



Farm management plan 2020

1. Introduction
2. Site Layout and management
3. Visitors
4. Hours of Operation and Community Involvement
4. Ecology and its protection
5. Trees and woodland management
6. Animal husbandry and livestock
7. Use of vehicles on the site
8. Sustainability
9. Site Security

An Introduction to GROW

GROW is a newly established charity based at the Totteridge Academy on Barnet Lane, Barnet. We work in schools and communities to promote mental wellbeing, physical health and a more hands on relationship with the natural world.

We want to create a vibrant working farm on the site that will grow organic produce and raise animals. The farm will supply TTA and other local schools with subsidised organic vegetables and form a key part of our 360° learning programme for both children and adults.

For more information on GROW and what we offer, see www.wearegrow.org

Site Layout and Management

The site is mostly flat and the soil is slightly acidic loamy/ clay and we consider it to be a good fertile base for horticulture and animal husbandry.

Site management will be the responsibility of Sarah Alun-Jones, full time Farm and Outdoor Learning Manager.

The plans for managing the various aspects of the site are set out within this Site Management plan. For any questions, please get in touch.

Visitors

During normal operations, visitors to the site will consist of:

- Full time farm manager

- Seasonal farm assistant

- Volunteers. Main volunteering day is Wednesday from 10am - 4pm.

- GROW participants, prospective participants and related support workers and teachers.

- Children from local primary and secondary schools. These sessions would run from 9am - 4pm for up to 30 children at a time. These groups would be supported by up to 5 teachers, support workers and/or facilitators.

- Professionals supporting the operation and maintenance of the farm and the operation of GROW and invited guests

- Corporate volunteers in groups of up to 35 adults, maximum 6 per year.

- Deliveries

Hours of opening and community involvement

Normal working hours will be:

Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm Saturdays 9am - 5pm Sundays 10am - 5pm.

Regular activities will include:

- Community volunteering days which are open to all those above 16 to learn about food growing and regenerative farming
- Educational workshops such as sustainable beekeeping, mushroom growing, forest school sessions, family fun days and flower arranging
- Supported volunteering sessions for adults with additional support needs

Community involvement

The site will be accessible to the community outside of normal school opening hours (Term time: 9am - 3.15pm Mon-Fri).

Ecology and its protection

We commissioned a full ecology report through Greengage (2019) which raised no major concerns about development on the site. Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment is key to GROW's principles so our approach will include the following:

- Ensure the retention of trees and hedgerows on site, wherever possible. New mixed native hedgerow will be planted and maintained around the Northern and North Western Perimeter

- Vegetation clearance should also avoid reptile hibernation season (November to February), and should be completed using hand tools and in a directional method to allow any reptiles to move.

- Ecological input should be considered within the landscaping scheme, including enhancing the scrub and wildflowers on site with native species. Creation of buffer strips along woodland and mature trees.

- Bat boxes and bird nest boxes to be added and maintained

- Farm will be managed organically with the aim to become certified with the Soil Association, this means that no chemical pesticides or insecticides will ever be used.

Trees and Woodland Management

A tree survey has been carried out by Greengage and raised no issues about the site development. Again, as trees are an important part of the GROW ethos, the following principles will be adhered to at all times.

-No trees will be cut down on the GROW site and we plan to plant many more ; including native hedgerow and an orchard of native fruit trees

-Livestock will be restricted to the North West section of the farm and will be kept away from woodland areas.

-Maintain larger trees appropriately to ensure that the site is safe for visitors and participants at all times.

Animal husbandry and livestock

The maximum number of animals that we propose to have at GROW are as follows:

Sheep - 20 (native breeds such as Shetlands) Chickens - 40 (rare breeds where possible) Ducks - 4 (rare breeds where possible)
Goats - 8 (Native breeds such as Golden Guernseys)

Keeping livestock is a huge commitment and it is vital for GROW to maintain its animals in the best condition possible. All maintenance of livestock on the farm is to be done according to best practice from DEFRA and LEAF (Linking farm and environment) when it comes to animal welfare. We have been in discussion with Barnet's Environmental Health Team to produce a thorough set of policies resulting to animals before livestock comes on site. Basic livestock management procedures are detailed below however detailed daily routines will be set by the farm manager:

- Wellness checks are to be carried out at least daily with the livestock being observed and any concerns noted and reported.
- All livestock to be fed and watered daily.
- Detailed health condition inspections monthly
- On a small holding worms are a real concern. 6 weeks worm & egg counts will be taken
- Paddock rotation to be done 24 hours after worming. Paddocks rotated will be left dormant for 3 months wherever possible
- In an effort to ensure nutrient and bio diversity, all hay and meal is acquired from 3rd parties
- Biological and organic farming methods will be applied on the farm

- In warm weather, daily checks for fly strike are to be carried out with any evidence of this reported to the farm manager and treated according to his / her instructions

Use of vehicles

There is a large car park for staff and visitors of Totteridge Academy at the entrance to the site. This will be used for GROW visitor parking.

Site Security

Gates to the site will be locked at all times when not in use.

For any questions please get in touch with Sarah Alun-Jones on sarah@wearegrow.org