

A person wearing a blue and white striped shirt and blue jeans is holding a white tote bag. The bag is filled with fresh vegetables, including a head of green lettuce, a purple eggplant, a red tomato, a yellow bell pepper, and a yellow squash. The background is plain white.

The Food Issue

# CRUNCH

Summer 2024



# CONTENTS

DATE: June 3rd, 2024  
TIME: 11:11 AM

REG #01  
CSHR #11

ITEM DESCRIPTION	PG NO.
CONTENTS	2
EDITOR'S NOTE	3
WITCHCRAFT	4 - 9
FOOD PROJECTS IN YORK	10 - 11
WHAT'S A FOOD SYSTEM	12 - 13
FOOD STORIES	14 - 17
GERALD'S ALLOTMENT	18 - 21
NOVEL FLOWCHART	22 - 23
YSJ PRISON PARTNERSHIP	24 - 27
GARDEN STUDENT CAFE	28 - 29
TO THE ACTIVISTS	30 - 31
INCANTATION	32
PISTACHIO	33
RESOURCES	34
CONTRIBUTORS	35
ITEM COUNT	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£24.96</b>

# EDITOR'S NOTE

While reading *Crunch*, you will encounter a diverse array of stories centered around food. At this point, you might wonder: why is this important?

Food connects us with our identity and culture. Many of us cherish memories of sharing meals with loved ones or repeatedly savouring our favourite dishes that provide us comfort. Regardless of what your background may be, food plays a pivotal role in our lives.

The Food Stories project is a part of the 'Living Lab: Feeding the Campus' which focuses on building a better and more inclusive food system for all through interdisciplinary collaboration. 'Food Stories' adds a student perspective to the project. The stories we collected revealed that students face particular challenges surrounding food,

food poverty, and kitchen space when they arrive at university. These challenges deeply impact the way that the students engage with food. The way their stories change in light of these challenges offers important context to explore possible changes to the campus food system.

This magazine started as a small idea and has turned into what you are reading today. By bringing together multiple views on food it has become its own food story explaining how impactful people's voices can be on a topic. The magazine hopes to capture this conflicting moment of struggle and hopefulness; to offer a space where stories can be shared in many different forms, and to inspire moments of activism that may help to make a meaningful change in our community.

The Editorial Team







# Witchcraft

by Mie Claridge

**A**s a research student focusing on ecology in Literature, much of my time these last three years has been preoccupied with looking at the stories we as humans tell about the world we live in. The stories told about nature in literature, whilst fictional, create a space where unseen consequences, harmful social or cultural structures, and discursive tendencies can be brought to light. I became involved with the 'Food Stories' project because of the links between my research specialism and the project's focus on storytelling. Working with the stories told by YSJ students has given me a real-world perspective of the approaches that I use in my research. The stories that our students tell about their experiences with food and food culture has highlighted problems within our campus food system and how the way they engage with food changes at university.

These stories also offer something uniquely powerful when combined with scientific approaches and practical measures, which is evident from the many positive changes made by the Living Lab over these past two years.

For research supported changes to our campus food system to be successful, it is central to consider barriers and complications communicated through our student's food stories. These put into words individual lived experiences and emotions connected to food culture, and express the challenges, hopes, and reward of engaging with food at university. Stories, real or fictional, highlight underlying issues or social structures that prevent these measures from being successful

Many of the stories that we collected during the project focused largely on inadequate kitchen space or social issues within the space of the kitchen that discouraged students from cooking. Food and food culture being such a large part of



the kitchen that discouraged students from cooking. Food and food culture being such a large part of climate justice, it seems only natural that sustainability initiatives are especially focused on kitchens. However, the space of the kitchen is historically contested.

Stacey Alaimo's *Undomesticated Ground: Recasting Nature as Feminist Space* highlights how the discourse used in climate activism places the burden of saving the planet on women. She argues that Earth Day campaigns and climate activist advertisements often portray 'the planet as a victimized female and suggests that everyday environmental problem solving is "women's work"' (173). Initiatives that focus on kitchen products, using specific ingredients to reduce the carbon footprint of the home, and slogans like "what you can do at home to save the earth" - places the blame and responsibility on women, who (still) do the majority of the shopping and housecleaning' (174). While initiatives encouraging individuals to make changes at home are well intentioned, their historical discursive approach reveal a disconnect between intention and daily life implications.

Combining the desire for change with the stories of those impacted, as the Living Lab has done this year, might be the answer. The unique power of storytelling is that it holds the potential of conveying lived experiences that others may not have a frame of reference to understand. Paul Simpson suggests that 'narrative events are mediated through the consciousness of the 'teller' of the story. It will encompass the means by which a fictional world is slanted in a particular way or the means by which narrators construct, in linguistic terms, their own view of the story they tell' (11). The stories collected in this project reveal many different positionalities and understandings of food and food culture, even though participants were all asked the same questions. It has become clear to me that critical engagement with storytelling, both of lived experiences and visions for future food systems, require interdisciplinary approaches.

Literature offers a way for readers to understand the lived experiences of others by allowing them to expand beyond their factual value, transforming the context to make space for the emotions of the experience. A great example is Madeleine Miller's 2018 novel *Circe*. The novel is a contemporary retelling of *The Odyssey*, a Greek myth central to the Western literary tradition that has served as inspiration for many canonical writers. Rewriting captures how the cultural context of our stories continuously change over time as you rewrite 'when what has already been written is not correct, complete or requires amendments [...] In this manner, the old becomes the new [and] the past is brought face to face with the present' (Hanes, 9). Miller's feminist retelling of the myth gives voice to female characters who were silenced through the phallogentric world view expressed in the original story. By offering a different voice to a familiar story, Miller provides a context to explore lived experiences of women and the literary tradition that reinforce the 'othering' of women.



The novel is narrated by Circe, a nymph who has been sent to live in isolation on an island as a punishment for practicing witchcraft. In *The Odyssey*, Circe is a temptress who seduces Odysseus and delays his return to his family. However, Miller reclaims her voice by telling the story of her life where Odysseus and his heroic efforts are fleeting tales in her wider narrative.



The novel focuses heavily on the contrasting spaces of Circe's kitchen and the wilderness of the island. Timothy Clark notes that nature is subjected to a patriarchal desire of domestication and 'that the very idea of dominating nature has its origins in the domination of human by human' (Clark, 2). In Homer, women and nature are often aligned through the Mother Nature trope which portrays nature as a hyperfeminine space. Patrick D. Murphy argues that the Mother Nature trope 'reinscribes an anthropomorphism that alienates Earth by trying to render it in our image' (67). This suggests that the alignment of woman and nature brings the natural into an inherently human realm of patriarchal oppression. In Circe, however, the alignment between woman and nature holds the potential for both to transcend these structures as the spaces of Circe's witchcraft defies desires for domestication.

The kitchen, rather than representing a hybrid landscape where nature has imploded into the domestic, portrays the two entities as interconnected. The wild does not give way to the domestic; it destroys the process of domestication by allowing women to access their own natural power. Circe's magic transcends the classical notion of witchcraft as 'the socially unsanctioned use of supernatural powers and tools to control nature and compel both humans and superhuman beings to do one's will' (Spaeth, 42). The classical construction of witchcraft as a supernatural power over nature, controlled by humans, contains assumptions of human superiority over nature within legitimate gendered readings of nature. The focus on using witchcraft as a tool to establish female power over nature constructs an anthropocentric approach to nature in which feminist issues silence environmental qualms by centering their attention on nature as a tool that can aid both the oppression and the empowerment of women. Circe, instead, draws on portrayals of witchcraft to explore ways in which a reciprocal relationship with nature can empower women and allow both to gain autonomy to transcend structures of oppression.

Circe is empowered by nature, but she does not, as such, possess power over nature. She describes what 'sorcery is not: it is not divine power, which comes with a thought and a blink. It must be made and worked, planned and searched out, dug up, dried, chopped and ground, cooked, spoken over and sung' (1437). Miller portrays witchcraft as a form of labour in which, through hard work and care for nature, Circe's reward is supernatural powers. The potions would not be successful without the wild forces of nature, but equally, their effect needs to be harnessed by human hands. Circe's coexistence with nature is mutually beneficial as she cultivates the plants that give her the power to fight the 'othering' of her body. Finola Anne Prendergast argues:

Ethical difficulties might arise in treating ['othered' bodies] as magical or metaphorical, and that to treat them as magical and surreal would be to rob them of precisely the quality that makes them so urgently compelling—which is that [oppression is] actually happening. (342)

Interestingly, Miller demystifies witchcraft by aligning it with female labour and contrasting this with the stereotypical gendered expectations of domestic labour. Circe practices her witchcraft in her kitchen, a space which is historically tied to gender structures and expectations for female labour. However, the kitchen in her cottage defies these expectations as Circe notes that 'however I tracked upon it, the floor was always clean, the tables gleaming' (69). Instead of following the expectation of 'women's work', Circe uses the space to brew potions that give her powers that can protect her against patriarchal violence. Significantly, her witchcraft depends on her cultivation and foraging of ingredients and her process is portrayed almost like cooking. Cooking is tied to a discourse of nourishment and care, which Alaimo suggests 'is problematic in a number of ways [as] unlike capitalist patriarchy, which is geared to short-term profits, women's lives straddling the nature-woman-labor nexus are



embedded in a context of conservation and care' (174). Circe's use of the kitchen reconfigures the trope of women as caregivers because her potions are not nourishing and her relationship with nature is reciprocal. She reveals that 'at least I thought, in those early days, once I cast a spell, I would not have to learn it again. But even that was not true. However often I had used a herb before, each cutting had its own character' (73). This suggests that the powers of the potions are contingent on her willingness to continue to learn about and work with nature as it continues to transform.

This rings true for our contemporary reality as well. As the world around us continues to change due to the effects of climate change, we must also continue to learn from and work with nature. Miller does this by inserting her narrative into a literary tradition that reinforces patriarchal and anthropocentric structures and highlighting the need for allowing 'othered' subjects to have a voice. Circe is an excellent example of how, through storytelling, 'women can make an effort to reject the language of oppression, tell the stories differently and the reality will start to transform too' (Al-Mahfedi, 54). The stories within this magazine engage with many different social justice issues; some reflect similar issues to Circe, and many highlight equally important challenges. By putting their experiences with food systems into words, the participants in the 'Food Stories' project have begun to transform reality.







## References:

Haneş, Ioana-Gianina "Margaret Atwood: *The Penelopiad* – Rewriting in Postmodern Feminine Literature" *Journal of Humanistic and Social Studies*, Vol. 10, Issue 2, Arad, 2019, pp. 9-20.

Miller, Madeleine. *Circe*, Bloomsbury, 2018.

Murphy, Patrick D. *Literature, Nature, and Other: Ecofeminist Critiques*. Edited by Ruth Fisher, State University New York Press, 1995.

Prendergast, Finola Anne "Revising Nonhuman Ethics in Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation*" *Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 58, Issue 3, Wisconsin UP, 2017, pp. 333-360.

Spaeth, Barbetta Stanley "From Goddess to Hag: The Greek and Roman Witch in Classical Literature" *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World*, edited by Kimberley B. Stratton, Oxford UP, 2014, pp. 41-71.



# PROJECTS

## RED TOWER

‘Our vision for the Red Tower is to bring this historic building to life by offering an inclusive, welcoming space for creative, learning and social activities, run by local people, encouraging local and wider community participation. We will achieve this by creating and curating an ancient magical space that offers a unique oasis in our busy city.’

Red Tower provides food, a warm space, and community for those in need.

!  
WARNING  
MAY CONTAIN:  
CHEESE, MILK, SALT  
AND MEMORIES OF HOME

## YOUR CAFE

‘Volunteers collect food each week from local businesses and shops and then work out that day’s menu depending on what’s been donated. The menu includes a starter, main (including a vegan option) and pudding with tea or coffee. It’s also provided on a ‘pay-as-you-feel basis’ – which can be anything – time, money or skills – remembering that food is valuable and so are you.’

Find ‘Your Cafe’ at Tang Hall Community Centre



# In York

## FOOD CIRCLE

‘We are a social enterprise determined to build a better food system from the soil up with our community of farmers, growers, producers and customers.’

‘Our twice weekly markets are at the heart of the business. Find us at Tang Hall Community Centre on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings to stock up on the very best fruit, veg, meat, bread, eggs and dairy - fresh and direct from our small scale producers.’

## ABUNDANCE

‘Abundance is an urban harvesting project which identifies fruit growing that would otherwise go to waste, and redistributes it to charities or community groups that will make good use of it.’

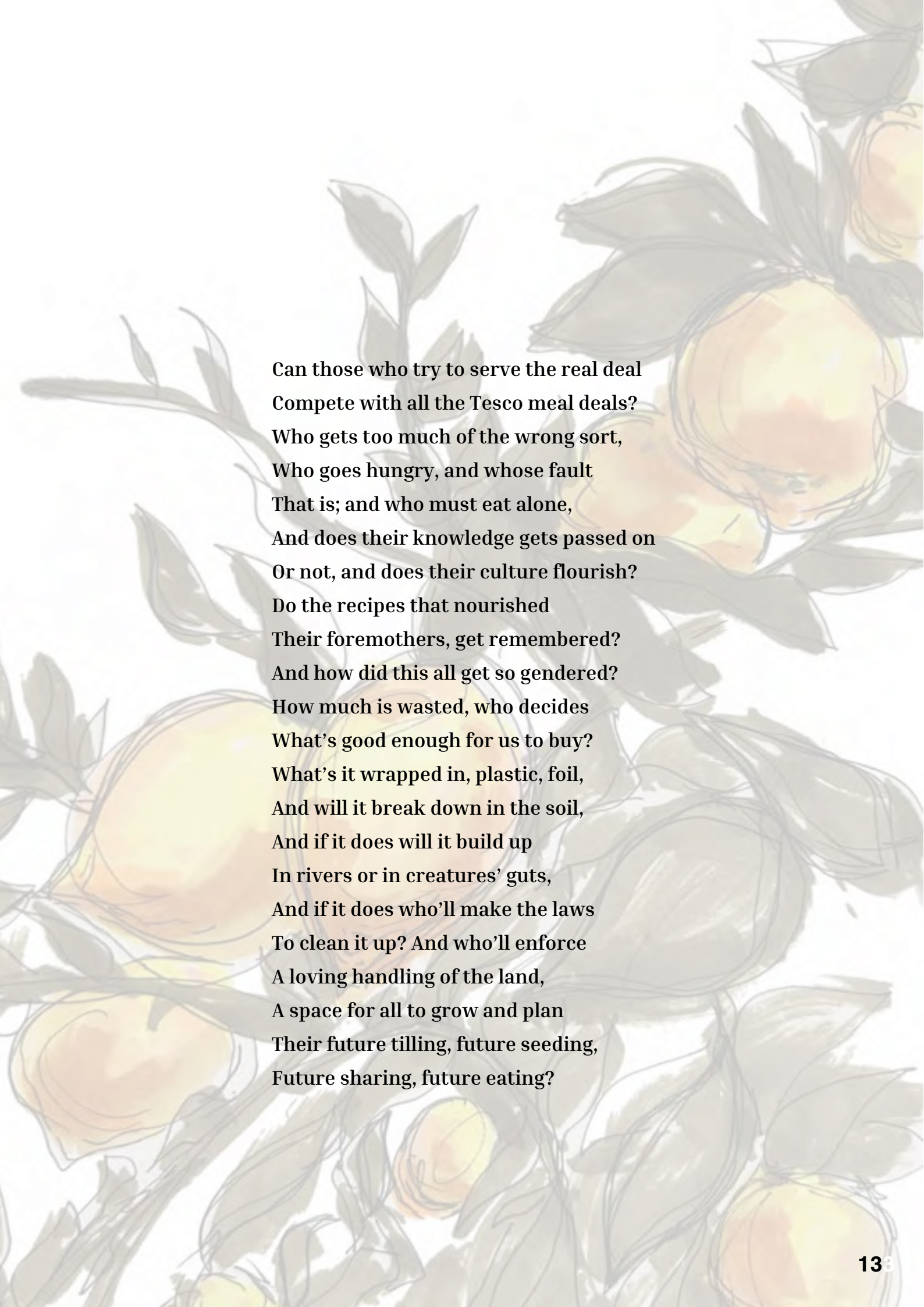
‘We collect the best surplus fruit and give this away to residents of York through various not-for-profit community projects. Even damaged fruit and windfalls can be collected and used for preserves and juicing.’



## WHAT'S A FOOD SYSTEM?

Well it's all about....

Where it's grown and how the soil is  
Whether we've got compost toilets  
To bring the nutrients back round  
And make rich humus in the ground,  
And whether worms and butterflies  
Are given ample space to thrive,  
And if the climate lets us grow it,  
Whether it's machines that sow it,  
In what country, and whose labour?  
Whom do terms of trading favour?  
Who gets paid and does a union  
Stand to help them get their due?  
Those who choose food, those who chew food,  
And which kids get bad or good food.  
Who eats meat, who never sees it,  
How the animals are treated.  
Which streets have the really good shops,  
Which ones just the odd fast food shop,  
What it costs to cook it tasty,  
Who's got time and who's too hasty,  
Since their jobs keep them up late just  
Keeping calories on their plates.  
When it's cheap, who pays the cost?  
When a chain wins, what gets lost?



Can those who try to serve the real deal  
Compete with all the Tesco meal deals?  
Who gets too much of the wrong sort,  
Who goes hungry, and whose fault  
That is; and who must eat alone,  
And does their knowledge gets passed on  
Or not, and does their culture flourish?  
Do the recipes that nourished  
Their foremothers, get remembered?  
And how did this all get so gendered?  
How much is wasted, who decides  
What's good enough for us to buy?  
What's it wrapped in, plastic, foil,  
And will it break down in the soil,  
And if it does will it build up  
In rivers or in creatures' guts,  
And if it does who'll make the laws  
To clean it up? And who'll enforce  
A loving handling of the land,  
A space for all to grow and plan  
Their future tilling, future seeding,  
Future sharing, future eating?



# FOOD STORIES

During Living Lab events we invited  
guests to write down some food  
memories, here are just a few ...





When I was young, my fav  
pudding was Mississippi Mud  
Pie. My mum would use  
a knife to make a smiley  
face in the chocolate.  
If there was no smiley face,  
it didn't taste the same.  
♡

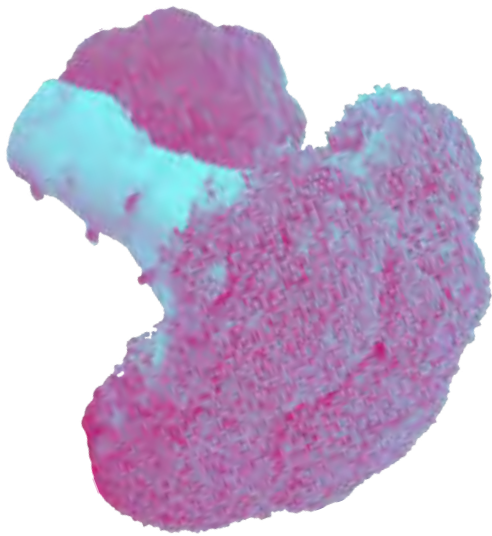
Being a lazy cook,  
was happy to  
discover batch  
cooking. Now I cook  
and freeze stuff.



I grow food because I  
like to eat! The n diverse  
my garden, the more diverse  
my diet.







I've learnt about the General Store at Spark (run by Dan) which sells £1 bags of rejected food from super-markets - fantastic resource!

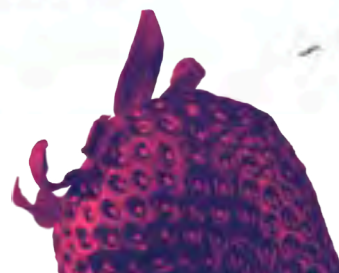
Made a Sweet Potato based Pie that took until the last minute in the oven to look like a Pie.

£ 2 hours is a long time to wait & your labour & love to look edible.



Living in Japan made me realise the importance of seasonal food. It's more sustainable, lets you look forward to certain food, made me try more diverse food and the excitement of trying something new.

- Amy





it's not easy to choose only one food memory because in my culture food plays a key role in shaping connections and relationships. I can recall many dishes my grandma used to make and now we as a family are always trying to bring back her memory by cooking the same foods.

My favourite food memory is baking gingerbread with my grandma. My family rarely ate meals together but Christmas baking was one of the few times we would sit down together. This was a tradition that we did every year without fail and Christmas was always my favourite season.



Since coming back from Japan I've realised British Pesto has not only gone up in price but also does not taste of anything anymore. :c







# GERALD'S ALLOTMENT

BY CHARLOTTE TUNKS

Gerald stepped down from his caravan and walked the short distance to the allotment he tended to, a permanent smile etched onto his square face. This place was his pride and joy. Every moment he got to live and work here gave him the happiness he had always dreamed of.

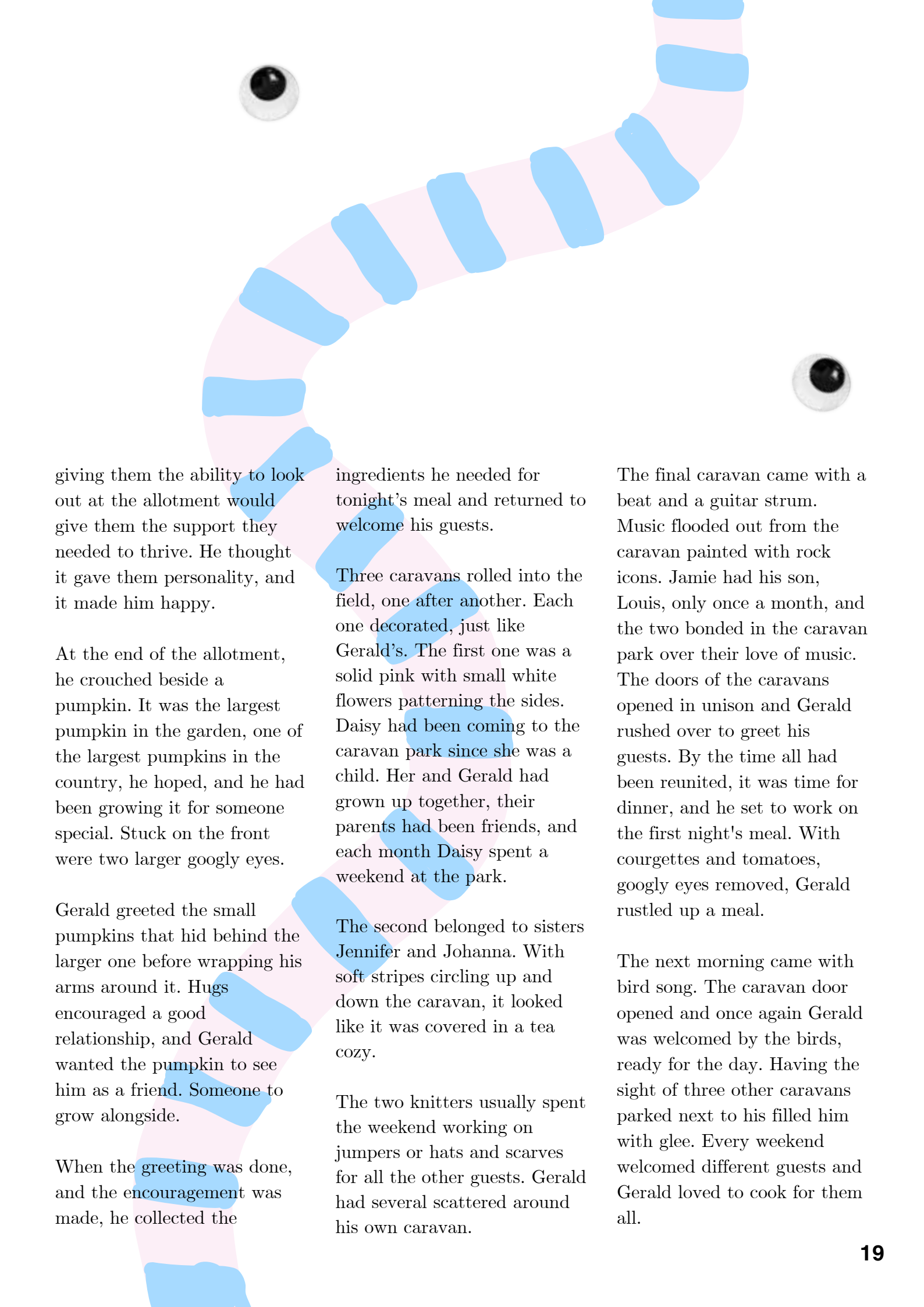
Today was a special day. The visitors this weekend were special to him, and he wanted to make sure that the food he would be cooking was just as special.

The allotment was just as it should be, and when Gerald arrived, he went straight to the back. Passed the broad beans, passed the sprouts and tomatoes, all with small googly eyes stuck to them. Gerald smiled and said a bright 'hello' to them all as he went, checking and looking to see any new growth. He spoke encouraging words to them, and believed

High in the sky, the birds were singing. They dipped and dived through the blue and whistled a song welcoming the new day. Below them sat a caravan park. New visitors would be arriving soon, and the birds were happy to see them.

Until then, a lone caravan stood in the corner of the field. It had been painted with bright greens and oranges. Images of fruits and vegetables coated the outside, and within lived Gerald. Gerald loved vegetables. Carrots, parsnips, sweet potatoes. Each one and more depicted on his caravan.

The door opened and a smiling Gerald was welcomed by the sweet bird song, ready for the day ahead. He was a gentle man, with thoughts filled with how his allotment would have grown since yesterday. He was tall and strong, with dirt beneath his nails, made for the hardship of gardening.



giving them the ability to look out at the allotment would give them the support they needed to thrive. He thought it gave them personality, and it made him happy.

At the end of the allotment, he crouched beside a pumpkin. It was the largest pumpkin in the garden, one of the largest pumpkins in the country, he hoped, and he had been growing it for someone special. Stuck on the front were two larger googly eyes.

Gerald greeted the small pumpkins that hid behind the larger one before wrapping his arms around it. Hugs encouraged a good relationship, and Gerald wanted the pumpkin to see him as a friend. Someone to grow alongside.

When the greeting was done, and the encouragement was made, he collected the

ingredients he needed for tonight's meal and returned to welcome his guests.

Three caravans rolled into the field, one after another. Each one decorated, just like Gerald's. The first one was a solid pink with small white flowers patterning the sides. Daisy had been coming to the caravan park since she was a child. Her and Gerald had grown up together, their parents had been friends, and each month Daisy spent a weekend at the park.

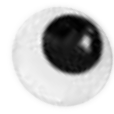
The second belonged to sisters Jennifer and Johanna. With soft stripes circling up and down the caravan, it looked like it was covered in a tea cozy.

The two knitters usually spent the weekend working on jumpers or hats and scarves for all the other guests. Gerald had several scattered around his own caravan.

The final caravan came with a beat and a guitar strum. Music flooded out from the caravan painted with rock icons. Jamie had his son, Louis, only once a month, and the two bonded in the caravan park over their love of music. The doors of the caravans opened in unison and Gerald rushed over to greet his guests. By the time all had been reunited, it was time for dinner, and he set to work on the first night's meal. With courgettes and tomatoes, googly eyes removed, Gerald rustled up a meal.

The next morning came with bird song. The caravan door opened and once again Gerald was welcomed by the birds, ready for the day. Having the sight of three other caravans parked next to his filled him with glee. Every weekend welcomed different guests and Gerald loved to cook for them all.





His smile beamed as he surveyed the caravan park and made his usual journey to the allotment. The sun had just risen, the field lit up with the shine of it and Gerald's smile brightened. He hummed a tune to himself as he wandered through the allotment.

All was well, each plant growing with exuberance. He greeted and encouraged, humming between each one, but when he reached his prized pumpkin, his song was lost on the breeze.

The front of the vegetable was destroyed. Broken inwards, a large googly eye hanging loosely from the stringy pulp. Seeds had spilled out over the rest of the patch, splattering them with the insides of a friend.

Gerald fell to his knees; despair coated his features and stealing his smile. The bird song ceased; the breeze

drifted down to comfort him, and he was surrounded by the rest of his beloved allotment. His mind stumbled over it all. The googly eyed vegetables as witnesses. The desecrated pumpkin. The villain who did it.

'Gerald?' A soft hand reached for his shoulder, rubbing circles over his shirt. 'Oh my.' Daisy had been his longest friend. The vegetables grew and fed, ever changing, but Daisy was always constant. He raised his head to look at her, concern and sympathy filled her eyes. He was distraught, but with Daisy he could recover.

'Who did this, Gerald?' He shrugged, still looking for the strength to get up. 'I don't know,' He pushed his feet to stand, and she held onto his arm, 'Will you help me find out?'

She looked around at the mess below. Her hair fell in front

of her face, hiding her expression from him, but when she returned his gaze, she nodded.

The caravan park and allotment were a long way from the nearest village, so they assumed it must be someone much closer.

The door of the tea cozy caravan was open, letting the morning breeze drift in. Jennifer and Johanna were sat on fold out chairs outside, the tapping of knitting needles provided the background noise as Daisy and Gerald asked them if they ventured into the allotment last night. The knitting continued, simultaneous 'no's coming in answer. Gerald frowned but left them to their yarn.

Their steps were punctuated with the beat of a drum. Louis twirled the drumstick around his fingers and Daisy waved back. Jamie stepped out of the caravan; a guitar strapped

over his shoulder.

‘Hey Gerald, you want to hear what we’ve been working on?’ Jamie pulled the guitar onto his lap.

‘Actually, Jamie, something’s happened.’ Daisy told them about the pumpkin but they both shook their heads, not knowing anything.

Gerald’s frown deepened. He believed them.

He left them and turned back towards the allotment.

‘Gerald, wait.’ Daisy caught up to him, ‘Where are you going?’

‘Back to the pumpkin, it needs me.’

‘Why don’t you sit out here with me. It’s not good for you to wallow.’

Gerald’s head hung low. It had been a nice distraction to investigate with Daisy. He liked her but he also liked his allotment. He had wanted to figure out what had happened.

Something on Daisy’s shoe caught his eye. Stuck on the side of her boot was a googly eye. She looked at what he was staring and quickly stepping away.

‘It was you.’

‘No, I think I just stepped on it when...’ She tried to wipe her boot on the grass, but the googly eye was stuck firm, cementing her guilt. She sighed, defeated, stopping her attempt to conceal it ‘Yes, it was me.’

‘Why?’ The betrayal pierced him.

‘Because I’m in love with you. Because every time I come here, you obsess over that pumpkin and I’m jealous.’

‘You’re in love with me?’

There was a heartbeat of silence, ‘I was growing that pumpkin to impress you.’

‘You were?’

He nodded, and suddenly the despair that had consumed

The bird song returned, and Daisy smiled sadly.

‘I’m sorry.’ She picked the googly eye from her shoe.

‘I’m sorry, too.’ She reached up and stuck the googly eye on the end of his nose. They laughed, all forgiven.

Everyone enjoyed a bowl of pumpkin soup that evening, and Gerald had a sudden realisation that it was not the allotment that gave him this perpetual feeling on joy, it was the ability to feed the people he cared for.

When the soup was gone, and the sun began to set, Jennifer and Johanna pulled out one of their creations. It was a bright orange hat, a green stalk sprouted from the top and Gerald wore it proudly.

He turned to Jamie and Louis, ‘Will you play that song for us now?’

Music played, and Gerald’s heart was full.



# Which novel will be your next Summer read?

START

Finish this sentence: I wanna read about -

Food! (amongst other things)

Actually, I'd rather be watching Netflix

Do you like 'bizarre' characters?

The weirder the better!

I prefer 'homicidal'

Ouch! You fell at the first hurdle. Try again.

What about witty narrators?

Define 'witty'

Uh, obviously

Fancy a *Hamlet* retelling?

Not particularly

Family drama? Yes please!

No - that's what the Google search bar is for

How about vampires?

I hate Twilight!

Sounds fang-tastic!



## **Fat Ham** **James Ijames**

Whether you're familiar with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* or not, this play is a sizzling drama stuffed full of delicious BBQ food and family tension - yummy!



## **Oryx and Crake** **Margaret Atwood**

Fancy poultry for dinner? Try ChickieNobs! Easy to cook, and even easier to grow - these eyeless, beakless, and brainless chickens at the Watson-Crick labs are nearly ready for slaughter! Pre-heat your oven and get the cutlery out - chicken's back on the menu!

## **Convenience Store Woman** **Saya Murata**

Keiko wouldn't wish to be anywhere else but the refrigerated aisles of the convenience store, and the food she purchases from the store only seems to deepen her love for her job.



## **Ghost Wall** **Sarah Moss**

This is a family vacation like no other. Forget Disneyland; think more 'Northumberland countryside.' Sylvie's father wants their camping expedition to be as authentic as possible, and that means foraging and hunting for their food.

## **Woman, Eating** **Claire Kohda**

Lydia can only digest one thing - blood. Still, she lives a semi-normal life, working in London, dating, and, oh, feasting on pigs blood. But how sustainable is her lifestyle? Sometimes hiding who you are can be so, well, *draining*.



## **Mother Land** **Melissa Thompson**

Thompson's cookbook is a time-travelling meditation on Jamaican food, with over eighty mouth-watering recipes.



# The YSJ Prison Partnership Project

The York St John (YSJ) University Prison Partnership Project started in 2013 and is a partnership between York St John University and HMP New Hall (closed female prison) & HMP Askham Grange (open female prison). It was born out of the idea and desire to provide a unique creative arts partnership between education, the arts and the criminal justice system, facilitating weekly drama and arts provision in prisons.

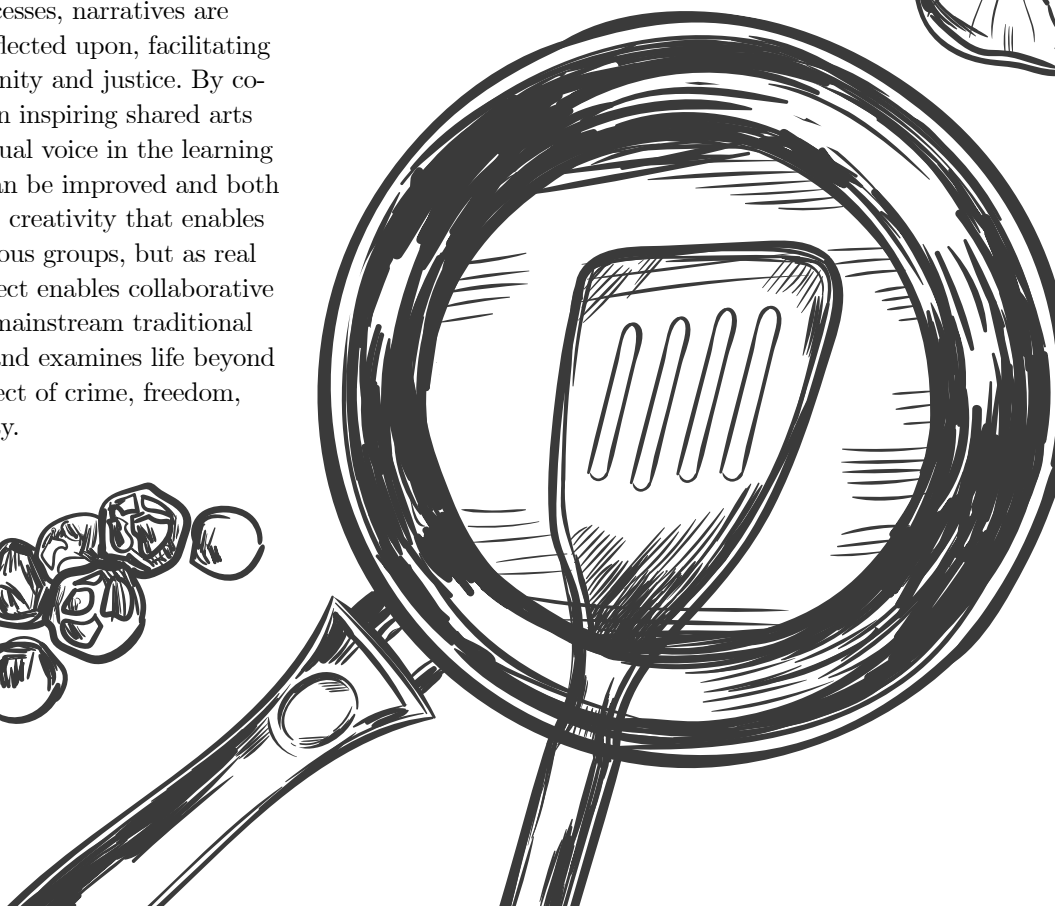
The partnership brings together two different kinds of communities - university students & staff and female prisoners & prison staff and aims to enable each to encounter each other across profound social barriers; two communities who in other circumstances wouldn't normally meet. The intention is for both communities to be part of a transformative & educational learning experience that emphasises creative collaboration and addresses issues of social concern. The aim of the project is to merge these two worlds so that participants come together through arts engagement, to unearth & illuminate dialogues that explore perspectives & perceptions of women in the criminal justice system, beyond adopted media myth & society stigma.

Through creative group workshop processes, narratives are shared and pathways into offending reflected upon, facilitating a deeper understanding of self, community and justice. By co-creating theatre and participating in an inspiring shared arts practice that encourages hope & an equal voice in the learning experience; self-esteem & confidence can be improved and both communities can encounter thinking & creativity that enables each to see each other not as homogenous groups, but as real people & artists. The partnership project enables collaborative arts making to happen outside of the mainstream traditional theatre or educational learning space and examines life beyond university and the prison walls in respect of crime, freedom, education, culture, family & community.

## The Prison Partnership and the Living Lab

The YSJ PPP was delighted to contribute to the Living Lab Food Stories series, facilitating women in prison to reflect and have conversations about food and recipes that held importance for them when exploring and discussing home, identity and the connections to family and self. The recipes and stories were created with women on the HMP Askham Grange singing project with 2nd year BA Community Students and on the drama project at HMP New Hall with 2nd year BA Drama Education & Community students.

Listen, read and enjoy!



History

Food, it has always been a bone of contention for me.

Born with coeliac disease way back in the mid 1950's, with little or no information or alternative food for a child like me.

Although I say I was born with it, I was not diagnosed until I was four and a half years old. This was following life saving surgery which resulted in me losing a large part of my bowel.

Still, despite having limited information my mum and my grandparents worked tirelessly to ensure I was fed.

My nans rice pudding was legendary and grandads pan Haggerty was a wonderful tea time treat.

My mam made pots and pots of her home made soap, so thick you needed a knife and fork to eat it.

My dad used to make me <sup>banana</sup> and custard pots, they were <sup>just</sup> heavenly, so it's thanks to them all that I am still here today.

## Top tips for living with Coeliac Disease when living in shared accommodation

By Hillary

- Register with the Campus/Local GP ASAP to ensure they are aware of your condition and that any medication is in place from day one.
- Explain to your house mates the importance of keeping food separate and your food prep area strictly for you.
- Always use your own utensils for food prep and cooking. Also use your own pans. Not everyone is as clean as you!
- Have your own chopping boards for all your food prep, colour coded for food groups.
- Buy your own toaster or use toaster bags. Toasters don't get cleaned out on a regular basis and gluten crumbs might get on your toast!
- Label all your food packets and boxes. Keep them in your room because a jar of gluten free ingredients is twice as expensive as regular ingredients!
- Ensure kitchen area is clean prior to preparing your food.
- Read contents labels regularly as manufacturers change their ingredients quite often.
- Never taste even just a little bit of someone else's food! Remember it only takes a few crumbs to cause a massive flare up.



# Peppermint Crunch

I grew up in a small town in Cumbria. It's out of the way, you have to be going there, you don't just drive past it. I feel like it could be described as a big cul-de-sac. There are advantages and disadvantages to living in a small town, everyone knows your business. So when you need support it's there but the flip side to that is people gossip and know things that perhaps you would rather, they didn't. I think of it as a quirky town, there are things that go on that are just totally normal to me but maybe to outsiders would be a little odd. There was a bakery in town that made things I assumed you could buy in bakeries up and down the country. One of those is a meat patty, which is a circular pastry filled with pork mince. It's just delicious. And the other thing as you might guess is a Peppermint Crunch.



## Recipe

### Ingredients

150g Self Raising Flour

75g Light Brown Sugar

30g Cocoa Powder

(or a little more if you want it more chocolatey)

150g MELTED butter

100g (or 4 big handfuls) of Crushed Cornflakes  
(I just crush them with my hands you don't want to fine crumbs)

### Topping

250-300g Icing Sugar

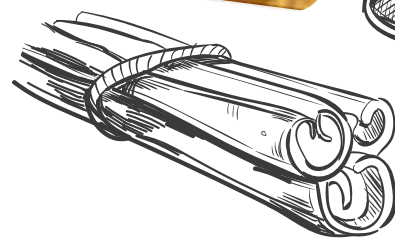
2-3 drops of peppermint essence  
(or more if you like it strong)

Green food colouring  
(or any colour if you want to confuse people!)

200g bar of Chocolate  
(dark or milk whichever you prefer)



My best friend is also from the small town which we have both moved away from but ended up living near each other, so our friendship has continued through lives ups and downs. Her life has not been easy at times. One day not long before her birthday we were talking about the mint choc crisp and no one else knew what we were talking about. They thought it was like a flapjack or something. Baking is something I love to do so I decided I would make her a tray instead of a birthday cake. Since that conversation I have made her a mint choc crisp without fail for her birthday. There was no recipe, so I combined a few recipes and made this one that I am sharing with you all.



## Method

Preheat oven to 180 degrees and line a baking tray (approx. 30x10 cm) with baking paper

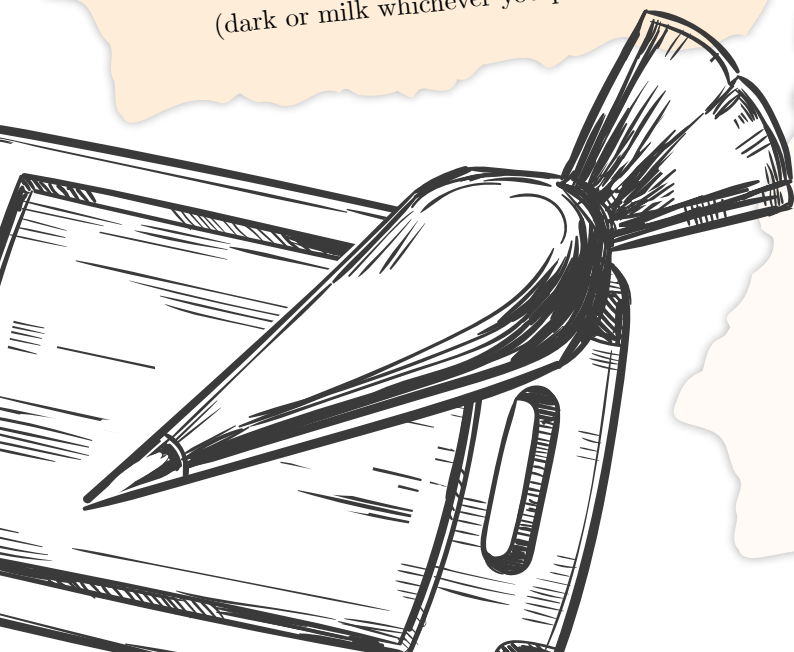
Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and mix together. Pour in the melted butter and make sure everything is mixed together. Put into the baking tray and spread it out evenly, I used the back of a spoon to do this. Bake for around 20-25 minutes

Mix the icing sugar with enough water so it is thick in consistency (a bit like playdough) Add the food colouring and peppermint essence.

Allow the crunch to cool for no more than 5 minutes and then spread the icing sugar on top. Sometimes I have to make up a little more to cover it all. My friend loves a thick layer of icing!

Allow the Icing sugar to set then top with melted chocolate and allow to set

Enjoy!





## Dinner Party – Nigeria

### By Buki

There is music playing in the background, people are chatting and are buzzing like bees. The sun is shining brightly and there is sweat dripping from peoples faces and body. The chatting and laughter of the men and women is buzzing around the compound bringing the atmosphere alive. Soon the smell of food will be in the air, mouths will be watering, and the excitement will move up a level.

A loud shout from the inside the house alerts everyone to appear busy, not to be caught doing nothing. The Madam shouts out “Madam Caterer, where are you?”

Madam caterer answers saying, “I am here”. She greets the Madam good morning.

“Have the cooks started with the cooking yet?” asks the Madam. “Let me remind you what I expect for me guests. Jollof rice, friend rice (Nigerian style) and white rice to be served with the special chilli stew. The rice should have their distinctive scent or burnt wood. Madam caterer, do you understand? Have you got the spices and ingredients for the different rice you are cooking? Take these and I will come round to taste the food later”.

Madam Caterer smiles and tell the madam that when she tastes the food, she will call her again. Madam Caterer rushes away with the ingredients and spices.

The Madam turns around and starts walking towards the Butcher. “Butcher man, are you there? What is happening here? Look at the slow men at work?”

“I am here” replies the Butcher. “Why are you calling us slow men at work? Come and see what we are doing. We have prepared the cow meat, goat meat, chicken, and fresh fish. All the seasoning has been done and I have instructed the cooks how we will present it”.

Recipe

Ewa Oloyin With Plantain

Ingredients

700ml water, plus extra as needed

300g honey beans or black-eyed beans

150g onion, chopped

2 tbs vegetable oil

1 tsp chilli powder

1 tsp salt

150g red pepper, chopped

1 tube tomato puree

2 medium ripe plantains 1/2 litre veg



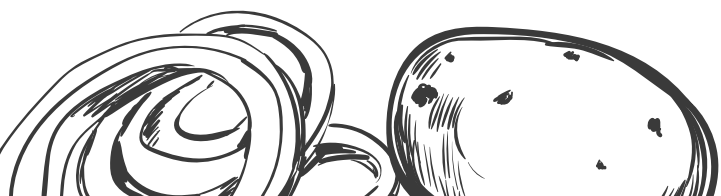
“There will be fried beef. This will be mixed with pepper sauce made with stew. We will have pepper soup made from the beef and goat meat. We will also have friend chicken. The fish will be steamed and mixed with sauce.”

“Madam do not worry yourself about the meat and food, because when you taste it, you will be so happy that you start dancing. Madam you will give me a cash gift! Madam, I wanted to ask what you are celebrating? Your birthday?”

Madam replies “You will know later. Let me go and taste the rice”.

The table and chairs are set. The food is dished into the serving trays. The guests have arrived and are seated, and music is playing. Madam is now dressed up in gold and silver and walks majestically towards the mini stage. She starts her brief welcome to the guests and family present.

“Thank you very much for honouring my invitation. I know you are enjoying the different delicacies prepared for you to enjoy”. She continued “Earlier on someone asked me what I was celebrating. Yes, I am thanking God for sparing my life, my friends and family. I started counting my blessings one by one and I was surprised at how the Lord has done for me. I think it is about time I extend my invitation to the neighbours as they have been stretching their necks and I know their mouths are watering. Come and join us, eat and be merry!”





### IN CONVERSATION WITH HAYDEN COSTELLO

#### **Tell us about the Living Lab Student Cafe - what is it, and how did you get involved?**

So last year the living lab did a module within the psychology department; I'd heard about that and they had a student research position going. I'm a student and I needed the cash so I figured I'd do it, it was work experience as well. I was talking to other students about their opinions on what the university provides food wise. There was the student allotments being developed at the time and a lot of people were asking 'well, what are we doing with the food we grow?'. I made the mistake of mentioning, 'oh we should do a student led café, that would be a really good idea.' So my boss, Cath, turned around and said, "yeah you can do that". So now we run a student led café!

#### **Sounds brilliant! Where can we find the cafe?**

So we don't have a physical structure at the moment because we're still working with funding and stuff but



the plan is it will be in an area just behind the chapel. There will be an outside area and then we've got a prep room already in the student union because we've got support from them and the estates team. So it's just looking for funding sources at the moment and then we should be set up, sort of. We're thinking that it'll be about October that we'll be physically on campus.

#### **Do you think this is one of the ways we can help students with the Cost of Living Crisis?**

Whilst I was setting up the café there was a lot of talks with the canteen staff and a lot of what their doing is really good. I mean the fact that for like £3.50 you can get a full portion! You can't really get that anywhere else. But at the same time, they don't have a whole variety of options, especially for people who have dietary restrictions. There aren't many ethnic foods, and things like that, so I was thinking if there was a way we could, you know, provide that, but at a lower cost so we're not making students fork out for a basic human right, basically.

## ON CAMPUS

---

### **What has the Student Café been up to so far?**

Well, we're in the trial stage at the moment, but we've had two stalls, we've given out free samples as a way of trying to get the word out. We've set up social medias and we've reached out to different funding options. I'm currently in a national competition for a £75,000 funding deposit, or part of that anyway. Basically it's lots of different universities and businesses who have funding pots, and they reach out to students that have sustainable projects going on; if my project is deemed as, you know, one of the higher ones up there, I'll hopefully get a good chunk of that. The main thing is proving to the university that it's worth full investment, because obviously we'll be taking up campus space; there will be some money that needs to go into it. It's all about showing that students are actually interested.

### **Would students have to pay for the food at the café?**

I mean, ideally I'd just give out free food wherever I could, but the university would turn that down in a

second. I'd be out of profit just like the canteen is, and I'd have to start charging and then heightening up the prices to be able to keep afloat. That's something I don't want to do, especially with the cost of living. I mean, if that started happening to the café I'd shut it down. So I'll be charging but it will be low, low prices. I want a minimal profit so then I can go back and go, 'okay I'll buy the ingredients and sell it again next week', or I can make little repairs. It'll be the bare minimum as appose to, you know, most businesses who want to make, like, a 60% profit. The priority is providing students with affordable and nutritious meals.



**The YSJ Garden Student Café will be piloting in early October.**

Transcript by Sophie Ripley and Ania Kukula



At a Burns Night do there's often a call  
For a toast to the lassies in the hall,  
Followed by one for the laddies in return  
A sweet tradition and nothing to spurn.  
But today our mission lies elsewhere  
Than gender relations. It's in what we share.  
It's a diverse crowd, to be matter-of-fact,  
But an activist's an activist for a' that.  
So it's a toast instead to the film-makers,  
To the gruel modellers, to the dyers and bakers,  
To the warmly-dressed outdoor educators,  
To the pithy writers and punchy bloggers,  
To all the thoughtful data loggers,  
To the thinkers, the sharers, to the brainstormers,  
The meeting leaders, the atmosphere warmers,  
The awkward questioners and bold performers.

To



The

A

C

t

i

V

i

S

T

S



To the Facebook posters, the frequent emailers,  
 The brave risk-takers and the sometimes-failers,  
 To the interviewers, the storytellers,  
 The passionate vegans, the thoughtful meat lovers,  
 The researchers of the views of others.  
 To those that make the food and that serve it,  
 Those that buy it, grow it, preserve it,  
 That probe the supply chain and challenge injustice,  
 That try not to waste it, give out the surplus,  
 Create the new orchards and projects and gardens,  
 That build things and watch for the interest to broaden,  
 The imaginers of different ways of working and living,  
 The inventors who flesh out the vision with striving.  
 It's a toast to the activists and a passing on  
 Of their baton, so raise your glasses as one: To the activists!

By Dr Catherine Heinemeyer



# Incantation

By Mie Claridge

We call on you spirits of nature  
Of all that surround us but remain so far  
out of our grasp

We are the writers of stories  
imaginary promises of greatness  
Destiny written in the bottom of our tea cups

We are beings of words  
that we desperately force into meaning  
which is everywhere and nowhere all at once

We have become our symbols  
so busy seeking the truth that we are blinded  
by all that the word *human* ought to mean

Lost and unable to find our way  
help us to understand your wordless stories  
so that we may learn how to live together  
on this earth

peacefully

to headbutt 3) an unhinged person. Nutshell: shell of a nut, in a nutshell to summarise briefly

Hard little **nut**, the truth. Call it a **pistachio**, as they're your favourite. Call it those ones at the bottom of the bag that never opened. The bottom of the **bag**, that's where the truth is. Asked to write about **food** and I write about you. I write about you because **food** is a relationship. I eat more since I met you, I've got fatter since I met you. I write about you because I can make it beautiful. I can't make beautiful what I kept at the bottom of my **bag**. My school **bag**, black and purple Nike with the green side pouches. **Rotten food**, that's what I kept there. Carrying my folders in my arms because there was no room. I must have stunk. I must have stunk so bad; **putrid**, **rotted** to the point of liquid. You have such a sense of smell. What am I worried you'll find out? That memory of Ruth from my form, asking me what I kept in my **bag**? How I pulled it so savagely away from her that I hurt her? I can still see the look on her face, the surprise at how viciously I'd pulled, hurt her. She never tried to look again. I did. I'd take each **mouldy**, disgusting package and shove it into a carrier, tying the handles when the **bag** was full, telling myself I could throw it. Put it in the bin. Only suppose people found it in the bin, suppose they traced it to me? Suppose there was something in the **bag** with my name on? I'd pack and unpack them, handling each **mouldy food bag** over and over again. Better to keep them. Stuffed-full carrier on stuffed-full carrier in my **bag**. I walked miles to school everyday, miles back, carrying them. It was normal. It was fucking normal, hiding them in my locker, my wardrobe, the overhead cupboards. The little **food** flies in my room got so bad I attacked them with hairspray, squashing them off the ceiling with a towel in the night. Secrets, secrets, how do we manage to keep such secrets? To be so immersed in love and hide so much from it?

Everyday my mum giving me **sandwiches** and everyday me not saying, *don't give me them,*

*please don't give me them.* I did say *can I just buy hot lunch today*, I did do that sometimes, so at least those days there was just the carrying not the adding. Now my mum is dead and I want her to make me a fucking **sandwich**. Horrible **nut** that breaks your teeth. I'd manage to empty the **bag** sometimes, then the cupboard, clean out my room, carrying a **bag** a day to obscure bins waiting 'till school emptied, paranoid, shoving them in the bin by the toilets; squeezing that soft mess through the slot. Disgusting, I knew I was fucking disgusting. Would tell myself that was it, that I could start again. But that's what I did, I started again, same thing; green pockets full first, then the bottom of the **bag**, then the carriers, then the cupboards and the stink and the flies. And I had no idea why I did it. It was what I did. I was in trouble for bullying, I had one friend and OCD that had me up at night, grasping the wood shelves in my room reciting patterns in my head. Only this was 1998 and I'd never heard of OCD; no one was looking out for OCD, it was just another weird thing I did alone in my room with the fucking indoor **compost** heap and the flies. My grandad had Alzheimer's, driving my parents to distraction and I'd already known 3 deaths. I think I was already ill with absence seizures, living in my head. I have clearer memories of the things in my head than I do my teen years except for that fucking **bag**. That **fucking bag**, I remember the **relief** when I chucked it and for decades I wouldn't eat **lunch**. I wouldn't pack **lunch**, I was fucking terrified of **lunch** boxes. Look at the language it's making me use, just thinking about it. And I became that woman in the office that was weird about **lunch** and even now, even now when I'll pack **food** and eat it, there's stuff I do. Like the 3 used **lunch** boxes I've had kicking around this week, one buried by the door under the shoes. So what happens when you move in? What will you smell out? What happens with the **sandwich** bags you tie around all your **food** to keep it clean, to keep it fresh? It's 2.24 am and I'm having to stay awake, over write what I

wrote here in this piece I made so I can say instead about that girl's face when I yanked my bag back. How she rubbed her shoulder shocked. How I hurt her. The only thing I can say, the only way I can take this anywhere, is that I'm so comfortable with you I've got chubby. It was never about thinness, I had no relationship with my image as a teen, I'm using chubby as measure, as a sign of truth. I'm so comfortable with you that I eat in restaurants, I'm so comfortable with you that I eat; I look forward to **picnics**. To packed bags of **food**. I'm not frightened of food with you. Sometimes, those closed **pistachios** crack if you set your teeth hard enough. Despite all the times I've made myself throw up, (or just thrown up, no control over it, a response I've had to **food** since I was old enough to chew) my enamel is still good. I've good teeth, I'm getting to the **nut** inside the shell. That's as beautiful as I can make it.





# RESOURCES

## Food Banks in York

### City Centre

#### I Am Reusable

Shed open Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday, Sunday 10am till  
5pm  
45 Aldborough Way, YO26 4UX,  
Off Leeman Road

### Haxby

Door 84 Youth and Community  
Centre

Friday 11am till 11pm

Pay as you feel cafe, advice and  
support community food bank.  
Lowther Street, The Groves, YO31  
7LX

### Tang Hall

Wednesdays, 11am noon till  
12.30

Tang Hall Community Centre,  
Fifth Avenue,  
YO31 6DG

### HOPING Street Kitchen

Sundays 2.20 - 4pm

Hot homemade meals and  
foodbank.

City Centre, outside King's Manor,  
Exhibition Square, YO17EP

### Acomb

#### Lidgett Grove

Tuesdays and Fridays  
9am onwards

Lidgett Methodist Church,  
Wheatlands Grove,  
YO26 5NH

### Seacroft

#### Collective Sharehouse

Tuesdays and Fridays, 9.15 - 11 a.m  
Wednesdays 5-6 p.m  
Clements Hall, Nunthorpe Road,  
YO23 1BW

## References

<http://redtoweryork.org.uk/>  
<https://www.livewellyork.co.uk>  
<https://www.tworidingscf.org.uk/>  
<https://www.foodcircleyork.co.uk/>

# CONTRIBUTORS

<b>Dr Catherine Heinemeyer</b>	<b>Co-ordinator of the York St John Living Lab</b>
<b>Vicki Pugh</b>	<b>Co-ordinator of the York St John Living Lab</b>
<b>Mie Claridge</b>	<b>Project officer on the Food Stories project</b>
<b>Amie Watts</b>	<b>Editor and Designer</b>
<b>Abigail Webster</b>	<b>Editor</b>
<b>Charlotte Tunks</b>	<b>Charlotte Tunks is a York based writer, studying a Masters in Creative Writing and Publishing. She writes short stories inspired by folklore, ghost tales, and long winter nights</b>
<b>Seline Duzenli</b>	<b>Page 12, 13, and 31 - 'Fruit Illustartions'</b>
<b>Hayden Costello</b>	<b>Garden Café Coordinator in the Living Lab</b>
<b>Kathryn Lund</b>	<b>Author of "The Things We Left Sleeping," Lund's work explores her life with a neurological disability, as well as her identity as a queer woman.</b>
<b>Faye Rogers</b>	<b>Page 10 - 'Warning: May contain cheese, milk, salt, and memories of home' art</b>
<b>Jack Morton</b>	<b>Page 11 - 'York St John' Food illustration</b>
<b>Ania Kukula</b>	<b>History student and placement volunteer</b>
<b>Sophie Ripley</b>	<b>History student and placement volunteer</b>
<b>Women from the York St John University Prison Partnership Project - HMP Askham Grange singing project</b>	





This magazine was created as part  
of York St John's 'Living Lab:  
Feeding the Campus' project.



Institute  
for  
Social  
Justice

York St John University