



# Novel Ways To Provide For Your Community

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For more information please contact :  
Helen.Holmes@manchester.ac.uk or  
visit [www.makersmakedoandmend.org](http://www.makersmakedoandmend.org)

# MAKERS MAKE DO & MEND

**Novel ways to provide  
for your community**

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## Acknowledgements

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By Dr Helen Holmes

## Foreword

By Jen Gale

I was honoured and delighted to have been asked by Helen to deliver the keynote speech at the fabulous Make do and Mend Expo and to write the foreword for this accompanying booklet. It's been so exciting to see an event like this happening, and such a great opportunity to learn more about how we can tackle some of the huge challenges we face as a society through more effective and efficient use of existing resources.

My own experience of Making Do and Mending began back in September of 2012 when I decided that we were going to spend a year buying nothing new. Our sons were both under four at the time, and I remember feeling pretty shocked at how the eldest already seemed tuned into this desire for 'stuff' and was constantly demanding new things whenever we ventured to the shops. It got me thinking about all the stuff we already had, all the stuff that was crammed into the shops, and whether we really needed anymore new stuff at all. I decided, rather naively, that it would be a 'fun challenge' to see if we could spend a year buying nothing new, and started a blog called My Make Do and Mend Year to document it. I am ashamed to admit it now, but up until that point, although I could sew, I had never even so much as attempted to replace a button in terms of mending things, but that year changed all that!

I learned how to not only sew on missing buttons, but also to patch endless holes in the knees of small boy's trousers and to darn socks. My husband managed to resurrect the washing machine, the toaster, and the microwave, and we learned that maybe things aren't as 'disposable' as the manufacturers and retailers might want us to believe.

What started out as this slightly naïve 'fun challenge' totally changed my life. I not only learned all the practical skills above, but I also for the first time really confronted the impact of our modern throwaway society on the planet and the people around us. Here in the UK, we use 2.4 planets worth of resources every year. No-one needs me to tell them that we have only one planet.

We are rapidly running out of resources, and that is already starting to impact on the most





vulnerable members of our global society.

One of the many reasons I'm so delighted to see this event take place and to be involved in this best practice booklet, is that it is looking at Making Do and Mending from a whole different perspective. My experiences have all been on a very individual level - making changes to our own lifestyle, and inspiring other individuals and families to make changes to theirs. But there are so many amazing organisations out there, like the guys at Stitched Up, and the team behind The Real Junk Food Project, doing brilliant and creative things, that show us how making better use of the resources we

already have is a fabulous way to create a fairer and more sustainable society.

They are creating models that can help to change the way we consume, and tackling issues around over-consumption and waste in engaging and creative ways, re-skilling a whole generation and equipping them for the challenges that lie ahead. We need more organisations like this, and we need more organisations thinking about how they can make the best use of resources, so that there is enough for everyone.

Learning to Make Do and Mend has changed my world, and I am excited to see the opportunities that arise as a result of this event and booklet, to help more organisations embrace Making Do and Mending, and embrace new thrifty practices that will create meaningful change in the wider world.



## Introduction

By Dr Helen Holmes

### Welcome to 'Novel ways to provide for your community'!

This guide was produced as part of a one day event called The Make do and Mend Expo. Inside you will find entries from all of the organisations who took part, offering useful advice and information about setting up third sector provisioning organisations.

From food groups to pay-as-you-fee cafes, to sustainable fashion workshops, to community growing projects, to general sources of advice – this guide is aimed at anyone wanting to help their community and provide resources in a sustainable way.

### The Makers, Make do and Mend Project

The Expo is the culmination of two years academic work exploring thrift and how the practices of being thrifty –making do and mending – operate during austere times.

Over the course of the project I have interviewed numerous households about how they are thrifty, and have had the



pleasure of working with several third sector organisations about their role in contemporary forms of thrift. The latter has introduced me to a whole new world of thrifty activities and a plethora of volunteer-led endeavours driven to helping the communities in which they reside.

A key conclusion from the study is that third sector community-based organisations are a fundamental building block to creating community resilience during times of economic crisis. Yet they are so often overlooked.

For more information please visit: [www.makersmakedoandmend.org](http://www.makersmakedoandmend.org)

### The Make do and Mend Expo

The Expo brought together all of these organisations to promote the excellent work which they do, and to showcase the novel and alternative ways they provide for their communities. Each of these organisations challenges social

## introduction cont...

inequalities, particularly poverty and social isolation, whilst also being as environmentally sustainable as they can – reducing, re-using, and recycling at every opportunity.

Furthermore, a huge part of what they do, and a benefit which is so often overlooked, is to provide support for marginalised and vulnerable groups. Accessible to anyone, these organisations provide the spaces and settings for people to come together, to chat and to socialise – without prejudice, judgement or need for referral. In doing so, they quietly build confidence and resilience in their service users and members; providing people with support networks and in many instances, skillsets, to take forward.

This guide only scratches the surface of the numerous organisations and grassroots collectives working tirelessly to support their communities around the UK; the unsung heroes tackling the effects of neoliberal austerity policies.

### Taking the guide forward

If this guide does anything, I would like it to motivate others to think about the differing

ways they can provision resources within their communities.

This is not just about tackling or responding to neoliberal austerity measures (indeed it is argued that such responses perpetuate political problems by filling the welfare gap austerity measures create), but it is also about thinking and acting more sustainably – joining up with others to make the best use of the resources we have – sharing, circulating, re-using. And, fundamentally, it is about seeing the bigger picture – by providing material resources what else can be provisioned? Support, advice, skills, hope?

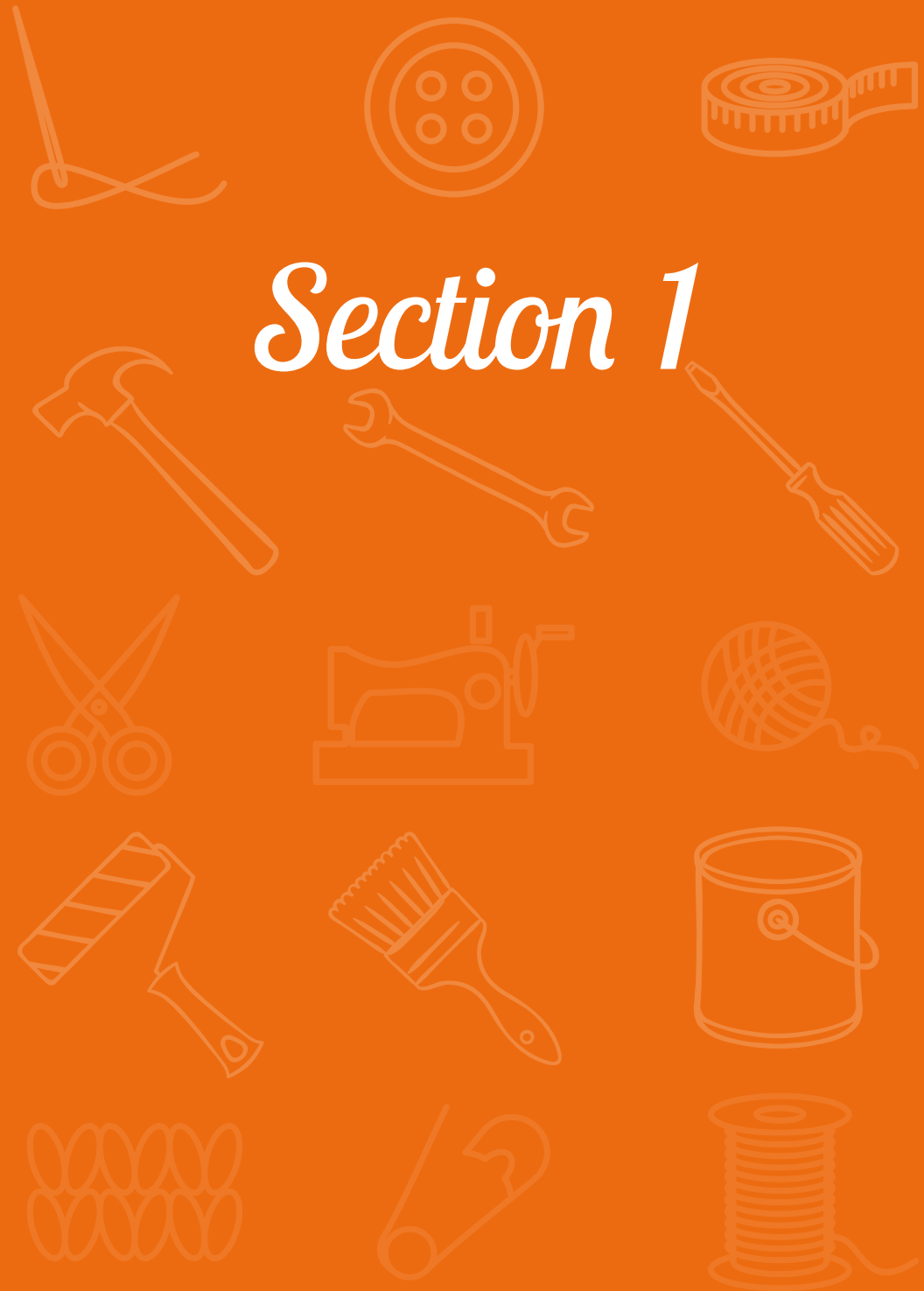
### I want to hear from you....

I want to hear from any other third sector provisioning organisations interested in promoting the work which they do and providing best practice advice to others.

If you are such an organisation, or you become one following the advice in this guide (or if you have any comments), then please drop me an email at:

**Helen.Holmes@manchester.ac.uk.**

# Section 1



## Financial Support



### Name of organisation:

First Choice Credit Union, Rossendale

### Name of contributor and position in organisation:

Amanda Robertson, Committee Member

### Website or contact details

Tel. 01706 215082

For First Choice Credit Union (covering Rossendale, Bury North, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Preston):

Website: <https://www.firstchoicecu.net/>

To find your local credit union: [findyourcreditunion.co.uk](http://findyourcreditunion.co.uk)

### What is a credit union?

Credit unions are a non-profit making alternative to banks and building societies. Run by members for members, these money co-operatives offer a place to save money, or borrow from pooled deposits at low interest rates. Furthermore, as they are only small they are often very friendly and much more likely to provide a bespoke and tailored service to their members! Most also pay a dividend (a yearly pay out) to their members based on how well the credit union does in a particularly year – although this is not guaranteed.

### Who can join?

Credit unions are formed around a 'common bond,' so for example living or working in the same place, or working for the same company. Most of the North-West now has access to a credit union, be that one in their local community or through their workplace.

### How do I become a member?

You need to contact your local credit union who will tell you about their application procedure.

This normally requires filling out an application form and providing the following information:

- National Insurance number
- At least one form of identification (passport, driving licence etc).
- An address for any correspondence

There is a small charge for opening an account (approximately £2\*), and to be a shareholder you will need to have at least £5\* in your account throughout the course of the financial year. There are also small yearly fees of approximately £3\* which you pay to keep your account.

\*All figures may vary depending on the credit union.

### What can a credit union offer third sector and community organisations?

- They can offer a place to save their money which gives them a bespoke service and no eye rolling at taking small change!
- It does not matter how little you put in. However, you can only save a maximum of £15k.
- By saving your money in a credit union you are helping your local community and ensuring that the credit unions and its services are available to other members of the community.
- You may also be eligible for a loan if your organisation needs one.

### What can a credit union offer service users /members of organisations?

As said, there's no prejudice! Saving small amounts is absolutely fine.

Often our loan rates are better than high street bank interest rates. This is because we can tailor a loan to a member's personal circumstances. It is the credit union committee who make decisions about who qualifies for a loan – not an algorithm on a website! We base our decisions upon you, and your ability to pay the loan back. There are also no early repayment charges with our loans.

As a member you are also a shareholder, so you say what happens to the credit union. We have yearly AGMs (Annual General Meeting) to which all members are invited to and get have their say.

We also offer children's account options to encourage saving at an early age.

## Local Advice



### Name of organisation:

Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn

### Name and position in organisation of contributor:

Mel Whitehead – Rossendale Crisis Support Project Coordinator

### Contact details:

<http://www.rossendalecab.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0300 456 2552

Address: Stubbylee Hall, Stubbylee Lane, Bacup, OL13 0DE  
New Era Centre, Paradise Street, Accrington, BB5 1PB

### Who are Citizen's Advice?

Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn are part of a network of over 300 independent local charities across England and Wales.

Each local Citizens Advice charity is a member of National Citizens Advice, together we form the Citizens Advice service and have helped over 2.7 million people face-to-face, over the phone, by email and webchat in 2015-16.

### What do Citizen's Advice do?

Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to people about the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

- We are a voice for our clients and consumers on the issues that matter to them.
- We value diversity, champion equality and challenge discrimination.
- We're here for everyone.
- We work holistically, meaning that; if someone lost their income due to being unfairly dismissed, we would offer help with the money issues as well as with the unfair dismissal

### Who do Citizen's Advice help?

We are here to provide advice to anyone living or working in Rossendale and Hyndburn. In 2015-2016 we provided information and advice to 4,000 people on 16,000 different issues. Half of the people we help have a disability or long term health issue and 80% of these report mental health issues

We are always looking for opportunities to work in partnership with other third sector organisations to reach more people, improve access to our services and promote preventative advice and support. In Rossendale through working with partner organisations we are able to offer outreach at 8 different venues.

### What is the role of volunteers? How many do you have? How do people get involved?

Volunteers are vital to our work at Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn. Without the valuable work of our volunteers we would not be able to provide information and advice to so many people. At present we have 30 volunteers. There are a wide range of roles volunteers can be involved with Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn ranging from gateway assessor, adviser, social media, research and campaigning and becoming a trustee. To find out more on how to become involved complete our online form at:

<http://www.rossendalecab.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/>

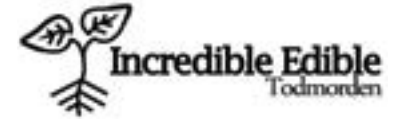
### Anything else?:

We are independently funded through trusts and grants and do not receive funding from the government. Our income stream is diverse and we pride ourselves on delivering successful projects to meet the needs of the community. We regularly review our services to ensure that we continue to meet changes in local needs. The most challenging aspects we now face is meeting increased demand when resources are being squeezed and the increasingly challenging funding environment. Also, cuts in local services and the impact of welfare reform means that the people we are helping face increased adversity and we are focused on reducing hardship and building resilience, especially for those most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society.



# Section 2

## Profile



1. **Name of organisation:**  
Incredible Edible Todmorden
2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor:**  
Mary Clear, Chairperson
3. **Contact details:**  
<https://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk>
4. **Year when organisation was established:**  
2008
5. **Geographical reach:**  
Todmorden and the world!
6. **Main aims of the organisation:**
  - Radical community building
  - Growing food in public places
  - Sharing skills and growing networks
7. **What does the organisation do?**  
We are passionate people working together for a world where all share responsibility for the future wellbeing of our planet and ourselves.  
  
We aim to create a stronger kinder community:
  - working together
  - learning – from field to classroom to kitchen
  - supporting local business
  - all with no paid staff, no buildings, no public funding: radical community building in action.
  - membership: If you eat you're in.

8. **Who does the organisation help?**

Our members – which can be anyone

9. **How often do you meet?**

Twice a month

10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation**

- Keep meetings short
- Eat cake
- Good coffee
- Be positive and kind
- A few good people can do anything

11. **Number of volunteers required**

Small is beautiful

12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**

Wash vegetables

13. **Any funding required?**

We are not prescriptive

14. **Anything else?**

- Go to our website and copy anything you like
- Email us @ [mary@incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk](mailto:mary@incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk)



## Profile



1. **Name of organisation:**

Positive Start Food Group

2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor:**

Kate Crane, Founding Member

3. **Contact details:**

<https://www.facebook.com/positivestart.org.uk/>

4. **Year when organisation was established:**

2016

5. **Geographical reach:**

Rosendale, Lancashire

6. **Main aims of the organisation**

- To alleviate food poverty
- To divert food waste/surplus from landfill and ensure it is eaten
- To encourage household budgeting

7. **What does the organisation do?**

The organisation meets once a week in a local community building where we distribute surplus food from a number of sources to people who want/need it for a small donation. Originally a membership group it is now open to anyone.

We are part of a wider charity called Positive Start and we use their premises for our weekly food group which runs every Friday from 9.30-12. There is a suggested donation of £3.50 per week but any amount, or none, is accepted. No one is turned away and no one is means tested. Visitors take around two large bags of food each week valued at approximately £30. Our food comes from two sources: Fareshare where we pay £100 a month for 25 pallets of food, and also our local Tesco who give us their surplus food every Thursday

night, organised through the Foodcloud initiative. We offer a range of foods – fresh, ambient and frozen foods so our members get a good range.

A key part of the group is the social element and everyone is invited to stay for tea/coffee and toast when we meet. So there is normally a very lively atmosphere – with people choosing their food and also having a chat whilst they are there!

8. **Who does the organisation help?**

It helps anyone that is in financial crisis, that needs help with the cost of food, and it also helps alleviate landfill. It helps with household budgeting and it's helping supermarkets to reduce their waste.

We are open to anyone – you don't have to be on benefits to come along. This means that our reach is far wider and our membership base diverse

9. **How often do you meet?**

We meet once a week, where the food is distributed and everyone has a coffee and a chat.

10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation:**

- Keep meetings short
- When working with someone like Fareshare you have to make sure you adhere to their guidelines.
- Appropriate space for food storage is one of the most important things as often you are storing ambient food, which can be stored for several weeks. So you need to store it somewhere clean, dry and out of the way, and if you are storing fresh or frozen food you will obviously need fridges and freezers with thermometers.
- Appropriate space for people to sit and be able to talk and enjoy the social aspect of the group without feeling cramped in.
- Transport is required to collect the food when it is available and this is something which often requires volunteers help and also some funding to pay for petrol. For instance the Foodcloud collections are always in the evening and so that requires some co-ordination and you obviously cannot have the same person going out at 9pm each time to collect that delivery. So we have a rota for that.

11. **Number of volunteers required:**

We have approximately 15 -20 volunteers with a core group of 10.

12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**

- We need to have a minimum of Level 2 Food and Hygiene Certificate and some of us have safeguarding qualifications as well.
- Those running the group are DBS checked and have First Aid qualifications.
- We have public liability insurance and we have had a health and safety risk assessment on the premises.
- It's also worth considering that occasionally we have food to distribute that has past its best before date. So it is vital the right messages regarding what to do with that food are passed on to the people collecting and using the food. Often Fareshare will give an extension note to out-of-date food, which covers that food and advises on what needs to happen with it.
- We also stick to the Fareshare rules. We do not sell food we just ask for a donation towards the costs of getting the food and running the group.

13. **Any funding required?**

We started with nothing and it was the good will of our volunteers which got us off the ground and kept us running – so using their own petrol to collect food, giving up their time. Since then we have obtained some funding and generous donations which have enabled us to continue running the group.

14. **Anything else?**

- We worked really closely with Fareshare when we set the group up to make sure we were doing the right thing by the organisation.
- Value your volunteers.
- Be led by the need – sometimes we have found that our members' needs are more than what we provide and we have done what we can to help in other ways. For example, finding furniture, cooking equipment and appliances.



## Profile



1. **Name of organisation:**  
The Real Junk Food Project Manchester
2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor:**  
Corin Bell - Director
3. **Contact details:**  
corin@realjunkfoodmanchester.co.uk 07912 509 665  
[www.realjunkfoodmanchester.co.uk](http://www.realjunkfoodmanchester.co.uk)
4. **Year when organisation was established:**  
May 2014
5. **Geographical reach:**  
City wide
6. **Main aims of the organisation**  
To reduce food waste, provide access to good food for all, and tackle social isolation.
7. **What does the organisation do?**  
We intercept food that would otherwise go to waste, cook it into meals and serve them to anyone and everyone on a pay-as-you-feel basis. We also provide volunteering and employment training opportunities for people who would otherwise struggle to find work.
8. **Who does the organisation help?**  
We actively refuse to narrow the focus of the project in order to include everyone in mainstream community and social life. The main beneficiaries of the project are adults and children who would otherwise struggle to access enough food or suffer social exclusion

9. **How often do you meet?**  
We currently deliver 3 events per week, and will be opening a full time restaurant in July 2017.
10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation**
  - Understand the legality of the food sector.
  - Innovative means it's never been done before, don't be afraid to be questioned or be contentious.
  - Ask for help – we rely on a number of different professional volunteers to advise us on issues including great service, finance, property, etc
11. **Number of volunteers required**  
Different for different events, I estimate we need around 10 volunteers per week (4 hours each)
12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**  
LOTS! Food safety law, licensing issues, risk assessment and safety at work considerations, etc
13. **Any funding required?**  
We aim for the project to generate its own income, but we have sought funding for set up costs and to help us transition towards being a financially sustainable business.





## Profile



1. **Name of organisation:**  
Recycling Lives - FareShare Lancashire & Cumbria
2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor:**  
Jeff Green, Food Redistribution Manager
3. **Contact details:**  
[www.recyclinglives.com/our-activities/food-redistribution/](http://www.recyclinglives.com/our-activities/food-redistribution/)
4. **Year when organisation was established:**  
2015
5. **Geographical reach:**  
City wide
6. **Main aims of the organisation**  
To redistribute surplus food products from suppliers and supermarkets to charities and community groups working with vulnerable and disadvantaged groups – thereby reducing food waste and tackling food poverty
7. **What does the organisation do?**  
**Environmental** – we prevent surplus food from becoming waste food.  
**Social** – we redistribute food to around 100 organisations across the region, which work with vulnerable groups.  
**People** – our work involves training and work experience for a wide variety of people; from volunteering opportunities for a range of groups including ex-offenders, ex-armed forces and those with mental health issues, to internships for overseas students.

8. **Who does the organisation help?**  
We distribute food to a wide range of charities and community groups, including food banks, breakfast clubs, residential homes, schools, hospices, community centres, homeless centres and youth organisations.

A community café worker said...

*"We couldn't do all that we do without FareShare.."*

A worker at a homeless charity said...

*"FareShare has had a big impact on what we do"*

A parent facing financial difficulty said...

*"If we didn't have FareShare, we wouldn't be able to have a nice meal together."*



## Profile



1. **Name of organisation:**  
Stitched Up Co-operative Ltd

2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor:**  
Bryony Moore, Director and Co-founder

3. **Contact details:**  
<https://stitchedup.coop/>

4. **Year when organisation was established:**  
2012

5. **Geographical reach:**  
Greater Manchester

6. **Main aims of the organisation**  
To inspire and encourage people to dress in more creative and sustainable ways. Our manifesto:

- **We love** our planet and believe we should treat it with respect.
- **We support** garment workers worldwide in their quest for fair wages.
- **We inspire** a more creative, sustainable and individual approach to clothing.
- **We prove** that sustainable clothing is for everyone, without compromising on style.
- **We are** passionate about recycling, upcycling, reuse and reducing waste.
- **We are** a community that has fun sharing new skills and ideas, and we want you to join in!

Workshops in schools  
Cheetham Hill Primary.

*"It was a great workshop. The children really enjoyed it, they loved using the needles to create something for themselves, and they actually had something to take away with them at the end of the workshop which they were really proud of. Would definitely recommend."*

7. **What does the organisation do?**  
We are a grassroots collective sharing skills, resources and education to encourage people to dress more creatively and sustainably. This includes offering clothes making, mending and upcycling workshops, a monthly repair café and clothes swap, and a range of educational events, including film screenings and talks. We have our own premises and also an online haberdashery selling 100% reclaimed material.
8. **Who does the organisation help?**  
At our premises in Chorlton, we mainly help adults living in the local area interested in our skills workshops and events. This summer we're launching our new Home Education Group and Summer Club for local young people. We also travel around Greater Manchester to run a range of workshops for schools, community centres, charities, local authorities and interested organisations, working with a wide variety of people to teach making and mending skills, whilst also building confidence and capability
9. **How often do you meet?**  
Our premises are open to the public two days a week – **Weds 12pm – 7pm & Sat 12pm – 5pm.**  
We have 1-2 events on every week at our premises, plus our monthly clothes swaps and repair cafes. Please see our website for more information.

Clothes swap visitor said...

*"This is like no other clothes swap I've been too, it's like shopping in a really nice shop!"*



10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation**

- Get business advice from the start, especially if you have no previous experience. We found the Co-op Business Consultants very useful in deciding what type of organisation we should become.
- Don't underestimate the time it may take to find suitable premises to operate from! Also, test out your services or offering and get feedback from your customers before you commit to a commercial lease.
- Ensure you set clear objectives and aims for your organisation which your team is fully committed to.



11. **Number of volunteers required**

We have 10 regular volunteers on our books who help us at our premises when we are open to the public. We have at least 5 volunteers at the clothes swap events and around 15 volunteers who help out at Manchester Repair Café.

12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**

We have a risk assessment for our activities and ensure that people are aware of the minor health risks associated with our activities (such as using scissors, pins etc). We have public liability insurance which covers all activities at our premises or elsewhere. We also have first aid training.

13. **Any funding required?**

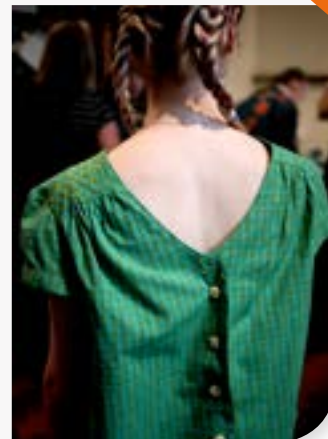
We received a start-up grant from our local authority and have sought project funding from other sources over the years, but we have never received core funding and are currently almost 100% self-funded.

14. **Anything else?**

Take a chance! If you don't do it no one else will!

Manchester Repair Cafe visitor 1:  
*"What an excellent session. Very friendly, great volunteers. Will share skills next time"*

Manchester Repair Cafe visitor 2:  
*"Great music, great people, great idea."*



**Profile**



1. **Name of organisation:**  
Stubblelee Community Greenhouses and East Lancashire Recovery College
2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor:**  
Souta Van Wick Operations Manager Stubblelee Community Greenhouses and Ben Millward, Principal East Lancashire Recovery College.
3. **Contact details:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/StubbleleeCommunityGreenhouses/>
4. **Year when organisation was established:**  
2004
5. **Geographical reach:**  
Across East Lancashire
6. **Main aims of the organisation**
  - To make a major community-led impact on people's wellbeing and create opportunities to make their lives better
  - To be sustainable – recycling, reclaiming and reusing wherever possible.
7. **What does the organisation do?**  
We provide an open access, inclusive environment which facilitates people's wellbeing and recovery through a broad range of activities and opportunities to learn new skills and re-identify with skills they may have lost. Our activities focus on creativity and include traditional skills such as blacksmithing and green woodwork; organic gardening; and various arts and crafts. We also soon will have our own on-site, self-sustaining cafe, which will serve the produce which we grow within our community cinema / wellbeing hub and artisan workspace hub. These activities alongside education and social support enable people to reclaim their identity and role following periods of illness or life changing circumstances / events.

8. **Who does the organisation help?**

We are open to everyone, but with a focus on targeting people in social isolation or recovering from physical and mental ill health. Within the college setting we deliver courses that help individuals understand and control their symptoms. Carers and front line staff have a better understanding of illness and in some way future proof society through an inclusive model which destigmatises and demystifies illness. In the future, as our organisation expands, we would like to support families more. We also offer a wide range of volunteer positions, work experience and training opportunities.

9. **How often do you meet?**

We are open 5 days a week (soon to increase to 7 days) 10am -4pm every day.

10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation**

- You need to nurture the ability to work in partnership with other organisations
- Don't work with exclusive groups – be open to all
- Be clear about your mission statement and stick to it
- Make sure you target and apply for relevant funding
- Respond to need and embrace all ideas
- Everyone has a skill – facilitate and incorporate them into your work
- You have to change to stand still
- Accept that evolution is often better than revolution within organisations
- Understand that we are all part of the journey and that it's an honour to be invited in to share someone's journey for 500 yards
- Strive for sustainability and not to be reliant on funding

11. **Number of volunteers required**

We have a total of 167 volunteers at present though this number changes daily, with a core group of 30-40 who volunteer weekly.

Over 1,500 students have attended the Recovery College within its first 12 months.

We also have voluntary board members who have been through the project. Across all domains of the project we work with around 2,500 people a year.

12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**

- Ensure the relevant safeguarding
- We take a practical approach to the work we do and ensure that we cover all legal requirements through this. This involves an induction procedure where, following initial training, the individual takes responsibility for themselves within a structured framework of routine risk assessment
- Ensure confidentiality procedures are in place
- If required have a lone worker policy and an accident procedure
- Ensure that all the right qualifications are met – in our case this is Food and Hygiene certificates for those handling food, and first aid qualifications for core staff/volunteers.
- Make sure you have the correct public liability insurance, specifically for community activities.
- Ensure that risk assessments are in place for all activities, tools, machinery etc and that all equipment is regularly tested, serviced and PAT tested where appropriate.

13. **Any funding required?**

We have Big Lottery Funding Awards for All England which has been great, and have applied for BRICK funding and Lloyds TSB Transforming Lives.

Make sure the funding you apply for is relevant to your work.

All of our funding bids are now for expansion, as core elements of the charity are now financially self-sustaining.

14. **Anything else?**

The biggest reason we are able to work the way that we do is that we are embedded in our local community, have cultivated and maintain strong partnerships within the public, statutory and third sectors and we have an understanding of the journey we take and share.

**No dream is too big!**





## Profile



1. **Name of organisation:**  
3 VALLEY VEGANS
2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor**  
Hilary Wilson, Core group member and co-founder
3. **Contact details**  
[www.3valleyvegans.org.uk](http://www.3valleyvegans.org.uk)
4. **Year when organisation was established**  
2014
5. **Geographical reach**  
Based in Todmorden, West Yorkshire, but covers the Upper Calder Valley and stretches to the west to reach Burnley, Rochdale and Bacup.
6. **Main aims of the organisation**
  - To inform the general public about reasons for choosing a vegan diet and lifestyle.
  - To encourage and support those aspiring to a more compassionate lifestyle
  - To raise awareness of the cruelty inflicted on farmed animals and the environmental effects of intensive farming.
7. **What does the organisation do?**  
3 Valley Vegans promotes a vegan lifestyle by offering information through regular market stalls and tasting opportunities, monthly meetings, social events and cookery demonstrations.  
We support anyone who wants to reduce their meat intake and offer help and support through regular meetings, dietary advice and social media. We also offer guidance about living a lifestyle free of animal cruelty: for example, in terms of clothing, choosing toiletries and household products which are non-animal tested and contain no animal ingredient.

8. **Who does the organisation help?**  
Anyone who expresses an interest in learning about adopting a plant-based diet and living a vegan lifestyle. We regularly hold tasting opportunities and guidance on recipes and cooking.  
As a vegan organisation, we work to reduce the consumption of animal products, so saving animal lives, improving people's health and reducing our environmental impact. Veganism also contributes to the food justice movement, as animal agriculture uses land that could be used to feed the the world's hungry.
9. **How often do you meet?**  
We aim to meet once a month. Sometimes we hold more than 1 event per month. We held a Vegan Fair in Todmorden in February of this year and followed this up, throughout the month, with a social meeting in a pub with vegan food, a cookery evening ( demonstrating 6 different dishes ) and a meeting in a vegetarian restaurant. Over the Easter weekend this year, we held an information stall, had a walk with a picnic and a Pot Luck Supper at a member's home. We try to vary our meetings as much possible, in style, dates, venues etc in order to encourage a wide range of people to attend and to make all our events accessible to anyone. We have also held open discussion meetings, film shows, quizzes and food sampling evenings.
10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation**
  - We needed a body of people willing to give time and energy, and to be committed to our cause. As we have grown, our organising body has expanded; we now have a core group of 10, to include a minutes secretary, treasurer, chair and individuals with responsibility for the Website and social media. It is usual practice for one or two people to take responsibility to lead on chosen events.
  - Resources to help explain and promote our cause. We rely heavily on leaflets and posters given free of charge by the Vegan Society and Animal Aid, though we print and distribute recipes and shopping and eating guides collated by our members.
  - We found early on that we needed a gazebo, as we hold stalls at local fairs and events throughout the year.
  - Some cooking equipment is useful, as we offer free tasters of food, but also at times, sell food we cook on the spot, offering an alternative to animal based street food and allowing us the opportunity to raise some funds.
  - Social media and the internet help publicise our group, so we have members who take responsibility for the Website, our Facebook pages, our Tweets, our mailing list and a monthly Newsletter sent out to members.

- We send press releases to our local newspaper, which help to publicise our events and we also display posters around the area and distribute fliers.

11. **Number of volunteers required (if applicable)**

This varies from event to event. We usually rely on 1 member to plan and co-ordinate our walks. Information stalls need at least 2 people at any one time. Cookery demonstrations and workshops will ideally have a minimum of 4 people involved. Large events, like our Big Veggie Brunch, needed a team of 10.

12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**

We have 1 member with a Food Hygiene certificate and are in the process of offering to others. We have insurance cover to include PL. We have experience of completing risk assessment forms, when necessary.

13. **Any funding required?**

We rely largely on donations given at stalls and cookery events and on money raised when selling food on market stalls. We received a grant from the Vegetarian Society in 2016 and put on a 'Big Veggie Brunch' in the centre of Todmorden, where we gave free vegan breakfasts to the public. We also received a grant from The Vegan Approach, which helped us fund the Vegan Fair in February of this year. We have recently had a Town Council grant approved to finance a series of cookery demonstrations and workshops.

14. **Anything else?**

Almost all our experiences have been remarkably positive and very fulfilling and we hope to inspire others who might be thinking of setting-up a similar group. One challenge we have had has been in setting-up a community bank account and we'd be glad to hear of others' experiences.



## Profile



1. **Name of organisation**  
Todmorden Food Drop In
2. **Name and position in organisation of contributor**  
Janet Garner. Founder member and first lead
3. **Contact details:**  
**www.todfooddropin.org**
4. **Year when organisation was established:**  
2013
5. **Geographical reach:**  
Todmorden, Hebden Bridge and surrounding areas.
6. **Main aims of the organisation**
  - To provide 3 days food aid for people in crisis and whose financial situation is such that they cannot afford to buy food
  - To not means-test and have realistic criteria in place to assess need
  - To offer free hot refreshments when open
  - To provide a safe meeting place, respecting dignity
7. **What does the organisation do?**  
The Drop-In is open on a Saturday morning from 9:30am till 12pm and is run entirely by volunteers. All the food we receive is donated or bought with donated or grant money. People have choice over the food they receive and we do not pre-pack parcels. We offer advice and support, including signposting to other agencies. We collate information about the people needing access to the service for campaigning and to highlight the issues of poverty and deprivation in the area.
8. **Who does the organisation help?**  
Anyone who cannot afford to feed themselves or their family for whatever reason. We see between 85 – 100 individuals and families each week. We do not limit the

number of times a person can receive support. Unlike the majority of food banks, we ask for no proof of income or personal situation. We do not accept referrals or liaise with agencies. Each person is interviewed to ascertain reason for needing support. People are given enough food to last for a three day period and can have no more than two large bags of food.

#### 9. **How often do you meet?**

The Drop In is open once a week on a Saturday morning from 9.30 – 12 noon. There are monthly management meetings and separate meetings for volunteers. Activity is ongoing through the week on food collections, fundraising and preparation for the actual Saturday sessions.

#### 10. **Helpful tips for setting up a similar organisation**

- Have a clearly defined lead and chair supported by a formal management committee made up of people with actual jobs to do, not representatives of organisations. Key roles for a foodbank are volunteer coordinator, secretary treasurer, fundraiser, kitchen lead, mid-week packing manager, food collectors.
- The lead should understand that running a foodbank is roughly equivalent to a full-time job on a voluntary basis. Ours took 15 months to establish and over 2 years to be fully established, learning from mistakes.
- Don't underestimate the level of need. Within 5 weeks of opening we had leapt from 2 service users to 95.
- Establish financial security by setting up a monthly giving pledge scheme. Many people will give £5 per month for a well-run and publicised local scheme.
- Be clear about your ethos. We said from the start we would not means test and therefore would not be part of the established state system. We see means-testing as part of the oppression and humiliation of the poor. We found that many people gave to us financially because they agreed with this position.
- Establish links with Fareshares and Fairfields who distribute food that would otherwise go to landfill. Also establish links with local supermarkets, bakeries, food coops etc. who will donate food.
- Draw on the skills of volunteers by regular meetings. You will need many able bodied people to lift and carry heavy weights of food and also drivers.
- Establish a number of food donation points across your catchment area with clearly marked boxes so people can donate food. Include a poster with a list of required items - food and toiletries – so people know what to give. Make clear you cannot accept short-life or fresh foods.
- Have a good presentation prepared and be willing to speak to many groups of whatever size to explain what you are doing. This will bring in donations as well as opportunity to dispel myths about the "undeserving poor".

- Spend money on good leaflets which includes a perforated tear off monthly giving sheet on the back that people can take to their bank.
- Create a website and Facebook page that includes a direct link to a Local Giving site.
- Keep up a regular presence in the local press.

#### 11. **Number of volunteers required**

A minimum of 60 required to fulfil all the roles and allow people to do 1 or 2 shifts per month at the actual Drop In.

#### 12. **Any health and safety or legal considerations?**

We operate from a church building but are not part of the church. We are, however, covered by all of their insurances and protection policies. Any other organisations would need to have this in place.

#### 13. **Any funding required?**

Our food costs are £1300 per month and likely to rise with food prices increasing. Grant applications are a regular feature of our work plus the establishment of a monthly giving pledge scheme which we call our £5 pledge.

#### 14. **Anything else?**

We are often asked how we can afford to feed so many people without limiting the number of times they attend and without means-testing. By giving people complete choice concerning which food items they can have from what is available and limiting families to a maximum of 2 large bags of food regardless of family size, we have found there has been sufficient and we have never run out of supplies. Neither has anyone ever said they have not had enough. Our food bags are supplemented by fresh vegetables and bread when available from Fairfields Market in Manchester.

By not means testing we believe that we have created an open and welcoming environment for our service users who appreciate that they are being treated with respect and taken on trust. We have had very few difficulties and people do not take more than they need.

We do not allow people to come and visit the Food Drop In unless they need to use the service. This is to maintain dignity and confidentiality. We particularly do not allow politicians of any party to visit us as a means to publicity for themselves or their party. **What we need now is action!**