inside:
celebrating our new website
My WWOOFing life—up to now!
#penntopaper
can I bring the kids?
on the plot with Mr Fluttergrub
Farms for City Children
welcome to the spring 2019 edition of WWOOF UK News

It feels ironic when I’m compiling our spring newsletter that I am usually, as today, staring out at a snowy field watching the sheep trying to find a tender tip or two to graze on while my neighbour replenishes their feed.

This year it seems just right that Imbolc and Candlemas have just passed and, as Scarlett Penn, our Chief Exec has recently described it, ‘we are at the time when light is returning and earth energy stirring, as we transition between winter and spring’. We can draw on that energy for whatever the new season will bring us and try to use all of our resources to meet its challenges.

Our spring newsletter reflects the incredibly broad appeal of WWOOFing as we hear from Lesley Gorski who has been WWOOFing since the beginning and plans to go on until she’s 80, page 7, and we also offer our top tips for WWOOFing with children, pages 8-9.

Mr Fluttergrub lights a fire under a controversial issue as he wonders if many of us are damaging the environment and our neighbours by our well-meaning choices, and what that might mean for the future, page 6.

We are also very pleased to be able to tell you about the uplifting work of Farms for City Children written by Heather Tarplee, page 10-11, as we have so much in common with them and their aims.

And throughout the newsletter you’ll find information about our new website, with some things for you to do and plenty to investigate. There are so many beginnings and so much to look forward to.

I look forward to hearing from you and receiving your news, comments and experiences.

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:

- 30th April for summer 2019 issue
- 31st July 2018 for autumn 2019 issue
- 31st October for winter 2019 issue
- 31st January for spring 2020 issue

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

- 12th April 2019
- 12th July 2019
- 11th October 2019
- 10th January 2020

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

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 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.
- Use the How it Works menu on our website for details of what is expected of hosts and WWOOFers.
- WWOOF UK is a charity registered in England and Wales 1126220 and in Scotland SC045524.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those held by WWOOF UK
Our biggest news is that our new website has launched and we’ve had some brilliant feedback.
Thanks to everyone who’s been in touch and encouraged us. There’s always plenty to troubleshoot and get used to after a major change like this so if you’ve got any questions, just get in touch; click on Contact Us from the main menu.

update your profile photos

Mike Hammer, who manages most of our social media presence, writes: Hi friends. As you know social media is now commonly regarded as a powerful tool and since I believe wholeheartedly that WWOOFing and hosting WWOOFers benefits people’s lives enormously, I would like as many people as possible to hear about us. The best way I can do this is by using eye-catching photo images.

Since this is the time of year when we are making plans for the year ahead and perhaps reflecting on the year just gone by, I would like to ask you all to consider the photos you have on your profile. Profile photos have been uploaded from our previous website and many of them are too small for me to use in social media posts, which is a great shame I can tell you.

Take a look at your profile and check to see if the photos enlarge to good–sized images when you click on them or do they only become small ‘thumbnails’? If so, please upload the images again to our new fantastic website and, better still add more up-to-date, buzzy photos.

Could all of you lovely WWOOFers and hosts please take some time to photo the experiences you have while you are in the fields and gardens; especially the people around you. Take photos of fellow WWOOFers, hosts and WWOOFers together, activities where people are being instructed, social events, meal times, stunning views, alternative technology, permaculture and biodynamic practices, innovative techniques, cute animals, vibrant vegetables, wildlife etc. etc., then add them to your profile.

Finally, and really importantly, make sure you have ticked the box to agree to give us permission to use your photos on our social media platforms.

Many, many thanks and I wish you all a vibrantly healthy and happy year.

photo: Scarlett Penn, from our Instagram account @wwoofuk
Last Sunday night I was in a fine Shropshire pub. I’d gone to play in a folk music session and this town was a bit further than I’d normally go, but a friend was starting up a new monthly event and I wanted to support him. It was an amazing night with a circle of about 15 musicians in a back room of the pub, plus a whole group of ruddy and rowdy men who’d come through from the front bar. They were revelling in the sing-along songs so we played to their enthusiasm and rolled out lots of well known tunes. It was a fun, cockle-warming thing to do on a cold winter’s night.

At the end of the evening we milled around having quick conversations here and saying goodnight there, and one of the hearty ‘gallery singers’, as we called them, came up to thank me for my Irish whistle playing. It was an instrument he’d always loved, such a great sound. ‘And you’re so lucky to have a local pub like this!’ he added. ‘It’s so alive, that sense of community, especially in winter, people doing things and having fun together.’

I’d assumed his group were locals, so I asked him where they’d all come from. ‘We live in Jersey. We don’t have pubs like this. We’re all saying we really envy you.’ I thought it was nice that this eclectic group of merry strangers appreciated such things in life, so I asked what they were doing up from Jersey. ‘We come up to do some shooting on land round here.’

I’d assumed his group were locals, so I asked him where they’d all come from. ‘We live in Jersey. We don’t have pubs like this. We’re all saying we really envy you.’ I thought it was nice that this eclectic group of merry strangers appreciated such things in life, so I asked what they were doing up from Jersey. ‘We come up to do some shooting on land round here.’

I’m sure everyone within a large radius felt the atmosphere instantly freeze. In my peripheral vision I noticed other people (some my friends, some his) silently and without exactly appearing to move, drift to our respective sides.

Just the day before I’d had the most polite altercation I could muster with my neighbour, who allows shooting parties to get their killer kicks behind my smallholding. Thankfully it doesn’t happen that often but the mixture of gunshot, dogs barking, aggressive male voices, the purpose of the event – it sets me very on edge. On that occasion the party had done something particularly inconsiderate and I happened to be in even worse humour towards shooters than normal. (And don’t get me started on how is it even legal that people can rear livestock and then release it to run free all over your land, creating the kind of damage I’ve seen with another neighbour where the pheasants (poor things, it’s not their fault) peck at all her flowers, which represents her livelihood as a florist? How is that even allowed??)

Anyway, I took a slow breath, thawed my frozen smile and asked them why they come up here for a shooting ‘party’. ‘I’m a big property developer. It’s full on. I work an 80 hour week. I like to get out into the countryside, you know, to relax. The countryside is nice. I don’t know any other way of getting outside, especially with a group of lads, other than to come shooting.’

Facepalm. I almost felt sorry for him. ‘So...you’re trying to relax? You’re shooting guns and killing animals to help you...relax.’

Of course a conversation followed where I said about WWOOF, TCV and others, but he’d just finished another large whisky and along with becoming glassy-eyed and slightly absent, he’s also begun to stroke the arm of my jumper, mumbling that it felt exactly like a sheep. He liked sheep, they’re soft. Err...yes. Time to skedaddle.

But before I could move one of his mates – very genial and jolly – piped up with ‘so would you prefer us to buy chicken in cellophane from Tesco’s where the bird has had a bad life, or eat the pheasants we’re catching tomorrow that have had a good life?’

Me: ‘Oh, are you going to eat these pheasants? Most shoots I’ve heard of don’t eat the birds and just dispose of them; often they bury them in the ground.’

Him: ‘Well...yes, we do chuck them away, you’re right about that.’

Pause.

Him: ‘But this is the countryside way and people like you move out from the cities and don’t like the country ways, which were here before you were, to be fair.’

Me: ‘And you know the environment in which I grew up...how...?’

So who had been priming him with these quick-witted and brilliant arguments to use against Tree Hug-
gers, I wondered. But more immediately pressing, it was definitely time to round off the evening and leave so I said ‘Listen, it’s been a great evening and I wish you all well, but I do hope you have a terrible shoot tomorrow.’ They laughed, raised their glasses and that was that.

But all the way home I was thinking about what they’d said. It’s a basic human desire to want to get outdoors, and it has proven mental health benefits. It’s natural to want to be a band of brothers. But it was a shock to me the only way they knew how to do that was to go hunting and killing. It brought up so many issues for me all at once, and for a while I went off on a crazy solution-finding tangent of business ventures to tackle just this precise phenomenon. And then I got to thinking about the more general mindset and how very widespread it is. Then I started to feel overwhelmed and helpless and before I knew it, I was driving home after a great night out feeling quite depressed.

So is there a positive end to this story; a wise nugget or some pithy point I can give you to take away? Really I’m still processing it all, but I suppose there is one thing I can think to say for now. A group of strangers, all with diverse backgrounds, interests and outlooks, managed to have a damned fine evening in a random pub that turned out to be no-one’s local, creating music, mirth and song together. That at least has to be a good thing, right?

Illustration: Gordon Allen

Our new website has a selection of Featured Hosts on the home page. They’re randomly selected and very regularly updated. It’s another good reason to make sure your profile photos are interesting and up to date.

This is one of many of the new and really useful functions on the website and it’s worth spending time looking around and finding out how to use them to the full—whether you are a host or a WWOOFer.

And don’t forget—if you have any questions or feedback please get in touch.
adding fuel to the fire

It’s a cold day and I’ve just put some more logs in the wood burning stove. The wood has come from my own trees, two acres of mixed broadleaves planted twenty odd years ago and now thinned annually.

Burning your own wood is a satisfying and, I used to think, an environmentally sound means of keeping warm. Increasingly, though, I’ve my doubts about wood burning’s green credentials.

I live on the fringe of an urban area. If I go out into the street on a cold day the air can reek of smoke. The fashion for open fires and stoves has taken hold in the neighbourhood. Every few doors chimneys puff away. Often the smoke is caused by burning wood that’s not been properly seasoned. Worse still, sometimes the smoke has a chemical whiff suggesting treated wood or plastic-based materials are being burnt. My wood may all be home produced, dried for two years and burnt on a modern stove that meets current clean air standards, but when I go outside I can still see smoke spewing from the chimney and smell it if the wind wafts it downwards.

A few days before I wrote this column the UK government published a policy paper on air pollution (https://bit.ly/2RtZxtE ). If you live in the UK you’ll probably be broadly familiar with its content from media reports and comment. In a nutshell it might be argued that it is a policy proposal short on specifics and targets, lenient or negligent on pollution from vehicles but, when I go outside I can still see smoke spewing from the chimney and smell it if the wind wafts it downwards.

Those of us producing our own wood will justifiably feel the government’s policy proposals are shooting at the wrong target. However, while they may skate over many other forms of air pollution, the potential harm of wood burning cannot be wished away. The scientific evidence of damage to health is surely indisputable. While the scale of the problem can be inflated numerous recent academic studies have highlighted the issue. According to some reports many wood burning stoves emit more particulates per hour than modern diesel vehicles.

All this leads me to wonder whether, in the longer term, domestic wood burning has a future. Will and should legislation limit or curtail the practice, at least in urban areas? And, even if it doesn’t, am I and others inflicting a lifestyle choice on the neighbours and causing them harm?

There are then the wider environmental impacts to consider. We desperately need more woodland, but if domestic wood burning is restricted will it be a disincentive to planting? It will certainly effect managing my small wood. There’s no other viable outlet for the small quantities of wood extracted annually so if it’s not used for firewood what use will it have? I don’t want a log cabin and only need a limited number of bean sticks and plant supports. You can have too many habitat piles.

It seems to me that all of us burning wood from our own trees, even those in the countryside, have to consider its wider environmental and health impacts. Long term isn’t the greenest way of keeping warm renewably generated electricity? I know that questioning wood burning may be controversial and that I’m probably, literally, ‘adding fuel to the fire’ by raising it as an issue. Next time I’ll get back to the safer ground of the plot, but if you’ve any thoughts please share them.

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 by using: editor@wwoof.org.uk.

photo: Alice Law
Lesley Gorski, long-standing and inspiring WWOOFer, writes: I say ‘up to now’ as I am ‘only’ in my early 70s and hope to WWOOF until I am 80!

I have been a member since the organisation was called Working Weekends on Organic Farms, quite a long time ago, and there have been so many changes in so many ways plus there’s an appreciation nowadays of ‘things organic’ which embraces a significant return to the basics; by which I mean the earth beneath our feet.

I remember learning about the nitrogen cycle in a biology lesson and I was hooked. But I was a lucky girl; my ancestors were smallholders and my Grandad imparted his knowledge willingly to an inquisitive youngster.

Care of his soil was crucial, composting was an art and companion planting was the norm.

Even before the phrase had been coined for the organic movement and the general populous, I was digging bean trenches, turning compost, caring for poultry and other animals whilst growing and learning to respect the circle of life, the seasons and mostly the environment in which we all live.

I still feel privileged to be invited into hosts’ homes and lives after all these years and perhaps over a hundred placements. But, hey, who’s counting?

I have learned so many different skills; practical and culinary, practised languages and passed on my knowledge, if appropriate, as I interacted and aged over the past years.

I am told, often now, that I am a reliable and responsible house, barn, child and animal sitter ‘extraordinaire’.

What more could a WWOOFer want at my time of life?

I have WWOOFed in many countries, namely France, Italy, Germany, India, Japan and New Zealand. When I return from a placement I start planning the next!

I am, at this time, organising a few weeks with hosts in the Shetland Islands.

I hope this missive encourages the reader to keep on WWOOFing, at any age, or to try if you have never thought of doing such a thing.

I’ve enjoyed my mini trip down memory lane. Happy WWOOFing!

---

Lesley is one of our very few remaining book members. With the advent of our new website and due to the increasing costs of printing and postage, we decided to stop book memberships from the beginning of 2019.

Everyone who is a current book member can still go WWOOFing but we won’t be renewing or providing new book membership from now on. All of our current book members’ details are on the new website and we’ve been in direct touch with them all to explain the new situation. If you’ve got any questions about this please get in touch.
a week of muck and magic

on our Gloucestershire farm

Heather Tarplee writes: We have had a special year here at Wick Court, one of three farms owned and run by the educational charity Farms for City Children (FFCC). 2018 marked the 20th anniversary of the very first group of children arriving to spend a week as farmers here in Arlingham, Gloucestershire.

Although that felt like a big milestone we are in fact the ‘youngest’ of the three farms with Nethercott in Devon clocking up 40 years and Treginnis in Pembrokeshire 30. With each farm welcoming 1,000 inner-city primary school children every year the mathematicians amongst you can work out how many children’s lives have been touched or changed since Sir Michael and Lady Clare Morpurgo founded the charity back in 1976.

Having both worked as teachers, the Morpurgos realised that for many children their knowledge of rural life, farming and where their food came from was based mainly on images seen on TV or films. They felt immersion in rural life and learning by doing real, hands-on tasks, would be beneficial for so many children, especially those growing up in inner-city and urban areas, with limited experience of the world beyond their immediate environment.

Over 40 years later many children are still disconnected from the countryside and still rely on screens to gain information about food and farming so a week on an FFCC farm is as relevant as ever and can be life-changing.

The children come in groups of 30 to 36, with their teachers, and arrive with their wellies on a Friday afternoon for a seven day stay. They are settled into our beautiful, moated, Elizabethan manor house then are issued with overalls and waterproofs and from Friday evening they are outside on farm jobs. Their day on the farm starts before breakfast with housework, morning feeding, collecting eggs and letting out the chickens. After a hearty cooked breakfast they are back outside mucking out stables, feeding calves, forking silage or working in the kitchen gardens and orchards.

After more delicious home cooking for lunch, afternoon jobs can include pig weighing, moving and sorting sheep, bedding out, fruit juicing, sowing, planting, weeding and harvesting in the garden, laying paths, moving firewood, digging thistles … if it needs doing we find a way to involve the children.

Finally after tea it’s evening jobs – collecting eggs, shutting in the poultry, feeding, checking the lambing shed, and of course over the winter these jobs involve being outside away from streetlights, a chance to enjoy the night sky.

For children who may never have worn wellies, never met a farm ani-
mal face to face let alone being asked to go in with a bucket to feed them, never run in a muddy field, the first few days can be quite a shock. But I’m always amazed by how quickly they adapt, gain confidence and by the second half of the week they really do become proficient farmers. And all the while they are busy ‘doing’; these 8 to 11 year-olds just soak up knowledge, farming facts, names of breeds, life cycles and new vocabulary as well as getting fitter, more co-ordinated and most importantly learning to work as a team.

Alongside the routine farming the children go on a long muddy walk, we take them bird-watching, bee-keeping in the summer and on a gamekeeper walk in the winter. They all get a chance to cook their own dinner using farm produce and on their last full day they spend the afternoon in our ‘Woodland area’ building dens, making willow head-dresses, weaving with wool from our sheep, making clay creatures and baking bread in the outdoor pizza oven. And we finish with stories from the farm around the campfire while we enjoy the bread rolls washed down with our home-pressed apple juice from our historic orchards.

We operate all year round, during school term time and every week we see the enormous benefits to these children. For some it’s the fresh air and exercise, for some it’s the home made, home reared, home cooked – and totally delicious – meals. For some it’s respite from stressful situations at home or academic pressures at school and for some it is the routine that they often lack in their home lives. All of them benefit from being immersed in a beautiful location and the natural world, so many comment on the peace and quiet, the fresh air, the views and the friendliness of people they meet. And for so many it’s the huge boost to their self-confidence when they are trusted with real jobs, caring for the animals and that sense of satisfaction that comes with completing a job well done.

FFCC has a Head Office in Exeter where a small team of fundraisers raise the money which allows us to subsidise every child by 55% of the true cost of a week on the farms, and for those most in need there is extra help available. The farms are all stunning, listed buildings with repair bills to match…and at a time when school funding is being squeezed more schools are asking for extra help with funding the trip. However with the many pressures on children, and as they spend more and more time looking at life through a screen, the benefits of a week doing real farming on a real farm is as important or maybe even more important than it was 20, 30 or 40 years ago.

For more information go to: farmsforcitychildren.org

photos: Heather Tarplee
cartoons: Farms for City Children
website
We are contacted several times a week by parents asking whether they are able to WWOOF with their children.

There are certainly plenty of great reasons for doing so.

They will learn about new places and people, about themselves and how to get on with life, about you, their family and their place in it.

They will discover more about their planet, organics and sustainable living (very important for the next generation to know).

It will make them more aware of their place in the cycle of life and generally more connected with the world around them.

They will explore new food, growing food and the enjoyment of eating food they gathered themselves, as well as learning about animal care and how to nurture.

They will make new friends, whether it be at the host’s, with the neighbours or at a BBQ, they will meet other kids at every turn. If you are visiting from overseas, they will experience another culture and traditions too.

As with any WWOOFing adventure – they will gather great memories along the way. It may be that your children have never planted a tree, collected eggs or milked a cow. You never know what opportunities will fall in their laps.

Even if you are WWOOFing in your home country your family will have the opportunity to experience a different way of life.

What better way to build tolerance and understanding amongst the younger generation than by showing them that we are all human underneath our differences?

That said it is important to remember that WWOOFing isn’t a holiday and wasn’t originally conceived with children in mind.

If you are going to have a positive experience and your host is going to benefit too, there are a few things to think about before you set off.

Listed below are our top tips for WWOOFing with kids, compiled from information sent to us from members past and present who have WWOOFed with, or hosted little ones.

top tips
1. Is your child ready for this? How will they cope with new places and people or sleeping in a strange bed? How will they react to moving on, and saying goodbye to dear new friends and family? If your child is not good with change then you may need to put off WWOOFing until they are at a stage where they can enjoy the experience.

2. WWOOFing is do-able with children of all ages – but will need extra planning and forethought if they are very young. Might their crying keep your host awake at night? Would it be best to wait until your son is potty trained? Is the host happy for you to liquidize everything?

3. Start small if you’re not sure whether this is going to work for you. Try WWOOFing locally for a weekend first. Work with your kids on things before your departure; change their nap times sometimes to try to make them flexible, get them trying new foods – and making sure they smile!

4. Choose the right host. About a third of our hosts say they welcome children. You can use ‘WWOOFing with children’ as a filter on our database. Look for families who have children of their own, ideally around the same age as yours. That way you’ll immediately have something in common (but don’t necessarily expect your offspring to like each other and be prepared for some upset around being supervised by new adults!). Think too about the kinds of experiences you want your children to have; animal care, planting, harvesting, cheese making?

5. Discuss as much as you can with your host before you arrive. This way there will be less chance of misunderstandings and disappointments around your stay.

Let them know you are WWOOFing with kids. Tell them the number of children you will have in tow and their ages. Check that this is suitable for the host. It may be that at certain times of year hosts are too busy, too full, or it simply might not be appropriate to have children
around whilst they build a new barn or put up a polytunnel.

Make sure you flag any special dietary requirements or allergies that your family may have; if your child is terribly allergic to cats or horses then a farm with those animals is probably not suitable.

Do ask about the accommodation arrangements. Will you be sharing with other WWOOFers? Is the accommodation some distance from where tasks will be done?

Other questions to ask include...

What hours are you expected to help and what type of activities will you be doing?

What is there to do during your time off or on rainy days?

How does the host normally integrate WWOOFing families into their home and daily life?

6. Remember WWOOF is about a fair exchange. Our guidelines suggest each adult is expected to help for 4-6 hours per day in return for food and accommodation. Childcare distractions can make it difficult to always stick to this and the host will have your kids to feed too. So, you need to work out an arrangement that suits both parties.

Some compromises might include...

Providing food for your children during your stay, or one meal a day for your family.

Splitting shifts if there are two adults in your group – or one could do a longer day while the other looks after the kids.

Minding your host’s children so that your host can get on with work.

Doing a little extra around meal preparation and clean up and keeping the house tidy for your host.

Any of these can help ensure that you don’t become an added burden to your host.

Discuss this before you arrive at the host to make sure that everyone is happy with the arrangements you’ve agreed.

7. Once you are at the farm it will be important to set limits for your child. Remember that these are working farms. Large animals, machines, and tools are a part of everyday life.

Most importantly let your kids know where it is safe to play, and any ‘out of bounds’ area. Agree these with your host.

When is it ok (or necessary) to call you away from your tasks? Children need to be aware that WWOOFing is about an exchange and that you and your host have things to get on with during the day.

Let your kids know who to go to for help, or advice, food or water. Remind them that they are guests and need to be respectful of the host’s property.

Do not expect your children to be looked after by the host or other WWOOFers unless previously arranged.

8. Can they join in? This is a critical question to ask your host. WWOOFing works best when your children are of an age where they can get involved and want to do so.

If you have teenagers accompanying you, do be clear with them about the terms of their stay and get them engaged as much as you can. Often young people can be the inspiration for a trip but if they are not on board with the idea, do consider whether the timing is right. A sulky adolescent can spoil WWOOFing for everyone involved.

For younger ones who are independent but not yet able to join in, try making a base camp for them to hang out in when you are doing something for your host.

9. Be mindful of your host family’s space. It is important for every family to have a little time to themselves each day, please respect this and give your hosts (and yourselves) the space and time-out they require.

10. Agree a ‘review time’ after a week. With all WWOOFing, but especially with children, it is a good idea to have an official trial period with your host. That way if things are not working out you can say farewell and no feelings are hurt.

11. Have a back-up plan. Sometimes things just don’t work out as planned. If your children feel uncomfortable or unsafe it is best to gently let your host know that you need to move on. Be sure to communicate with WWOOF UK if you think there is an issue that may affect other WWOOFers too.

12. Most importantly RELAX and ENJOY the experience. Remember that all these things will shape your child for their future.

If you have WWOOFed with children or hosted WWOOFing families and would like to share your experiences, ideas or photos then we would love to hear from you using editor@wwoof.org.uk.
Female, late 40s, permaculturist, grower/gardener and tutor, looking for a nice man of similar age to join me on life’s adventures. I am passionate about nature, sustainability and building community, love crafting, reading, cycling and socialising with my friends. Do get in touch! femalegrower69@gmail.com

Assistant grower wanted at Primrose, a thriving, organic, no-dig market garden near Hay-on-Wye, from April till October 2019. Food, accommodation, £50/week and a good learning environment. Opportunity to take on the lease for 2020. Drivers licence desirable. Email: primrosemarketgarden@gmail.com, Glenn: 07891756358, Tamsin: 07427041939

A children’s author with more than 50 published titles and a founder of a charitable publisher wants to rent a farmhouse/cottage on a working farm for at least a year while writing a series of books. Your farm will become a setting for the stories, be mentioned in the titles and in promotional literature. Contact: julie@cleverfoxpress.com.

The Gaia Foundation Seed Sovereignty programme is looking to connect with growers interested in training in seed production with a view to sell or swap seed their wider community. Would also like to speak to farmers interested in growing ‘heritage’ grains. Contact: katie@gaianet.org

New courses at Karuna Insight Design, beautiful established 18-acre Forest Garden project in Shropshire: Grow your own plants: June 29-30, Forest Gardening: July 13-14, Permaculture intro: July 20-21, Living in community: August 24-25, Vegan Permaculture: August 31-September 1. You can WWOOF before or after a course. Contact 01694-751374, julie@cleverfoxpress.com, merav66@hotmail.com, karuna.org.uk, Karuna insight design on Facebook

Enjoying your WWOOFing or hosting? Don’t forget to link to our website when you post about your adventures on social media. wwoof.org.uk

WWOOF UK, established almost 50 years ago, is a registered charity.

Would you consider leaving us a legacy in your will?

Please contact info@wwoof.org.uk for more information.

Thanks.