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Todmorden High greenhouse

Growing and campaigning for local food. This is our January 2014 bulletin. Do forward to a friend. To subscribe email incredibletodnewsletter+subscribe@googlegroups.com
Any queries about the newsletter: pennya@fsmail.net
(Archive of past newsletters [here](#))

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Interview with the Jo Hutchison, tutor on the new BTEC in Agriculture at Tod High on page 2.
Page 3 for visits to a Sunderland Housing Association and Catalonia, and a job vacancy at the Incredible Farm.
More pruning news, and words and photos of an incredible willow weaving day on page 4.
See page 5 for fantastic local events to get involved in.

Starting the year with more than just veg

January means thinking about our new growing season and what we are going to sow this year.

But as Estelle says in her blog, the new year is about more than vegetables. We have already had our first visitors of 2014, and there is an incredible new sign at the station.

There's more to read in [Estelle's blog](#).

Estelle writes: We have been doing a lot of tidying of beds when the rain has let up enough and we had our first visitors of 2014, four lovely ladies from Tameside who came over to get a taste of incredible edible before booking tours for a larger groups later in the year. Bookings are starting to come in fast so there will be a lot of visitors again this summer.

But it isn't all about food, we like to encourage other local talent too as can be seen by the art work around the green route and now at the railway station the front door to our town.



New station sign – see full picture on Estelle's blog.



Visitors from Tameside

Let it grow, let it grow, let it grow!

Penny D interviews Jo Hutchison, B TEC Agriculture Tutor at Todmorden High School

Since its opening in November last year, the Incredible Aqua Garden has been a hive, or should that be lake, of activity. Joining the team on their journey to cultivate, nurture and harvest fruit and vegetables for the pupils of Todmorden High as well as the wider community is BTEC Agriculture tutor, Jo Hutchison.

Jo's teaching A-level students from Tod High and also has an overall teaching role within the centre. As a keen gardener herself with a background in Food Technology she jumped at the opportunity to get involved with the project;

'The whole idea of being able to teach crop production to students in an inspirational setting (one far removed from the traditional class room environment) and then have the students pick and cook with their produce was an opportunity I was not going to miss.'

And it's fair to say that Jo's green fingers run in the family;

'My grandfather trained at Kew gardens when he was in his twenties and as a result owned his own nursery for a number of years, so I have vivid memories of running up and down his green houses, filled with colour from all the flowers he grew. I kind of feel I'm continuing his legacy. I actually refer to his old notebooks which are 75 years old now, in my teaching'

Jo's hands are currently full with tomato plants as the students are running research projects to see how they grow under different conditions, comparing Aquaponic and Hydroponic techniques with traditional green house methods. Success so far includes some very early runner bean plants, herbs, garlic and a glut of tomato plants. This is a great achievement for the class who only began the course a couple of months ago.

We'll be back to visit the Aqua Garden later in the year, as Jo's students continue to study towards their BTEC in Agriculture in this incredible building.

Agriculture BTEC (Level 3) is designed to give students a broad knowledge of all the skills, techniques and attitudes essential for success in the agricultural industry.

Visit [the Aqua Garden](#) for more information.



The classroom in the greenhouse



Jo and very early runner beans in the greenhouse



Trays of thriving tomato plants in the hydroponic unit

Gentoo, an inspirational housing association

Pam writes about [her visit](#) to a Sunderland housing association

Every now and again, something truly wonderful happens.

That's what I feel about meeting up with the Sunderland Housing Association, [Gentoo](#). They had heard our story at a few events last year, came to Todmorden and had one of Estelle's legendary tours. They just loved it.

Round Christmas I was invited to meet their top team in Sunderland, and oh my god, they are truly incredible.

They get everything we do. Seeing people as a solution, reigniting community through food, helping all of their tenants to believe in the power of their own actions.



Rebuilding our self-belief cuts across boundaries

Pam writes about her visit to Catalonia.
Read it all [here](#).

Wonderful visit to Catalonia, a place that is really thinking about Edible Landscapes.

Unemployment around 50 per cent means that although Barcelona seems protected many people are thinking about their futures.

Reconnecting to place through food is high on their agenda. Maybe the bit we can help with is to say ' it starts with the individual, not the state.

JOB at the spin off not for profit Incredible Farm Walsden

The farm are looking for a part-time Assistant Manager to join their team in furthering the teaching and learning opportunities in sustainable food growing at the heart of this social enterprise project. The farm website is [here](#).

The Assistant Manager will host visitors to the site, manage events, ensure compliance with health and safety procedures and assist in managing the apprentice growers. There is also the possibility of development work in fund raising and new projects.

Some weekend and evening work will be involved. The successful applicant will need to complete an enhanced DBS check and hold a current driving licence. They will also be a key-holder who will need to be able to reach the site quickly.

This is an 18 hour a week [50% FTE] post: salary £17,000 pro rata per annum. The post is for 6 months initially subject to ongoing funding.

Application form, job description and person specification are available by calling at the farm in person (weekdays) for a chat and look around. Text Nick on 07985 150296 to check we are available.

Pruning days are here again



Stella and John pruning apple trees near Ferney Lee



...and there's plenty more to do

It was a beautiful sunny day and Ferney Lee growers couldn't have picked a better day to prune some of the fruit trees growing on land near to the school.

Incredible Willow Weaving

Sunday the 19th of January saw a group of regular Sunday volunteers gather at the Unitarian Church for a willow weaving workshop under the expert guidance of Green Willow Workers Claire Wells and Helen Blackwell.

We had a fantastic day; it was action from the start as Claire and Helen introduced us to the characteristics of willow via making a simple wreath.

Read the whole story on [Jenny's blog](#). here



Everyone made something beautiful



Stephen topped his tower with a heart

Local Events

Saturday 22nd September: Calder Valley Organic Gardeners Potato Day at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Royal Fold, New Road, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge HX7 5DZ between 10am to 3pm.

Admission of £1 includes entry to the Potato Raffle. 30 varieties (organic and non-organic) will be on sale at 14 pence per tuber. A pre-order service is available.

Children's activities, information displays, organic cheese stall, compost and plant stall, garden book stall, onion sets and shallots along with other stalls. Food and drink.

More information, catalogue and order form for postal pre-orders for collection at the event...Tel 01422 846173 or 07977 929684 (answerphone), email info@cvog.org or visit www.cvog.org

Saturday 22nd February International Women's Day event at Todmorden Town Hall from 10.30am. Craft stalls * information stalls, including Incredible Edible * taster workshops in plumbing, DIY, car mechanics * food (Hilary is cooking). Evening disco with performers. Fund raising for Overgate Hospice, this year's mayor's charity.

Friday 28th February

Incredible Edible Skills

Student Conference

Friday 28th February 2014,

The Unitarian Church, Honey Hole, Todmorden



More details [here](#).

Friday 28th Feb 'Fair trade – fair food?' at the Methodist Church, Market Street, Hebden Bridge 7pm for 7.30pm. Fairtrade refreshments will be available. **More details [here](#).**

That's it for now. Do stay in touch. Email us at estelle@incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk or phone on 01706 815407. We'll be back with our next edition at the end of February