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Welcome to the Summer 2017 edition of WWOOF UK News

There's a real assortment of news for you in this issue of WWOOF UK News; we continue to find and share inspiring stories – this time nomadic WWOOFer Teresa Donohue reflects on the three years, so far, she’s spent on her WWOOFing road, page 4, a couple who met as WWOOFers some 40 years ago tell us where it led them, page 7, and we are delighted to bring news of host Seed Co-operative’s achievement in becoming finalists in the BBC’s Food and Farming Awards, page 11.

Our annual members’ gathering has a different format this year, find out what and where on page 5: book early as places are limited.

WWOOFer Ruth Pullan organised a training day for WWOOFers in January and suggests this may be a useful way forward, page 8, while Mr Fluttergrub shares his wisdom on how to grow that quintessentially summer berry, the strawberry. He evokes their scent and flavour and sent me scurrying to YouTube for a lyric check – find out why on page 6.

There’s plenty of news from the office, page 3, and Jane Thurlow describes the North East regional gathering, page 10. Apparently their meet ups guarantee a sunny day so that must be why there was such a good turn out.

We are also reminded, on page 11, of the important contribution our volunteer Regional Host Contacts make to supporting hosts. Would you like to join them?

Please continue to send me your news, comments and experiences, we love to share them.

Elaine Koster,
Editor

Stay in Touch

Please send contributions for our print editions to editor@wwoof.org.uk or by post (address page 12) by the following dates:

- 31st July 2017 for Autumn 2017 issue
- 31st October for Winter 2017 issue
- 31st January for Spring 2018 issue
- 30th April for Summer 2018 issue

The deadlines for material to be included in the next four electronic updates are:

- 10th July 2017
- 6th October 2017
- 5th January 2018
- 13th April 2018

We particularly welcome your photographs and letters as well as your WWOOFing tales.

Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/wwoofuk
on Twitter: @wwoofuk
and Instagram: @wwoofuk
Contact: socialmedia@wwoof.org.uk
And don’t forget members can always post adverts, question and comments on our members’ forum www.wwoof.org.uk/forums/forum

Cover: Please see credits throughout the newsletter

What is WWOOF UK?

- WWOOF UK holds a list of organic farms, gardens and smallholding, all offering food and accommodation in exchange for practical help on their land.
- These hosts range from a low-impact woodland settlement to a 600 hectare mixed holding with on-site farm shop, café and education centre.
- WWOOF hosts should follow the IFOAM organic principles but need not be registered with a certifying organisation.
- Hosts do not expect WWOOFers to know a lot about farming and growing when they arrive, but they do expect them to be willing to learn and able to fit in with their lifestyle.
- The list of hosts is available, either online or as a book, by joining WWOOF UK for a membership fee.
- Once you have the list you can contact hosts directly to arrange your stay.
- Your host will explain what kind of work you will be expected to do, what accommodation is on offer and will discuss the length of your stay.
- WWOOFers do not pay to stay with hosts and hosts do not pay WWOOFers for their help.
- The ethos and mission page of our website gives full details of what is expected of hosts and WWOOFers.
- WWOOF UK is a charity registered in England and Wales 1126220 and in Scotland SCO45524.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those held by WWOOF UK
WWOOF UK and the LWA: We have been in partnership with the Land Workers Alliance (LWA) for two years, and have decided to carry our partnership on to its third year. During the last two years we had over 80 hosts join the LWA, and an impressive 60 LWA members applying to become a host. Nic Green, from Incredible Farm, Todonton was the first LWA member to take advantage of our partnership offer and sign up as a host. Here’s what he said about his membership with WWOOF UK so far...

‘Well, it’s like this… The WWOOFer thing has transformed the farm, and our expectations, totally. I just wish I’d had the nerve to invite WWOOFers seven years ago when we were first building the farm; it seemed cheeky, we had so little to offer them. But now we’re moving to a different piece of land and we are totally counting on those energetic, talented people. In 2016, we had 28 volunteers including WWOOFers, who stayed on average a month.

‘It continues, we’ve just said good bye to one young lad who stayed for ten weeks over the worst bit of winter, he loved it, cooked over a campfire, taught little ones, taught us how to make a bed out of string, and worked like a man on a mission. We now think that WWOOFers are an important way that we change the world; they come, get inspired and leave changed, as are we. Big Stuff!’

From Mike, social media: I would like to remind hosts to update your listing photos with all your 2017 activities as you go through the season. Our updated system means your new photos are bigger and better giving potential WWOOFers a great introduction to you. And for WWOOFers to let us know of the special things you’ve done, seen and learned so that we can share.

From Scarlett, our Chief Exec and Co-ordinator: At our February Council Meeting the directors and staff team collaborated to decide on our main focus and aims for the next three years in a novel workshop session led by two directors, Nim Kibbler and Katie Hastings, with the help of some remarkable chocolate ladybirds to indicate our preferences. The main aim that emerged for this year is to recruit more UK-based WWOOFers, in line with our commitment to limiting the environmental impact of long distance travel and to perhaps counter the possible effects of Brexit.

IT Update: as spammers and bloggers get cleverer and more determined, email providers are constantly improving their security to protect their users. We have recently updated the way messages from WWOOFers are sent to hosts from our website to ensure as many as possible get through. Just occasionally those messages will be sent to spam or junk folders so hosts please check those folders regularly, just in case. If you think you are missing messages please get in touch.

10 years with us: remarkably two members of our staff team have been working with us for 10 years this year – Scarlett, our Chief Exec and Co-ordinator, joined in May 2007 and Christiane, our Finance Administrator, joined in August that year. Thank you both for everything you’ve done for us so far!

To contact us please use: info@wwoof.org.uk

Are you going to the Green Scythe Fair on 11th June?

WWOOF UK will have a stall there – plus we have been offered a marquee (next to the Green Info Café) for a bit of a get-together from 5-6.30 pm.

This will give us an opportunity to gather and share WWOOFing adventures, as well as provide some hints and tips about improving exchanges in the future. If you’ve just joined WWOOF it will be a great way to meet other members – and potentially find your first host. As it will be part of a public event we will also be inviting potential hosts and WWOOFers to join us. We look forward to seeing you there. Full details: www.greenfair.org.uk
Teresa Donohue has been WWOOF-\ing for three years and we first became aware of her when she gave great advice to new WWOOFers on our forum. Here are some excerpts from her reflections on those three years. You can read her full story here: goo.gl/eZoVtr

My decision to try WWOOFing came about (like for many people, as I later found out) at a time of confusion; a turning-point; perhaps because it’s a great way to instigate change. To literally shift yourself into new surroundings, seek new company and swap normality for something totally different, can really do the trick in gaining a fresh perspective. Having run away from an internship, I was feeling increasingly disillusioned by my current career path, was weighed-down with self-doubt and badly in need of direction... So, I chose north, and the wilds of the Scottish highlands.

In May 2014, I boarded the Caledonian sleeper train in London Euston, for what would be my first real stay in Scotland and my first ever WWOOFing experience... Now, nearly three years and over twenty hosts later, I’ve WWOOFed my way from Scotland to Wales, England, and most recently over to Ireland, and I’m not entirely sure it’s over yet! After my first experience I knew I’d found something worth holding on to and exploring. And the more I explored, the more I was curious... so I kept going...

...Many of the hosts I chose were small, market-garden enterprises such as community groups and box-delivery schemes. I went wherever I was most drawn towards – the sea and rural, isolated areas, including several islands (Scotland is good for this) – where I hoped I could get the most ‘raw’ experiences of nature. I remember how awkward and alien it all felt in the beginning; using hand tools, planting out delicate seedlings, spending long periods of time with my eyes to the ground and my hands in the soil. But I was lucky that my first hosts gave me a great balance between instruction and independence, satiating my hunger for both learning about the garden and exploring the countryside...

... It was such a refreshing and fun way to learn, at the same time as being useful. And as time went on, I really began to feel my physical effort transform into tangible, edible rewards – a kind of job-satisfaction I’d never experienced before!...

... As I continued my travels, I found that staying long-term in a place could be particularly enriching; to see the seasons progress, and get a deeper understanding of the cyclical nature of farm work through the year. WWOOFing then also becomes so much more than just about work, through the close bonds that form with people over time. One family I stayed with welcomed me into their home for over three months, and included me in everything from birthday outings, to dancing around in the living room. ...

...And it’s perhaps these extra little things that, although hard-to-define, are what makes WWOOFing really special. Many hosts too, appreciate and even seek out those unique qualities – like the motivation, ideas, company, and novelty that volunteers bring to their lives. 'We can’t
go out and see the world, so we invite the world here, with us’, one host told me…

...The flexible nature of WWOOFing allows everyone to make of it what they want, and perhaps helps cultivate a little more trust in a world. For me, it’s been a gateway into other ways of thinking and being, and has helped me connect and find my place in the world through self-discovery. In learning to look after plants and animals, I’ve cared for my own personal development…

...WWOOFing and wandering all over the country for the last three years has helped untangle a lot of the root agitation that set me off in the first place, about who I was, where I was going, and to what purpose. And (when I’m asked what I hope to achieve) my answer is that honestly, I think I’m already doing everything I want to be doing – right now. The world is so full of colour, and variety, and my only aspiration is to carry on exploring, for as long as it makes me happy.

annual members’ gathering

The Sustainability Centre in Hampshire is home to the Permaculture Magazine, it boasts the woodland craftsman Ben Law amongst its many course tutors and we’re delighted to tell you it is WWOOF’s chosen location for this year’s Members’ Gathering and AGM on Saturday 23rd September.

We’re offering a day of activities and information-sharing with inspiring people in a seriously interesting setting. Staff and directors will be opening the day (after the brief business of the AGM) with a discussion panel where you can ask, suggest and share your WWOOF experiences, and get to know the team behind WWOOF UK as well as the other members attending the day.

Katie Hastings is a director of WWOOF UK and will lead workshops on the pioneering projects of Mach Maethlon in West Wales, including land share, a veg box co-operative and edible town initiative.

Sarah ‘The Herbalist’ Furey is a medical herbalist who works and teaches at the Sustainability Centre and throughout the local area, and she’ll be offering an informative session discussing how to grow and use herbs to boost immunity.

Throughout the afternoon, there’ll be the opportunity to take a tour of the many projects and experiments on the Centre’s site. Louise Arthur, who has been instrumental in establishing the wetland site and willow-growing enterprise at the Centre, will be leading the tours around the gardens, woodland, and buildings.

The Members’ Gathering is always a valuable time for members to get together and talk over the pleasures and challenges of being part of WWOOF and the organic movement. There’s lots of time within the day to chat with friends old and new, over tea, cake and lunch.

The Sustainability Centre is situated within the South Downs national park, right on the South Downs Way; so if you want to make a weekend of it the Centre hosts Wetherdown Lodge, yurt hire and a campsite for overnight stays. Visit their website to book accommodation; sustainability-centre.org/stay-with-us. WWOOF will be providing a shuttle service between the Centre and Petersfield train station; although there is parking on site, we very much encourage you to come on a car-free visit!

There will be a small cost for the day to include all refreshments; numbers will be limited, so please book soon via the WWOOF UK website; www.wwoof.org.uk.
strawberry fields forever

John Lennon wasn’t inspired by fields of strawberries to pen the lyric for *Strawberry Fields Forever*. It was apparently living next to a Salvation Army home called Strawberry Fields where a band regularly played that inspired the psychedelic anthem. Sticking with the Beatles theme, ‘when I was younger, so much younger than today’, I spent a lot of time in strawberry fields, it felt like forever, as part of a summer pick your own ritual. Although at the time it seemed an ordeal, I do fondly remember the luscious taste of the fresh fruit and, most of all, the smell that wafted from the sunbathed field.

Perhaps those pick your own days had a subliminal effect because, although strawberries aren’t my favourite berry, the plot just wouldn’t be complete without them. I grow strawberries in the same way as on that pick your own field, in the soil in rows, bedded down with straw. That’s in contrast to most commercial production in the UK which is now under polythene, the plants grown in bags at table height. This may give an extended growing season and improved fruit quality, but I’m not sure it does much for flavour or the environment.

I’ve four strawberry beds. This is because the plants tend to crop well for no more than four years before berry number and quality drops. After the fourth summer plants in the oldest bed are dug up and the land used for another crop. In the autumn a new bed is planted on fresh ground, either using bought in plants or ‘runners’ from the youngest of the other beds. For those new to strawberry cultivation runners are the young plantlets thrown out, usually prolifically, from established plants through the growing season. Once rooted these can be detached and planted to create a new bed. As strawberries are prone to developing virus and other diseases over time I always take runners from the newest (one year old) bed.

Maintaining four beds of different age plants will help get a good crop but it’s also important to keep the beds under control. If runners are not removed a strawberry bed can rapidly become ‘messy’, a mass of interwoven and crowded plants. This leads to competition and small, poor quality, berries. Strawberries need plenty of space. I like to have 40-50cm between plants, usually growing them in double rows at a similar distance between the lines.

For me, and I suspect many other small-scale growers, the other main strawberry challenges are birds and rain.

Blackbirds are the main culprit on my plot when it comes to avian attack, but other species including members of the corvid family will peck and steal fruit. As soon as there’s a hint of red on the berries I erect fruit cage net held well above the plants on canes topped with plastic caps. This is either anchored to the ground by wire staples or, for easier access, weighted down by heavy metal poles.

Unless you have a hotline to the weather gods, heavy rainfall is harder to avoid. June downpours can easily set off *botrytis*, a grey mould which can rapidly render most of the crop inedible. I place straw round the plants as the fruit develops. Obviously, this doesn’t protect from rain, but it does help reduce mud splash from the soil which both disfigures the berries and, I think, encourages fungal disease.

Strawberry growing does take some effort but the rewards are worth it. In some ways it’s the crop finale that’s best. As the fruit is picked it’s the smaller, later ripening, and sometimes misshapen berries that remain. These are the ‘jammers’, destined for the jar rather than the table, but a few can be savoured at the picking. If gathered on a sunny late July day these always seem to have the richest taste and, if the sun shines, a smell that takes me back to summers past and that pick your own strawberry field.

Mr Fluttergrub is the pen name of someone who is close to the heart of WWOOF UK. Based in the north of England he’s a very experienced grower and has agreed to write a regular column for us. Let us know if his suggestions work for you or if you have other ideas for your region, please get in touch using: info@wwoof.org.uk.
Ellen Lessner and Daniel Scharf are living proof that WWOOFing can change your life...

In 1978, in the week before I was due to go WWOOFing at Postlip Hall near Winchcombe, I stepped on an upturned harrow in the corner of the village football field. It was only when the hole in my foot was mended that I was passed fit for the rigours of organic gardening and finally arrived at Postlip. After my rather painful equivalent of a ‘sliding door’ I enjoyed sharing a weekend with Richard (Hazell, see appreciation in Winter 2016 newsletter), Brian Smith, and Ellen.

The weekend was memorable for rounding up pigs ‘wheel-barrowing’ them by lifting their rear legs, and weaving wattle fences. As a fence panel literally grew between us, Ellen and I shared our thoughts about life, as WWOOFers do, and our liking of John Fowles. We shared a lift with Brian and went back to our urban lives. About a month later I wondered whether anything between Brian and Ellen might have worked its way out and chanced a letter asking whether she might fancy a visit to Oxford. I was living in Drayton, a village to the south of Oxford, and Ellen was living in Drayton Gardens, London and I thought that we could try a punt together in Oxford. Unfortunately I forgot to put ‘London’ on the envelope.

Waiting a month or two without a reply I was thinking that the offer had been rejected when a rather battered envelope was returned having been around all the many local roads with Drayton in the name. I have no idea what Ellen had been doing over the previous months but she responded positively when the correctly addressed letter arrived. The next hiccup was the failure of an alarm clock which meant that instead of a relaxed meeting in central Oxford I had to intercept Ellen as she returned to the station believing she had been stood up (those were the days before I even had a land line). I have been told that it was the sandwiches made with home milled flour that did the trick.

The next forty years have been relatively uneventful. We have run a wholefood café called Harvest (an adjunct to our WWOOF ‘farm’ of seven allotments called Drayton Organic Growers), we are still friends with two people who came WWOOFing at the gardens thirty-five years ago, we have raised two children, enjoyed several further visits to Postlip, Ellen has done a stint as a WWOOF organizer, I have applied my knowledge as a land use planner to land access issues and agroecology and I am now part of another WWOOF community garden where I can issue warnings to young people about the potential of romance while fencing and handling livestock.
WWOOF training day: pruning

WWOOFer Ruth Pullan, who organised a WWOOF training day at a host in the North of England, tells of her experience and wonders whether it could become a model for a kind of WWOOF ‘Training Day’ to attract new, regular and local WWOOF volunteers.

I have been a WWOOFer on and off for the last year or so and have really enjoyed the extended stays I have had on small farms. However I am in the fortunate position of being able to take time to visit places as I can take my work with me while I learn about organic and small scale farming. But why should WWOOFing be limited to students and the self-employed? There are many people who cannot take time out of work or who have family commitments which mean that to take time off to WWOOF would really be a bit of a luxury and perhaps not what all the family considers their ideal break. As one of the day’s participants said, ‘Whilst I’d love to go WWOOFing again, due to childcare commitments I don’t have the opportunity nowadays so a one-day course held locally suits me better’.

Most WWOOF hosts have years of experience and a huge range of skills and many, I’m sure, would love the opportunity to pass on skills while benefiting from a few extra pairs of hands at the same time, in a classic WWOOF skills and labour exchange. Many of those attending the pruning day were in a position to apply what they learned directly to their own or community projects, and because of this able to disseminate thoughts and skills to a wider, and most importantly, new audience. I’m sure many people like this would appreciate the opportunity to WWOOF little and often, an arrangement which may well suit potential hosts too who don’t want to commit to having WWOOFers stay in their home but who want to share skills and who would benefit from the help WWOOFers can bring.

And so with this in mind back in January 2017 eleven people, some already WWOOF members, others who had paid a fee equivalent to membership to attend the event, squeezed into host The Nursery’s front room – they are a one acre suburban smallholding on the outskirts of York. The eleven had come from all over Yorkshire to take part in a great opportunity to learn about pruning fruit trees. Similar days had been organised in previous years but this was perhaps the first year that it was run with the thought that this could become one of many such days organised by hosts as a way of attracting a new type of WWOOFer to the membership.

A great day was had by all, tea and fabulous cake making everyone very happy as well as the delicious, home grown lunch washed down with the host’s very own apple juice. Real, tangible learning took place with clear instruction and practical application meaning everyone came away confident and ready to tackle their own pruning projects. The basics of pruning were taught around that prickly nemesis otherwise known as the gooseberry, in this case a delicious Hinnonmaki Red,...
and provided a great, miniature case study which can then be applied to larger tree fruits, particularly apples.

We then went on to prune a range of different apple trees of various vigour and shapes; a good introduction to the vagaries of pruning! It was great to be able to learn alongside a group of like-minded people from all walks of life and all ages too and with varying reasons for being there. From the RHS student wanting to brush up for their exams to the co-ordinator of a Leeds based Forest Garden and members of Leeds Permaculture Network, all manner of opinions on growing and varying amounts of experience were represented and the day was all the richer for it.

For the hosts, it was a great opportunity to reach people in the area who were keen to come back and they were pleasantly surprised by the amount of work which got done on the day, something, I think, which came from having a clear purpose. It felt like the day reached an end point for the kids at least and raised a family perhaps, who can give hugely valuable experience in return for their learning. Being able to pick the brains of an ecologist on the best way of introducing new species to a meadow while they learn about pruning their apple trees seems a fair exchange to me! Not only is there great opportunity for skill exchange but it is a chance to develop strong local networks of WWOOF volunteers which hosts can call on.

I think WWOOF has a great opportunity to reach out to this group and push the idea of one-off training days and that it would be very popular, going on what people said on the day; one lady in particular said ‘I am busy most of the time and not good at planning and researching when and where to go. I also can’t do long visits. Weekends or days are perfect for that. I would love it if other hosts put out that they need help for specific jobs on specific weekends or days so I can book them in my diary’. It’s a perfect physical presence and complement to LLOOF and one which could increase the membership of those put off WWOOF by the idea that it is just for students. For me personally, when I think back to my first forays into organic growing and someone a bit nervous of just plunging myself into WWOOFing without knowing what it entailed, I would have loved the opportunity to go on a day’s introduction, learn a new skill and see that WWOOFing is great! Of course this is dependent on there being WWOOF hosts prepared to plan and deliver a more structured day of work but in return I think there is the real possibility of a more dependable and long term local volunteer exchange and one which taps into WWOOF ideals of spreading organic and sustainable growing at, dare I say it, a grassroots level!

Our friends at the Ecological Land Co-operative (ELC) have a share offer this year that aims to generate funds for the development of two new clusters of small farms.

Their mission is the creation of residential smallholdings aimed at new entrants to horticulture and mixed farming, protected for ecological agricultural use in perpetuity. They believe new entrants to farming have no possibility of buying a farm in England as the cost of land and rural housing is too high. Based on the success of their first cluster of small farms at Greenham Reach, Devon, the ELC raised further funds to purchase and begin development of a second cluster of smallholdings in Arlington, East Sussex – and now the share offer brings the opportunity for involvement in this new venture.

You’ll find more details of the share offer and be able to read Phil Moore’s story of his journey from WWOOFer to being a member of ELC’s communications team here: goo.gl/Yp9qSw. We’ll update you in future issues.
North East regional gathering

On a beautiful sunny day the week before Easter a group of twelve from the North East Region met at the Sheffield Organic Growers (SOG) site on the edge of Sheffield for a regional gathering organised by RHC Jane Thurlow who sent us this report.

There were six hosts present, ranging from the very experienced with over 25 years under their belt to the newly signed-up yet to host. Three WWOOFERS also joined the gathering. We had a very interesting introduction to the project from Nick, the SOG host, and then a tour of the site, followed by a bring-and-share lunch and discussion. A few stayed on to help Nick do some actual work!

The land was bought from a local farmer (who still has traditionally farmed arable crops on adjoining land) then divided into four plots and an extensive young orchard. Nick has one quarter and is the only WWOOF host on site, though the others take volunteers from elsewhere. Two box schemes are run from the site – Nick trades as Sheffield Organic Growers, as shown on the hessian carriers that hold the veg bags.

The whole site is Soil Association registered and one of the partners has biodynamic registration as well. Tools and facilities are shared between the four growers.

Nick was keen to show us some of his more useful tools such as the broadfork (see photo) used to break up the soil without inverting it, causing damage to worms and other soil dwellers. The wheelhoe also looked a very useful piece of kit for large areas. To establish lines at the correct spacing for the hoe, Nick uses a wide rake with small pieces of tubing over the tines where he wants the rows. Drawn along the ground he can use it to make four drills at a time with perfect spacing.

After only three years as a WWOOF host Nick has made fantastic progress in developing his growing operation with each year more and more veg from the plot able to go into the veg bags.

It has not all been plain sailing though! Lines of polypropylene ground cover have been laid to suppress weed growth under a new electric fence – essential to keep the badgers off the plums, squashes and other veg. Hares apparently sometimes dig up the seedbed, and some areas need rabbit fencing.

It’s a beautiful place to grow veg and must be a convenient place to WWOOF being so close to some northern cities. You might want to go to their Open Day in July or Apple Day in the autumn.

Incidentally, if any host in the region wants to volunteer their place as a venue for a future gathering, remember that the sun ALWAYS shines when we get together (the last meeting on 31st October was similarly sunny and warm)...
Seed Co-operative

Congratulations to our host Seed Co-operative, which is one of three finalists in the BBC Future Food category of the BBC Food and Farming Awards 2017.

Seed Co-operative is a community owned seed company that is growing and selling organic and biodynamic open pollinated vegetable, herb and flower seed in the UK. Launched in 2014, this initiative is building on the work of Stormy Hall Seeds which for 20 years has been the biggest organic vegetable seed producer in the UK on just seven acres. A small farm in Lincolnshire, run by a small team of staff and volunteers, is currently in organic conversion, and provides a hub for a growing UK wide network of seed producers.

As a Community Benefit Society their financial backing is provided through donations, grants and community shares, with 220 people now being co-owners. We were pleased to feature the launch of their share offer (www.woof.org.uk/news/seed-co-operative).

David Price of the Seed Co-operative recently wrote in an email to Scarlett Penn our Chief Exec and Co-ordinator:

“Our story is about the wholesale reconstruction of the food system, required due to the inherently unsustainable nature of the existing structures... We are a very small team with constrained resources telling a very big story and up against massive odds; small community owned seed company v global corporations. We know we now need help from our friends... Seed sales have been fantastic and the business needed to provide a sustainable income stream is taking shape. To reach our target we still need to raise ~£300,000 (we have raised £450,000 since 2014). If you haven’t bought shares already please do consider it; there is great strength in numbers! www.seedcooperative.org.uk/support/”

did you know...

WWOOF UK has Regional Host Contacts?

The hosts amongst you are hopefully aware that for some time now we have had Regional Host Contacts (RHCs); a network of experienced, knowledgeable WWOOF members around the country who are available to support hosts to engage positively with WWOOFers and provide a good quality experience.

Their role includes:

- welcoming new hosts
- ringing or emailing around established hosts at the end of the season to check in with them
- organising a get together for local hosts and WWOOFers once a year
- providing advice and guidance to local hosts as and when required

An RHC should be able to answer day-to-day queries about hosting – or direct you to someone else who can help. Hosts can find out which RHC they are assigned to by checking their own host profile – or clicking the Find my RHC link in their My tools menu when they log in at wwoof.org.uk

If you would like to connect more with hosts in your area, becoming an RHC might fit the bill! Anyone over the age of 18, who has some experience of hosting or WWOOFing in the UK, likes meeting new people, is happy using the phone and emails as key methods of communication and doesn’t mind keeping basic records, is welcome to apply. The ability and time to visit hosts would also be helpful – but is not essential. We are particularly looking for someone on the Oxford/Bucks area... if this might be you please contact info@wwoof.org.uk.
Classified ads are free up to 50 words at the editor’s discretion. WWOOF UK accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of advertisements and does not endorse the products and services offered. You are advised to check before availing yourself of what is offered. editor@wwoof.org.uk

Classifieds

Housesitter/s required from 21 June-5 July 2017 to look after 1 horse and 2 cats in beautiful High- land Glen. Wonderful walks, bike rides etc. Will need own transport and some knowledge of horses care. Tel: Juliette: 01349 884440 email: juliette@dalreoich.co.uk

Colin Tudge, founder of the ORFC, will be hosting a one-week ‘pop-up’ college on the Future of Food and Farming from 17th September at Chisholme House in Scotland. Please see their website for details: www.chisholme.org

Fit Guardian reader, 70, seeks situation with eco-minded group or individuals. 50 years experience backwoods living in Munster (Ireland), Dyfed, Portugal. Keen on cycling, trees, horses, pottery, cabin building, writing. Some capital. Prefers Wessex, Dyfed, Norfolk. email: chriswalker789@hotmail.com WWOOFer ID 60698

We are always interested in hearing from people who would like to be more involved with the WWOOF UK steering group. Please contact scarlett@wwoof.org.uk


Free holidays for tired WWOOFers. Large shed with woodburner, cooker and necessary cutlery etc, separate shower, loo, and upstairs bedroom, free for short breaks in our six acre wildlife home in rural North Cornwall. No dogs. Email: alison@zanzig.plus.com

Beautiful Karuna project in Shropshire: courses in Permaculture, Forest Gardening, Scything & Natural building. Sign up for a course and WWOOF before or after. There’s a summer opportunity for a couple for longer term WWOOFing after an initial trial period, need to be flexible and have own transport. Please contact: merav66@hotmail.com karuna.org.uk

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