



Windmill Hill City Farm Volunteer Newsletter

Issue 12 September 2017

A Successful Summer of Volunteering

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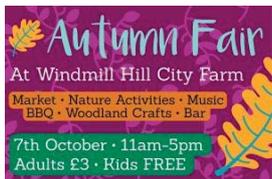
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As the summer draws to a close and the seasons shift, it's a good opportunity to reflect on a fantastic summer of volunteering. Volunteers have helped the farm flourish in every single area. The Community Gardens are looking stunning. Volunteers have been mowing and growing; everything from broad beans to chillies have filled the plots and polytunnels, in between the plentiful fruit, herbs and flowers. Dedicated groups have ensured everything is nurtured, freeing plants of the wicked bind weed and harvesting a grand total of 1293.43kg of produce for the café and farm shop! 936 cucumbers have been picked and enough chard and kale for 700 bags to sell in the farm shop. In total, volunteer's harvesting has raised approximately £4100- truly astounding!



Clare, Richard and Rhianna with their crop

Meanwhile over in a different corner of the gardens, volunteers have created the 'Peace Garden', a seating area for contemplation and reflection. The leadership, teamwork and involvement of other organisations was commendable. We've had visiting volunteers constructing the seating area outside

the café, pygmy goat pen, volunteer's garden, and giant rabbit's new habitat. Over 100 volunteers from 8 corporate groups have completed these big tasks, donating £2850.



Ciaran's sausage rolls!

The transition to the bigger and better café has been supported by the wonderful café volunteers who have been a consistent and solid presence during all of the changes; washing up and taking customers their tasty food at rush hour, preparing food, and encouraging café staff to never stop dancing and singing!

Children on the farm have had the opportunity to pick produce and learn about growing, dig and make pizzas, all thanks to the support of volunteers who helped out Julie and team with the groups. Volunteers from Farm Adventurers too helped children to enjoy a summer outside.

The ongoing daily achievements and hard work of maintenance, memberships, website, supporting and all other volunteers are too great to mention, and have consolidated the success of the wonderful summer of volunteering. **WELL DONE EVERYONE!** Let's keep growing together.

As a volunteer you can get 10% discount in the Farm Shop, and 50% discount on plant sales :)

My return to WHCF

When I entered the gates to the Farm in September, I couldn't believe it has been a year since I left and went back to Germany. My name is Nicole; I am a student from Hanover. In 2016 I spent six weeks in Bristol and had the chance to volunteer at the farm a couple of days per week. I felt really sad when I had to go and promised myself to come back as soon as possible. Therefore, returning to the farm this year has been a very emotional experience.



Even though there have been some changes during my absence (I was e.g. quite amazed when I saw the new café) it still felt as if I had never been away. Staff members as well as other volunteers recognised me immediately when I entered the volunteers room, cheered "You are back" or "Very nice to see you again" and gave me a big hug. It is a wonderful experience to feel this welcome. I think the whole atmosphere among the people who spent their time at the farm is one of the main reasons why I personally enjoy volunteering there so much. Contributing something to the community together, feeling that your work and especially yourself is appreciated can help when you have to face problems of stressful daily life. It was amazing to be part of something and since Bristol isn't my home-town, volunteering was a great opportunity for me to get involved and to get to know the city and it's residents. I'd like to say a huge thank you to all of the staff and volunteers I met for making me feel welcome. I had a fantastic time and met so many great people!

Volunteer Meeting Notes

Nursery Expansion

The potential nursery expansion on the sports pitch is now definitely off which is disappointing but not entirely unexpected. The planning risk was too high because of a lack of alternative places to put the football pitch. That meant that the Council couldn't convince central government funders to put up the funds in the time allowed.

Old Dairy/ Interaction Centre

We've opened 'The Old Dairy' despite it not being entirely finished. There is a new area with guinea pigs and rabbits, toddler play space and educational info on the walls; and an open space for activities. There are still bits of decorating and more educational materials to go in there yet. We're aiming to get some videos up and to hook up a live webcam into a bird box in the spring, too. ***If you've ideas of things to do in there do let Julie know.***

OVO

OVO have given us a grant to develop the adventure playground. The partnership also involves their employees volunteering here. They will be at the Autumn Fair, please welcome them!

Community Garden Accessibility

The gardens have developed to be an amazing shared space for allotment holders, volunteers, visitors and groups. Thank you for your contributions. With lots of people using the space, we want ideas on how to communicate what each area is about— ***talk to Susan.***

Animals

We have 2 new Aberdeen Angus heifers. They will be brought up here and sold at market next spring. The hens have been sprayed and their pecking has reduced a little. The sows did not get pregnant by Bowie so they will hopefully get pregnant by artificial insemination.

Volunteer issues/ suggestions/ ideas

- A volunteer asked for everyone wash the hand tools before putting them away as they rust if dirty and wet. Terry has now installed a new washing station behind the shed to do so.
- How can we get rid of café seagulls? We are looking into it!
- When will the Volunteer building kitchen be re-done?— SOON! It's on the list after the Old Dairy is finished.

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



Staff Profile



Volunteer Profile

Name: Monse **Age:** 31

From: Margarita Island, Venezuela

Favourite animal: All of them

Random fact: I found a four leaf clover when I was a child. I then survived an earthquake, a hurricane, loss of a wheel from both a plane and my dad's car, I somersaulted off the stairs in my childhood house and twice I almost drowned. I am glad I found that four leaf clover in the field of my grandma's house!



What do you do at WHCF?

In the words of my colleagues...lead the kitchen team, make the best cakes in Bedminster, motivate staff through slaps, sing songs incorrectly including 'heads, shoulders, beans on toast', and be generally bonkers!

How long have you been working at Windmill Hill City Farm?

2 years, 4 months and 13 days.

What's the best thing about working here?

For the first time in my life, my place of work is part of something more, so I have been able to meet many different and amazing people. My coffee every morning, jokes, the loud music and karaoke and rare dances of my colleagues, the hugs, and good days of those who work or volunteer at the café. The happy customers and of course the moo, quack, oink and behh as I walk in! The best thing about working here is that the children in my family believe I have the coolest job (and the adults too!)

What changes have you seen since being here?

Too many to detail— all the time everything is changing, nothing is still. But structurally, it is a bit obvious, but our café has grown.

What are your hopes for the future?

I want to go back to study, learn French or Italian although maybe it is better that I start with English! I want to learn to dance tango, salsa, tap, swing and samba too! I want to learn to sew a button that doesn't fall off the next day. I want a house by the beach with the sand literally on my doorstep, and I also want a treehouse. I want to know many places. I want to walk to Camino de Santiago de Compostela. I want to bike from Bristol to Bath. A recurring dream since adolescence is to have goats and make cheese. I want to write a book and I want to have grand children.

Name: Bill **Age:** 63

From: Toronto

Favourite animal: There is something about all of the animals that I like.

Random fact: My family settled in Canada from Ireland in 1703



What do you do at WHCF?

I volunteer in the farm and gardens. I work with a team to muck out the animals, collect eggs, make sure the chickens have enough food and water, and do general gardening.

How long have you been volunteering at Windmill Hill City Farm?

Since November 12th 2012. Back in Canada I worked on a farm near Toronto then when I came to the UK I volunteered with Fareshare in a Warehouse. Then I found out about the farm . When I started I used to clean out the old chicken pens near the Volunteer Building.

What changes have you seen since being here?

The infrastructure has changed 100% and the café and nursery have grown. Poco Drum has become very popular; even though he plays the same tunes every week he always draws a crowd!

What do you like about volunteering here?

I like working in the soil, developing the gardens— harvesting, making bug hotels, keeping it maintained. On a Wednesday I enjoy working in a group and everyone pulling their weight. I often work with Carolyn who is a great help. Volunteering has helped with my routine and regaining balance and has helped me have a positive attitude.

HAVE YOU SEEN THE PARAKEET?



Tweet tweet says the farm's parakeet, or is it more of a squawk? You may have heard this beautiful bird's distinctive call as you meander around the farm, and if you



haven't, listen out! Originally a resident in the tropics, their call sounds somewhat out of place on our little farm in Bedminster. The parakeet is the UK's most abundant naturalised parrot, becoming established in the wild in the 1970s after captive birds escaped or were released. The population has been increasing steadily, though remains concentrated in south-east England. Birds reported elsewhere in Britain are likely to be local escapees.

See if you can see our escapee, disguised in green as he/she is. Parakeets are able to cope with the cold British winters, especially in large gardens where they feed on a wide variety of fruit and berries, although they have been known to take from our native bird species. Let's just hope our resident parakeet doesn't get greedy, and manages to stay warm this winter!

Upcoming Events and Opportunities



Autumn Fair

Saturday 7th October

A lovely autumn day out at the farm with something for everyone to enjoy! There will be local bands and musicians, a bbq, the 'Farmbar', a host of activities, crafts and games for children and adults and a fantastic market. We need your help to make this a success.



Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Monday 16th October, 5.30pm, The Café

Every year, the Board of Trustees (who make lots of decisions about the farm) are voted in. You can have your say and vote! To vote you need to be a member—sign up at reception. Come along, free food provided!

First Aid Training



Tuesday 14th November OR Wednesday 24th January, 10.30-12.30

This first aid and health and safety training will help you prepare for emergencies which may happen at work, at home, or out and about. Open and free to volunteers!

For more information on these opportunities, talk to Lizzie.

Winter Wellbeing and Horticulture Course

January/February 2018

Susan is running a course for gardening volunteers in the winter months. This course will explore horticultural themes and link growing in the gardens to personal growth and self care, looking at seasonal change and bringing in elements of permaculture.

Steps2Work Drop-In



Every other Wednesday, 2-4pm, Training Room

Formerly known as job club, this two hour drop in supports those who have had a mental health challenge take steps back to work. You'll be matched with a mentor who can help you think about what's next and how to get there. Just drop-in.

Employability Skills Course



Wednesday 4th October- Wednesday 8th November 10-12

This course run every Wednesday by the WEA can help you recognise your potential and identify what route you want to take- training, education or employment. You will also learn how to update and target your CV and interview skills. The cost is £37 (may be reduced for those on a means-tested benefit).

Feedback, issues and questions... just contact...



LIZZIE SPENCER
Volunteer Manager

0117 947 1181

lizzie.spencer@
windmillhillcityfarm.
org.uk



NICKY BACON
Health & Social
Care Manager

0117 947 1188

nicky.bacon@
windmillhillcityfarm.
.org.uk



SAM LLOYD-SMITH

Health & Social
Care Operations
Manager

0117 947 1188

sam.lloydsmith@
windmillhillcity-
farm.org.uk