Local Foods Suffolk update

Welcome to our new project newsletter.

This quarterly newsletter will give anyone interested in local food in Suffolk a regular update on Suffolk ACRE's new community development project. Local Foods Suffolk aims to connect people with the growing, cooking and eating of local food by supporting the development of community food initiatives. We already have some fantastic news to share about projects up and running across the county. See **page two** for details of the work underway by some inspiring community groups...

But before you do, as this is our first newsletter we'd like to take the opportunity to introduce ourselves. If you haven't been in touch with us yet you might be wondering who the Local Foods Suffolk team is and what we do. Ask no more – read on to meet the team!

Meet the Local Foods Suffolk team!

Mik works half time for the project covering the coastal districts, Waveney and Suffolk Coastal. Mik also runs a smallholding in Badingham, and as such is our resident expert on livestock, advising on chicken and pig clubs. Mik is also our subject expert on allotments, and local fish.

Tim works in the west of the county, living in Depden near Bury St Edmunds. Tim spends half his time advising communities on lunch clubs, food hubs and training, and the rest running a smallholding and farm shop. As such, Tim can also advise producers and community food enterprises.

Kirsty lives in Ipswich but works in all of central Suffolk, covering Ipswich, Mid Suffolk and Babergh. Kirsty works full time on the project, primarily with community orchards, food cooperatives and Transition groups. Kirsty is our resident expert on Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and also maintains our Local Food Directory of producers.

Local Foods Suffolk

SUFFOLKACRE

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Local Foods Suffolk is a Suffolk ACRE project which runs until spring 2014. We aim to support communities in the production and enjoyment of local food.

Contact the project team:

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Write to us at our Ipswich office:

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Or find us on **Facebook**:

www.facebook.com/LocalFoodsSuffolk

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Local Foods Suffolk update

News from community food projects around the county...

Suffolk ACRE's new local food project team has already started supporting over two dozen projects in their first quarter, following a fantastic response from communities across the county since the project launched in September.

Projects range from allotment improvement projects, to new orchard planting schemes, a number of community gardens and even some involving community pig keeping! Many groups have sought funding from the project's capital grants pot to kick-start projects, whilst others have sought advice and mentoring to build their skills, knowledge and confidence.

Some projects are already starting to bring communities together, especially in the Suffolk Coastal district where allotment groups in Dennington and Saxmundham have met to share use of a community brushcutter funded by Suffolk ACRE. This has been used by both groups to create and maintain community gardens within allotment sites in their parishes.

Maidenhall Community Orchard's trees go in!

Two community groups, in South Ipswich and in Metfield in Mid Suffolk, have applied to the project for funding to plant community orchards, to produce fruit and provide social green spaces. The project has been able to fund shared tool sheds and help the groups source saplings from the Woodland Trust and Suffolk Traditional Orchards Group. These will be great multifunctional spaces for communities to use in years to come.

One of the more novel projects supported by the team is Ipswich Pig Club, a group of local residents in the North-East of Ipswich, who came together in September with a shared desire to start rearing their own pork in an ethical and environmentally beneficial way.

Ipswich Pig Club get to work building fencing, funded by Suffolk ACRE.

The group partnered with a local vegetable farmer who allowed use of her land for a pig keeping club to help prepare the ground for cultivation. Following a great deal of planning and fence-laying, with financial support and mentoring from Suffolk ACRE, the group welcomed two rare breed Large Black boars on to the land in November. Come February the pigs will become pork, when the group will learn new butchery skills.

Finally there has also been some interest in the cooking and eating of food through lunch and dinner clubs. Suffolk ACRE is soon to fund cooking equipment for Bungay's new 'Happy Mondays' dinner club, and has offered food hygiene training to volunteers from a small lunch club in central Ipswich needing a boost.

The project still has funding to allocate this year and seeks applications from any community groups in Suffolk wishing to start or develop local food projects. For advice or inspiration contact one of the Local Foods Suffolk project team.

We'll be bringing you more project news in the spring; until then happy growing, cooking and eating!

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