



Mission Statement

Loxley Valley Community Farm is a community smallholding which provides members with the opportunity to produce their own food, develop a more involved community and give something back to those in need.

Aims and Objectives

Our constitution details the following aims:

- Manage a local food co-operative as a consumer-led, not for profit social enterprise, that produces nutritious, safe and fairly priced food for its members who are drawn from Sheffield and the surrounding area.
- Engage with the local community to promote the benefits of locally produced sustainable food and foster a greater sense of community through mutually beneficial agriculture.
- To give a proportion of any surplus harvest to the poor and/or other voluntary, community or charitable groups.

Principals

Members of Loxley Valley Community Farm agree to abide by the following principals:

1. To establish a **not-for-profit** social enterprise in order for members to supplement their household food requirements.

Members agree to share the costs of any project they take part in and will not stand to gain financially from it. Any income from the sale of surplus produce will go back to the project to further its aims.

2. To develop the idea that **knowledge and labour can be given freely**

Non-members who take part in the project do so on a voluntary basis without reward. Similarly the group aims to help other groups or individuals with similar aims and will share knowledge without profiting.

3. To build a **community** where everyone feels they can participate and grow.

Community will be fostered through members working together on a co-operative basis and this will extend outside of the group as we actively engage with local people and businesses.



4. To be an **inclusive** group where members can participate regardless of physical ability or financial status.

Although all labour is considered voluntary, members agree to play an active role in the group and take part in work rotas. However, where disability prevents members from physical roles, contributions can be admin based. In addition as soon as possible the group will establish a fund in order to offer membership at reduced rates for those on lower incomes.

5. Present an **alternative model of agriculture** which has relevance to city dwellers.

Through membership of Loxley Valley Community Farm, consumers will become producers of the food they eat which will allow those in an urban environment to re-connect with the natural world.

Six Month Plan (June 2009 – December 2009)

In the first 6 months Loxley Valley Community Farm aims to:

- Establish a group of founder members who can steer the project
- Build a suitable infrastructure for rearing livestock
- Establish growing beds for vegetables and fruit
- Raise pigs and turkeys to slaughter for Christmas
- Plant vegetables for ongoing harvesting
- Start to build links with local community groups and businesses
- Develop a website to promote the group

In order to do this we will apply for grant funding as well as charge a membership fee. We will obtain Public Liability Insurance and will co-ordinate a rota so all members will share the responsibility of raising the animals and growing vegetables.

One Year Plan (June 2009 – June 2010)

Following the first growing period outlined above we aim to:

- Hold an open day where we will invite the local community to visit, have a go and if possible sample some of our produce (subject to the cost of Produce Insurance not being prohibitive)
- Gather feedback from the local community to allow them to have an input and manage their expectations
- Expand the project to enable more members to get involved
- Develop an ongoing horticultural and livestock plan to stagger yields
- Review local suppliers to negotiate best deals for inputs to the project
- Identify knowledge shortfalls and put in place a training plan to mitigate these
- Gain publicity and press coverage to promote the group's ideals and aims
- Farm in a way that promotes biodiversity

This will involve a detailed review of the first 6 months operation, refining the initial schedule and producing a gap analysis to enable us to achieve the two and three year plans.



Two Year Plan (June 2010 – June 2011)

Assuming that the first year has established a viable Community Smallholding, during the second year of the project we want to work on the Community element of our aims:

- Develop a programme for schools and community based groups
- Maintain initial members' enthusiasm and retain the group's community spirit by engaging in new projects and skills
- To produce a regular report or newsletter to be distributed to interested parties who do not wish to become members
- Sell any surplus produce and return any income to the group with an aim to be financially self-sufficient (aside from major capital spend) by the end of the second year.
- Establish a central fund to allow equal access to the group for those on lower incomes.

In order to do this we will need to review the facilities on site and may need to work with local businesses in order to share amenities such as toilets, hand-washing and car parking facilities. We will also need to ensure members working with the public are police checked and we have a child protection policy. We will need produce liability cover and will work to establish distribution on an ad-hoc basis through local businesses.

Three Year Plan (June 2011 – June 2012)

- Establish the group as a knowledge centre for the smallholding model and provide mentoring to other similar groups free of charge.
- Work with other organisations to set up similar models where demand exists.
- Hold a three year celebration, inviting the local community and recognising contributions made and resulting group achievements.
- Expand our "local" network beyond Sheffield.
- Document the first three years experiences in the form of a "Manual" which can be passed on to interested parties.

This will require us to appoint knowledge leaders and develop suitable training programmes.