

KIRKSTALL VALLEY FARM

Business Plan – 2019

Introduction

The aim of this document is to set down the principles by which we run Kirkstall Valley Farm, and the strategy by which we realise our principles. It aims to outline a detailed business plan in the short term (1- 2 seasons). It also aims to define some medium to long term objectives for the enterprise over the next 3- 5 years and outline a plan for how we will reach them.

It is intended to be a working document and one which we will modify from time to time to reflect changes within and external to the business, and as the business develops. We intend it to be a document to which all our members have access and they are all invited to comment on it and participate in its development.



Principles

We see the Kirkstall Valley Farm as:

- ❖ A pioneering organisation which provides a vehicle for change and sustainable living and an example to other communities
- ❖ A sustainable enterprise that produces local, seasonal, vegetables for subscriber members and the wider community

- ❖ An organisation which involves and connects local people together in aspects of farm work, social events and volunteering opportunities
- ❖ A farm which provides educational events for local people, including children, about sustainable agriculture, ethical businesses, local history and wildlife
- ❖ A farm that conserves and enhances areas for wildlife

Our vision is therefore one of *reconnecting people with each other and the land and the farming year in a meaningful and sustainable way and to provide opportunities for people who live local to the farm to become engaged in farming and in eating local, seasonal, and organic food, while aiming to conserve and enhance areas for wildlife*

Our mission is to *produce local, seasonal, organic vegetables for people who live local to the farm.*

Vegetable Production

We will produce seasonal vegetables produced to organic standards. As a Community Supported Agriculture scheme¹ (CSA) we encourage the members to share the risks of production with the farmer by providing a steady income to the enterprise in the form of share subscriptions, in return for which they get a share of the produce. The CSA will be run on a non-profit basis but is intended to run as a stand-alone business which covers its costs, including that of paying the growers an ethical wage. We will raise finance for setting up the business through a mixture of grant funding and money raised from members.

Social Interaction

The CSA will, as an organisation, provide an active social space for the local community. We will have a membership scheme separate to our vegetable subscription scheme. Membership of the CSA on this basis will allow people to access the space and events organised by the CSA. Families are actively encouraged to bring their children onto the farm and the CSA will provide a safe and hospitable social space.

As a minimum the CSA will:

- organise weekly work parties for those wishing to volunteer their labour
- organise 4 large socials or events per year for members to come onto the farm and celebrate aspects of the production process and farm year
- organise an annual and sociable AGM to report on the enterprises, report on the accounts and discuss future plans with the members.
- organise occasional events for fundraising and socialising

¹ Part of a national movement – information at <https://communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk/>

Governance

The CSA is run as a sub group of Kirkstall Valley Development Trust, with its own bank account and a representative on the Trust Board. Kirkstall Valley Farm (KVF) will share the same bookkeeping, accounting, insurance and policy resources as the Trust.

All members are invited to put themselves forward to sit on the steering group but must be prepared to attend evening meetings on a regular basis and remain in regular communication (email contact) with other members of the committee. Members are also invited to help run the CSA in whatever capacity they feel able and these opportunities will be advertised to the membership as they arise. An open AGM will be held annually to give account of Farm activities and to allow general members and subscribers to discuss the business, vote for members of the Steering Group and influence its future actions and action plan. The Farm accounts will be open to inspection at this meeting and generally upon request of members. The principles and annual action plan will form the framework for making decisions within the steering group.

Adoption of a legal form independent of Kirkstall Valley Development Trust is an option for future years

A founding supporters meeting was held on the 4th October 2018 and from this a steering Group has come together that meets monthly, generating and completing actions (see Appendix 1 for details of Steering Group). To date, 350 hours of effort have been logged by Group members.

Initial Business Set Up

Aim

To set up a financially sustainable vegetable production business using the top field at Burley Mills. This would involve producing vegetables to supply 80 paying shareholders and using any surpluses to supply the local groups and businesses in the community farm area.

Production

We will produce seasonal vegetables grown to organic standards and offer the production as shares to CSA members. No extra vegetables will be bought in to supplement the share and members will be encouraged to eat seasonally, for example by supplying recipes to use available produce. Members will be expected to pick up from the field site and weigh out and pack their own produce.

We are aiming to provide two vegetable pick up times during the week- on Wednesdays and Saturdays to coincide with work mornings (to be finalised). The possibility of forming groups to distribute to select locations (e.g. Universities) will be explored.

We will start growing on the 5 acres of land on the top field with 2 poly tunnels, pick-up/ distribution point, social area and toilets. In Jan 2019 Lancrop Laboratories undertook a full soil analysis and reported satisfactory growing conditions with the recommendation of adding Manganese, Boron and Molybdenum to increase fertility.

Equipment: equipment currently on site (+ tractor, rotovator, weeding machinery as well as hand tools – full audit needed).

Inputs: water for irrigation and small amounts of biological controls and/or organic pesticides

Staff: we will employ 1 experienced part time grower (28 hours/week) and 1 part-time administrator (1.5 day per week) We have planned for start-up labour as we prepare the land as well as occasional funds for a consultant if need arises (extreme pest attack/ crop failure that grower requires advice with).

The Market and Competition

The initial market is expected to be residents of Kirkstall Valley (pop approx. 70,000) as well as any local businesses interested in the scheme who may purchase multiple shares².

As of October 2019, 170 people have registered an interest in buying a veg box / volunteering on the farm.

The economic background to the launch of our CSA is favourable. Organic sales continue to grow (6.5% growth in 2017 compared to 2% growth in non-organic sales – *Soil Association Organic Market Report*)

Veg box sales are big business. Riverford and Abel and Cole between them sell 110,000 boxes a week. Riverford has grown its sales by 60% since 2010. The growth is spurred by a number of features – health consciousness, a search for natural quality, wanting to know where the food comes from and reducing air miles and packaging.

Both these companies deliver in the Leeds area, but their farms are based around the country. Closer to the Kirkstall Valley model are Goosemoor (11 acre farm in Wetherby) and Organic Pantry (300 acre farm in Tadcaster). These are private farms with a long track record. Veg boxes can be ordered on line and supply is supplemented by organic external suppliers; sometimes from beyond the UK.

Veg box prices are competitive with supermarkets. If Brexit has any effect on vegetable prices (tariffs, devaluation, cost of farm labour, loss of subsidy) it is likely to be in an upward direction, enhancing that competitiveness.

Minimum order (or medium box) price for the above

Abel and Cole - £16

Goosemoor - £15

Riverford - £14

Organic Pantry - £12

Kirkstall Valley (proposed) - £10

² Harris Greengrocers, newly converted to a community co-operative, one mile from the Farm + nearby Smak Restaurant and Ryan's Kitchen have expressed interest in the scheme

Our farm can be very competitive as we will not have delivery costs. Veg will be collected (with possible delivery to local businesses). If we were seeking to grow to a large scale, this model would not work, but we are unlikely to ever have the growing capacity to sell more than 150 boxes a week and our break-even point is 80. Within 6 months of starting a veg box scheme, Goosemoor was selling 600 boxes³

Partners and Marketing

Our partners and members are our sales force, as well as helping us to reap social benefit.

The first 40 expressions of interest in a box scheme came from a single mail out to our 1000+ subscribers. We will continue to supplement this by leafletting the Kirkstall Deli Market, the Kirkstall Festival (20,000 attending) and many other joint ventures the Trust is involved in.

We are already working with local schools (Energy Heroes), the Universities and Permaculture Association (Aireshare sustainability initiative) and working up action plans with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (Nature Reserve by the Farm) and Hollybush (common growing interest). Social and kids' events will be held on and in aid of the farm, further promoting the veg boxes.

We also expect our relationships with CEG (Kirkstall Forge) and Artisan (Kirkstall Hill) to introduce us to many new buyers in the future.

We are also pleased to have developed partnerships with the Community Payback team (see Appendix II), who are offering to support the development of the farm and Askham Bryan College (Appendix III) who are offering placements, advice, student research and equipment loans.

Social Projects

Our primary task is to establish the CSA scheme as a viable business, but from the outset we will invite independent projects that bring social benefit to be part of Kirkstall Valley Farm. They will have to contribute to farm costs and not add to the management burden of the Grower. They may take an allotment or two or a part of the farm not used by the CSA.

To this end, we have started discussions with Leeds Forest Schools, GP Practices and various growing projects.

Site Plan

Exact usage and layout of the site is still under discussion with FAS and Community Payback (Probation Service) and will continue with Council officers. We envisage:

- 1) Principal growing area will be the upper field
- 2) Growing on the lower field will be adapted to the liability to flooding
- 3) The Immigration Office field in the medium term will be used for FAS storage. Thereafter we would like to explore possibilities of tree planting and other uses compatible with flooding.
- 4) Fencing to the north west of the site, adjoining the river, will be created combined with hedgerows. We would hope the FAS work will leave the farm secure, with a new gate at the north west end plus improvements to the existing gate

³ Yorkshire Post – 9th Nov 2012

- 5) A public footpath would be best at the back of the site, entering through the new gate and coming southwards behind the existing bramble barrier and behind new natural barriers by the Immigration Office, through to the proposed Burley Mills footbridge
- 6) Allotments would all be in the existing cluster to the left of the entrance
- 7) An independent Allotment Association will sub-let the land from KVDT and will be represented on the Steering Group. Together they will explore the potential of allotment lets to both individuals and projects
- 8) The existing tractor shed will be extended to serve as the collection, storage and social area. Toilets will be added.
- 9) Positioning of Community Payback, their polytunnels and the two we will start with have still to be considered

Timescale

In Sept '19 the Council decided to award the Trust the Lease from April 2020 (subject to detailed negotiation) on a stepped rental:

Year 1 - £0

Year 2 - £500

Year 3 - £1,000

Year 4 - £1,500

Year 5 - £2,000 (discussions to take place on future lease and terms at this point, but the principle is that the rent should never be more than the previous lease level which was around £2,000)

We will, holding the necessary insurances, ask that preparation work for the launch of the Farm can be undertaken during 2019. In early 2021 we will appoint a full-time grower and within 2 ½ years expect to have a fully sustainable production unit.

Capital equipment required

Tractor	£4000
Rotovator	£2000
Weeding equipment	£2000
Container	£2500
CosyTex Mesh	£2000
Hand tools and wheelbarrows	£500
Polytunnels	£4000
Misc seed trays, crates etc	£500
Irrigation lines and equipment	£2000
Site security fencing	£3000
Rabbit proof fencing	£1000
Collection hut and toilet	£3000
Total	£26,500

See cash flow for running costs.

Action Plan

1. Steering Group formed and Business Plan produced (March 19) -done
2. Expression of interest for lease (April 2019) - done
3. Start recruit members and veg box buyers – marketing campaign ongoing from April 2019 - ongoing
4. Permission to work land and preferred bidder status given (June 2019) achieved September 30th 2019

5. Apply for funding for start-up funding - November 2019 onwards
6. 1st AGM October 2020
7. Loan campaign/buy a year in advance to pay for grower start up wages/seed order (winter/spring 2021)
8. Lease in place early 2020
9. Major seed order Jan 2021
10. Sow summer crops in modules (January 2021 forwards)
11. Recruit part time grower (5day summer – 2day winter) (Jan 2021, start March 2021)
12. Start regular work days/ work share waiting list from April 2021
13. Begin weekly share offer from midsummer, increasing membership to full capacity by December 2021
14. AGM and evaluation (Nov 2021)

Field Action Plan

1. Assess site for potential for a fully self-sustaining CSA (minimum 5 acres growing space) (Done - December 2018)
2. Determine specific options for CSA growth, e.g. 11 x 20m x 70m rotation beds (Done - January 2019)
3. Prepare land and sow green manure (clover?) on 2x brassica rotations (April/May 2020)
4. Prepare land and sow long term green manure (2-year mix) on 3 x green manure rotations (April/May 2020)
5. April/May 2020 prepare land and sow remaining plots green manure
6. Sow one plot broad beans/garlic/overwintering onions in prep for next season
7. NB cost of contractor to prep and sow 5 acres is approx £900.

Infrastructure Action Plan

1. October 2019 assess onsite building for use
2. November 2019 assess jacking container in woods for storage use
3. April 2019 liaise with Payback re polytunnel – Done?
4. November 2019 onwards investigate seedling propagation area (hot bed in polytunnel) by probation
5. November 2019 – Nov 2020 fund/source: watering/crop protection/ground cover/ fencing/tractor implements/growing mediums/pots/ etc.

Risk Analysis

Issues

Issue	Necessity for project	Discussion
Community access to the site, use of equipment and building.	H	Configuring public access to the site while securing the farm is clearly problematic. On-going discussions with the Council and FAS
Community Pay Back Scheme	L	Need to ensure that personal safety issues are resolved along with developing joint project plans and site occupancy details

Use of polytunnels	H	the business assumes that it will have the use of at least two polytunnels and ideally three.
Resolution of Flood Alleviation works	L	Positioning of pathways and access of farm to be finalised. Compound in bottom field – wildlife impact and soil impact mitigation. Potential opportunity of support for infrastructure construction
Start-up finance	M	Failure to raise sufficient Trust funds will increase pressure on volunteers and delay full opening
Transport for off-site delivery of produce if required	L/H (depending)	Access to a small/medium sized van may be necessary if off site deliveries need to be made. This could add considerably to start-up costs.

H- high, M- medium/moderate, L- low

Risks are set out and discussed on the table below.

Risk	Impact	Probability	Mitigation
Low interest from identified client groups	H	L	Publicise project widely, organise public meetings and make contacts in target area. Make contact with sympathetic groups in target groups.
Unable to obtain quick start up finance	H	M	Spend 2019 building the membership to create a large enough pool of potential financial supporters
Unable to use polytunnels to desired extent	M	M	Include extra polytunnel on funding, look for agreement with other projects
Unable to use minimum of 5 acres due to flood mitigation/other land users	H	M	Allotment holders represented on Steering group, good communication with payback and liaising with FAS2 representatives.
Equipment not sufficient/ not maintained adequately	M	M	Plan for maintenance of equipment/ purchase second hand kit/look to share with neighbouring farms, hire in contractors
Unable to negotiate adequate access to social space and/or access for share members	H	M	Need to define access for share members; develop drop off points and volunteer system, hold socials off site (not ideal)
Unable to recruit experienced grower or slow recruitment	H	M	Offer attractive wage; advertise widely; offer attractive hours (at least 4 day week). Provide adequate support and back up to grower. Provide professional advice to grower. Offer support for relocation and/or starting work.
Unable to get fields back into good agricultural state	M	M	Recognise the challenge and allow sufficient time/funds for weed control and good management prior to veg box start.

H- high, M- medium/moderate, L- low

See cash flow for running costs.

Labour costs will be kept down by the use of CSA members for voluntary labour at peak times such as sowing, weeding and harvest.

Any transport to local bulk pick-up points will have to be organised and costed on a voluntary basis, at least for the first year.

Estimated Income:

Our projected sources of first year income are set out below:

Income Source	Number	Price	Duration	Total Income
Paying Share Holders	80	£10 /week	50 wks/year	£40000
Membership Fees	240	£2/month	12 mths/year	£5760
Misc Sales		£50/month	12 mths/year	£600
Total income				£46360

We anticipate a trading loss in the first year and a profit of £15,000 in year 2, with the minimum cash balance occurring in May '21 (£1,000). Such projections give us a cushion in the event of not achieving the veg box sales target.

We will ask members to pay a £2.00 membership fee per month which is essentially a donation to support the project but will also help to pay for social events on the field and to administer the company. This will generate £5760 based on an estimate of 240 members (all shareholders would have to be members).

A range of other potential sales outlets exist on the area including Harris's Grocers and two restaurants that have identified themselves.

Work Shares

We intend to recruit regular volunteers who work a regular shift of half a day per week in return for their vegetable share. We currently plan to offer three individual work shares.

APPENDIX I

Steering Group Members

Roger Plumtree

Group Lead and rep on Kirkstall Valley Dev Trust Board. Works in relationship management and project design at Zenith (vehicle leasing), based in Kirkstall Forge. Zenith lead for Corporate Environmental Social Responsibility. Coming from a long line of farmers, he has a deep understanding of the day-to-day realities of agricultural life.

Keith Whittaker

After working on a farm, had a career as a project manager for engineering companies, initially in agricultural engineering but predominantly hydro-mechanical engineering. BSc (Agricultural Engineering), PhD (Small hydro-power as a tool for rural development). Now working as a support worker at a care farm undertaking small animal care and horticultural activities with teenagers and adults with special needs. Lifelong allotment holder.

Sue Brown

Project Manager for Growing Works Huddersfield. Started as a Physical Oceanography Researcher. 12 years working on land-based projects including Grower at Earthshare CSA and Main Grower at Five Acre Community Farm CSA.

Diploma in Countryside Management.

25 years volunteering in conservation including community woodland association, forestry commission, YWT Stirley Farm and Colne Valley Tree Society.

Skills - tractor driving and maintenance. Growing organic certified vegetables to produce all year around, planning crop rotation etc.

Rosie Atkins

BA (Biology and ecology). Taught sciences in secondary schools. MSc Environmental Technology (Imperial College), Tutor for Open University 'Sustainability' courses (which included sustainable farming and ecology) for over 15 years; Project management for UK wide 'Women into Technology' Open University scheme (for over 10 years) - responsibilities included obtaining grants, supporting students, administration and monitoring of student progress. Worked for Leeds CC as a primary school mentor for the 'Sustainable Schools' program and volunteered for Yorkshire Wildlife Trust monitoring otters and water voles. An organic grower who grew up on a family farm

Bobby Bowker

10 years experience of the Wildlife in the Kirkstall Valley and its habitat. Worked with the previous farmer on the BM farmland regarding protection of wildlife habitats and the management of invasives. Trustee for friends of woodland wildlife group in adjoining woodland which extends to the farmland for wildlife, cleanups and invasive management. Team leader for Team Kirkstall River clean up group. Trustee for Urban Wildlife Leeds protecting wildlife and their habitat. Work for River Stewardship Company for clean ups and river assessment patrols

Doreen Illingworth

Allotment holder at Burley Mills for 30 years.

Chris Hill

Development Director of Kirkstall Valley Development Trust. Serial business and property development experience over last 20 years.

Adele Rae

Lead Community Director of Kirkstall Valley Development Trust, Board member Kirkstall Neighbourhood Forum and Chair of Burley Top Community Association

Paul Hudson

Retired Art teacher, Mountaineer, Artist, Allotment holder on Ash Road allotments

Cllr John Illingworth

Local Councillor and long-term Burley Mills allotment holder

Jenny Lawrence

Local Flower Grower

Nicola Bell

Membership Manager at the Permaculture Association

Lance Penketh

Burley Mills allotment holder

APPENDIX II

Letter of support from Community Payback Team

To Whom it May Concern

Community Payback have discussed the proposal of Kirkstall Valley Farm with members of the Steering Group. West Yorkshire CRC Ltd is pleased to give their support to the venture and can envisage a variety of ways that we can work together.

Our team of approximately eight offenders who are managed by a Supervisor could assist in path and fence creation, planting natural boundaries and trees, digging ponds etc. A project plan for the year could be put together in order to manage the work that is required to be completed. There is however the expectation that proper breakout and toilet facilities are provided. Our team can work on any part of the land that is used for the benefit of the community but they cannot work on private land.

We do not foresee there being any personal safety issues as the community payback team are risk assessed prior to being allocated to this site and they are supervised by Supervisor throughout the day including over lunch breaks. A risk assessment will also be carried out by our team prior to work commencing on the site.

We look forward to helping develop a thriving community farm.

Your faithfully

Liz Rushton

Unpaid Work Manager - North Yorkshire and Leeds, Interserve (Justice)

The Humberside, Lincolnshire & North Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation Company Ltd 5/7 Haywra Crescent
Harrogate

North Yorkshire, HG1 5BG

Tel: 01442295222

APPENDIX III

Letter of support from Askham Bryan College

To whom it may concern,

As Head of Askham Bryan Agriculture Department I am writing to give my support in principle to the establishment of the Kirkstall Valley Farm Community Agriculture project. It would be an excellent use of the Grade 1 Agricultural land in the valley floor and a great opportunity to educate local people about agriculture and food production.

Our students have visited the site and used it as a case study to meet their course requirements: to consider options and propose income generating and educational activities and also wildlife enhancements for the land. Members of the Kirkstall Valley Farm Steering Group attended the student presentations of their ideas, which the Steering Group are considering for the development of the project over time.

Our Employability Manager at Askham, Samantha Tordoff, has confirmed the offer of long and short term student placements on Kirkstall Farm, should the lease be granted, which will be to our mutual benefit.

We have offered to provide other information and support where we can, such providing contacts and the possible loan of equipment.

We wish the Kirkstall Valley Farm Community Agriculture project success.

Yours faithfully,

Fiona Macdonald

Head of Department | Agriculture

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APPENDIX IV

Comparative Budget for Canalside Community Food

Canalside Community Food (www.canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk) is a CSA scheme that started over 10 years ago on a rural site close to Leamington Spa in Warwickshire. The KVF Steering Group visited the farm in February 2019 and were inspired to see the success it had achieved with virtually no grant support and no public sector contracts.

Canalside operates on a similar acreage to the Burley Mills site. If KVF is well managed, we believe our urban location and access to many more buyers and supporters than Canalside, we can at least equal their financial performance. With their permission their income and expenditure for 17/18 is printed below.

Canalside Community Food

Budget 2017/18

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

INCOME

Veg bags	71,424
Veg sales: Budget	1,500
Membership	3,600
Goods	50
Other	1,000
Barn Dance/Social events	3,000
Gift/Donations	250
TOTAL INCOME	80,824

EXPENDITURE

Wages	
Main grower	21420
Second grower	17700
Contract work	1300
Labour (veg and fruit)	1500
GROWERS WAGES	41,920

Growers budget- veg and fruit

Seeds	3,000
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Equipment	1,500
Inputs (sacks, sand, gas etc.)	2,500
Other (plant hire, contractors, maintenance etc)	1,000
fuel	500
Water	1,500
Other goods (books, bags)	0
SUBTOTAL GROWERS BUDGET	10,000
Overheads	
Admin wages (1)	8200
Admin Wages (2)	2500
General costs	500
payroll/company admin/bank charges	1500
training and courses	500
insurance	1500
Publicity	1000
Social Events	1000
Barn Dance	1500
Social Facilities	250
Rent	2000
Certification	500
Depreciation	3000
SUBTOTAL OVERHEADS	23,950
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	75,870
BUDGETED SURPLUS/ LOSS	4,954

APPENDIX V

FAS2 detailed planning stage- comments to FAS2 Team

To whoever it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Kirkstall Valley Community Agriculture Steering Group, with specific requests regarding the Grade 1 agricultural Land in the valley. We will shortly submit an expression of interest to LCC to gain the lease for this land and therefore have an interest in the potential impacts of the FAS2 work on it.

1) Pond construction for wildlife mitigation

We request that a pond be constructed, as a wildlife mitigation measure, to compensate for habitat lost elsewhere in the valley. We propose that the pond probably be sited below and alongside the path which we have requested should run along the northern edge of the field to be used as a temporary construction compound. This pond would provide a habitat for amphibians, dragonflies, and other pond organisms, which in turn would provide a food supply for reptiles, birds etc. We also intend the pond to be used for wildlife education, so we request that the construction include a 'dipping platform'.

2) Use of farmland after Construction Compound

We request that IF the area of temporary Construction Compound is made into a wildflower meadow as wildlife mitigation, that Kirkstall valley Farm be permitted to use the field for other growing projects/activities, such as a community orchard, or other growing / appropriate projects- to be negotiated and agreed with LCC.

We also request that native trees and native shrubs be planted at the edges of that field, along the riverbank if possible, to replace those lost.

3) Flood risk to Kirkstall valley farmland

The flood risk maps show the Grade 1 agricultural farmland (generally) as 1 in 50 year risk level after FAS2 developments. The KV Community Supported Agriculture Project has to be commercially viable in providing vegetable boxes to our members all year round. The level of flood risk to the land is therefore of critical for us. We would be grateful if you would clarify the flood risk to the following different areas of farmland:-

the 'top' field containing the allotment area covering the land below the goits. This is the main area we will use to start the CSA growing project. We are concerned that when flood defences are shut at Burley Mills, this is likely to increase the flood risk to that field. It would help us to know the specific flood risk for that field, to guide our planting and land use plans.

The field to be used as a temporary construction compound. We believe it is proposed that the river banks will be lowered to enable flooding, as a 'flood plain' to protect the urban areas. Whilst we accept that flood protection of the urban areas is the priority, it would help us to know the

protection of the urban areas is the priority, it would help us to know the specific flood risk for that field, to guide our planting or land use plans.



The third, southern, field alongside the river is lower land. Again, it would help us to know the specific flood risk calculation for that land, to guide our planting or land use plans.

4) lorries on farm track for access to construction compound.

We believe that a temporary bridge will be constructed across the existing one, across the goit, to enable access into the farmland, to take width and weight of lorries. We request confirmation that, if we are granted the lease, we will be permitted to use the temporary bridge for our access to the farmland.

The history of theft and vandalism on the farm area over the last few years is concerning. The previous leasee had equipment, pumps, and even one of his tractors stolen; polytunnels have been slashed; crops have been taken from the allotments; regular, intermittent thefts also occur of the Probation Service equipment and stores- even to the extent that an angle grinder was recently used to open their shipping container to steal its contents ! Therefore we request that a strong, secure gate be erected across the new temporary bridge.

We understand that you will need to widen the farm track and put hard core on it for the lorries. Since we plan to farm the land, we are very concerned to avoid soil compaction and thus request the all lorry drivers are made aware of the vital need to only drive on the track itself and never onto the soil alongside.

We seek reassurances that you have policies to cover any oil spills/contamination by the vehicles and by all equipment stored on the temporary construction compound.

5) Wild cherry trees retained for wildlife

There are wild cherry trees to the east of the allotments and the south west corner of the Home Office plot. These trees are an important autumn/winter food source for birds. We strongly request that these be protected during construction of the flood protections of the Home Office.

your faithfully,

Rosie Atkins (resident)

on behalf of Kirkstall Valley Farm Steering Group