

Dig In

Community Food Growing in West Lancashire

New allotment site planned for Skelmersdale

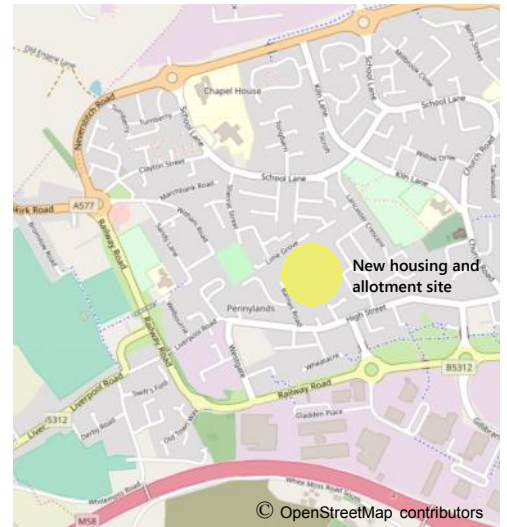
West Lancs Borough Council has been working with Lancs County Council to create a new allotment site as part of a housing development planned for Barnes Road, Skelmersdale. Following an initial suggestion from West Lancs Allotment Federation back in 2011 and early development work by CVS Community Food Growing project, the Borough Council has been in discussion with the County Council to develop the site.

The Council is now in the process of finalising the design details of the new site which will contain a minimum of 12 plots of around 150 sq m - each with their own shed. There will be a water supply to the site, and a small community building which will contain a community room, storage cupboard, kitchenette and toilet. It is also hoped that an area around the community building can be used as a community orchard.

It is unlikely that the site will be ready in time for the growing season this year, but plots will be allocated later in the year to be occupied early in 2020.

If you want to register your interest in having a plot on the site please email your contact details to: paula.campbell@westlancs.gov.uk Those on waiting lists elsewhere in Skelmersdale will have preference on the waiting list, as will those in the immediate vicinity of the site, but anyone in Skelmersdale will be able to register an interest.

The Council will keep us informed as this scheme develops and an update on progress including a finalised plan of the new site will feature in a future Dig In edition.



Potato Day 2019

The weather may be challenging, but you can get a head start on the 2019 growing season by heading along to this year's **Potato Day** on **Saturday 2nd February 2019** between 10am-3pm at Skelmersdale Concourse Shopping Centre, WN8 6LE.

West Lancashire Allotments Federation (WLAf) is delighted to be running the 7th annual Potato Day - organised in conjunction with Brighter Blooms Nursey of Preston. Potato Day customers will be able to choose from over 100 varieties of potatoes as well as seeds, onions, garlic, soft fruit bushes and fruit trees and get the chance to discuss all things growing related with members of the West Lancashire Allotment Federation.

Potato Day is always a highlight of the West Lancs growing year - don't miss out!

For further information please contact: wlafsecretary@outlook.com.



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West Lancs Community Food Growing Project supporting local people to grow their own food

Sources of funding update

We have recently updated our website resources including [sources of funding for community food growing projects](#), so do check them out if you're planning a project in 2019!

- **Elsbeth Thompson Bursary - up to £5,000:** funding to create a garden or an allotment for community benefit – especially projects aimed at bringing the community together by the sharing and acquiring of horticultural knowledge and skills, and by inspiring a love of gardening across all age groups. www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/bursaries-grants/elsbeth-thompson-bursary
- **Active West Lancs - Up to £500:** Active West Lancs is providing small grants to Associate Partner organisations to help them get people in West Lancashire more active and by so doing help to improve either their mental or physical health. http://activewestlancs.org/wp/?page_id=855
- **Lancashire County Council Community Project Support** - food-growing and healthy eating projects are among the projects that LCC is keen to support: www.lancashire.gov.uk/benefits-and-grants/grants-and-funding/community-project-support/
- **The Eric Wright Charitable Trust Small Grants Fund - up to £500:** This small grants fund is open for 2019 and is aimed at helping small voluntary & community groups around the following priorities: the elderly, health, education and training, carers, or youth. Read more [here](#).

For detailed information on these and other sources, please go to our Resources page: www.wlcvs.org/projects/community-food-growing/#tab-id-4

Call for RHS Chatsworth

Would you like to help showcase Skelmersdale's food growing projects at the RHS Chatsworth Show in June this year? Local organisation [Well Skelmersdale](#) is looking for anyone involved in local projects to help with an exhibit within the community area at the Show.

This year the Show has a theme around the five senses, focusing on wellbeing, and the idea is to have a plot of Well North allotments in the communities area. The RHS would provide the sleepers and soil for the allotment beds and put them together. The group would then put the allotment display together and go to Chatsworth the day before the event to do all the planting etc. The RHS would provide free passes for pathfinders who have an allotment for the show.

If you are interested in getting involved in this exciting project, applications need to be in by mid February but in the first instance please contact Debbie at CVS: email debbies@wlcvs.org



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New courses @ Burscough Community Farm

Neil Hickson writes: *'Burscough Community Farm is all about learning and sharing, so running workshops and courses is something that we love to do. We are pleased to be offering a wide range this year and they all have our core ethics of 'Earth Care, People Care and Fair Shares' running through them.*

'Many of the courses are run by tutors connected to the farm as volunteers, and the farm itself often features as the working example of what participants learn about, or it may even be the source of the materials used in a workshop.

'We love our food, so some of the sessions will incorporate a hearty lunch made with something grown on the farm. Learning together, eating together and sharing together; it's what the farm is about.'



If you are a 'Friend of the Farm' you will get a substantial discount off all of these courses.

Courses for 2019

• Wooden Spoon Carving - Introduction	2nd Feb 2019	£60
• Applying Permaculture to Your Life	3rd Feb 2019	£60
• Train Your Mind to Loose Weight	5th Feb 2019	£40
• Small Business Finance, Budget, Plan	12th Feb 2019	£60
• Applying Permaculture to Your Life	21st Feb 2019	£60
• Wooden Spoon Carving - Introduction	28th Feb 2019	£60

Book your place today: <https://burscoughcommunityfarm.org/courses-and-workshops/>

Grow wildflowers with GrowWild this Spring!

GrowWild is working to get people all around the UK **transforming shared spaces with beautiful, blooming UK native wildflowers**. People who have never sown seeds before, who don't know what a wildflower is, or who just want to bring some love and colour to their community are being invited to apply for one of the **free wildflower seed kits**.

There are **only a limited number** of free seed kits so apply for yours today before they run out! Even if you miss out on the allocation, GrowWild will still keep in touch and walk you through what tools and resources you will need, how to prepare the soil, what seeds to use, how to sow them and then what to look out for while they grow. [Apply for a seed kit here.](#)



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Elswick Community Garden

Elswick Community Garden in Skelmersdale was officially opened by Mayor Noel Delaney and Mayoress Ann Stubbert recently. The garden was the brainchild of Cllr Maureen Nixon, and has grown from 5 fruit trees and fruit bushes to a landscaped area with raised beds at varied heights to be used by the whole community in Tanhouse.



After fundraising for the materials for the raised beds, topsoil and gravel, the Prince's Trust team, based at West Lancashire College offered to turn the plans (developed by the Groundwork Trust) into reality. Prince's Trust tutors and six team members worked tirelessly to get the job done. The team also did their own fundraising for the project and sourced the wood for the raised beds, as well as the topsoil.

Cllr Claire Cooper says, 'Without the help and hard work of the Prince's Trust team, the Elswick Community Garden Project would still be just fruit trees. Now we have an area that all the residents can use and enjoy. We've had so many positive comments from the community and we're looking forward to growing our own vegetables and fruit to share with them using the [Incredible Edible](#) model'. The next stage of the project is to install a garden bench in memory of Yvonne Harrison who had nurtured the fruit trees.

Thanks also go to Tanhouse Action Group for the small raised beds, and West Lancashire Borough Council and Lancashire County Council who provided community funds towards the garden.

The West Lancs Community Food Growing Project aims to get more people involved in growing their own food and eating more healthily. We are working with local communities and schools to set up community food growing initiatives and providing help in finding the land (and funds) that might be needed. **We are keen to hear from anyone interested in growing their own food with others in West Lancs. Please get in touch!**

Debbie Shepton
Alison Wall
Claire Cooper

CVS Community Support
CVS School Mentor
CVS School Mentor

Email: debbies@wlcvs.org
Email: enquiries@wlcvs.org
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Keep up to date at our website: www.wlcvs.org/projects/community-food-growing/



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