

For your information only - no need to reply - Best wishes, ¹³⁴⁶⁶ Liz Taylor ✓

VEGAN COMMUNITY PROJECT

NEWSLETTER No. 1

FEBRUARY 1987

Hello, and welcome to the first Vegan Community Project newsletter! Apologies to those of you who have been waiting to hear from us - we in turn have been waiting to get in the replies to our various advertisements, so as to assess the amount of interest before producing a newsletter.

The response has been very encouraging. We currently have a contact list of 55 names and addresses, and many of these are couples or families of course. That is certainly enough people to get started on something. The next step, as we see it, is to draw up a more detailed contacts list giving information about people's wants, needs and intentions regarding a community, and to distribute this to everyone on the list. Then we can get a reasonable idea about how much similarity there is in our ideas, and what the potential problem areas are. After that, a meeting will no doubt be needed, and we really ought to start thinking about that now. So, what about a meeting during the summer, a camping weekend perhaps, somewhere fairly central? Have you any suggestions? Can you offer to host/arrange such a meeting? This is 'our' project: you are now involved in it, and we need to hear from you and get your active support.

What is the Vegan Community Project?

For those of you who are not clear about this, the VCP has 2 aims:

- (1) to form a contact network between people who are interested in forming and living in a vegan community;
- (2) to ourselves form a vegan community in the near future.

Those of us who have set up the Project do not wish to be authoritarian and say, "This is how the community will be: are you interested?". Rather, we want to hear about the sort of community other people want, see where our ideas coincide or are at least compatible, and where our differences lie, and then with some compromise and a lot of tolerance from everybody, we can draw out of the great melting pot a viable ground-plan for a community. So, our apologies to any of you who hoped to have the "ideal community" handed to you on a plate - I am afraid we shall all have to work for our supper! If you believe as we do in an egalitarian community, then it is important that everybody has their say now, at the beginning, and is actively involved in its formation.

Before we can realistically tackle the practical questions such as "What legal structure should the community take (housing co-op, trust, charity etc.)?" or "How is it to be financed?" we must first decide upon the sort of community we want to live in. So please ask yourself, "How do I want to live? What sort of work do I want to be doing? What degree of co-operation with other people do I really want? WHAT SORT OF VEGAN COMMUNITY DO I WANT TO LIVE IN?". Which brings us to.....

Information for your entry in the VCP Contacts List

Enclosed is a request for information about yourself and your ideas concerning a vegan community, with questions to help you write something. Your reply will form your actual entry on the VCP Contacts List. Please do not write more than the equivalent of 2 sides of typed A4 (if you do, we may have to cut it). If you answer the questions we have listed, it will help both you and the people reading your entry by organising the information somewhat. Please feel free to add on anything else you think is important, or to omit any questions not relevant to yourself. Your contribution, along with everyone else's, will be typed out and put together to form

a detailed Contacts list, which shall be distributed only to those people who are on it. We must have your contribution by mid-March please, so it can be sent out beginning of April. If we do not hear from you, we shall give you an entry on the contacts list based on the information you have provided in your letter(s). (Anybody not wanting to be included on the Contacts List also needs to let us know before mid-March, otherwise they will have an entry.) We feel that this detailed Contacts List is important, both to enable people on it to contact other like-minded people (but please write or telephone - never call on someone uninvited!), and also to clarify what people want, where we agree and disagree, pointing the way to the type of vegan community/ies which could work. Your ideas are important, so please write your entry for the Contacts List now before you forget, and send it before mid-March to Paul and Jenny, who are taking on the daunting task of compiling it! Their address is: 122 Jewell Road, Throop, Bournemouth BH8 0JS.

News of Communities

Although we hope that a largish vegan community will form from this Project, we also want to keep people informed about what is happening now. A small community forming now could grow into a larger community in the future, or could be an interim measure until something bigger happens - or of course, it could stay small because people want it to. Please let us know of anything that is happening.

TALYSARN, NORTH WALES

At present, there are 3 vegan families looking into moving to North Wales, with the intention of being neighbours, who would like other vegans to join them. They are looking at properties around Talysarn, a village near Caernarfon and Snowdonia, where there are already a few families who are members of "Education Otherwise" and educating their children at home. There is a Steiner school nearby, and a sort of food co-operative in existence. There is a good bus service to Caernarfon, though it goes without saying that there is very little employment. Vicki and Tony Creek, who are definite about moving there, with their children, as soon as they have a buyer for their house, write about Talysarn:-

"Talysarn (a large village) has many and varied properties for sale, from £6,000 2 bed. terraced houses, to £30,000 7 bed det.. There is a large warehouse part converted for dwelling - and a 7 acre farm with 4 beds for £18,000!! (in a bit of a state though!!) Talysarn was born around the local slate quarries, and this unfortunately has scarred the valley, however properties are cheap and in close proximity (a community potential with 'own front door' being satisfied). It is 6 miles from Caernarfon, 3 miles from the sea, 5 miles to Snowdon's summit, and the views - oh! the views!!! It has occurred to us that all the points you raise and more could be realised at Talysarn. A vegan community could 'sprout' there..... We can make the move now (well, within months) and obviously we lose opportunities if we wait too long. There is potential at Talysarn, it's not 100% ideal - but then again what or where is? We could make the start - do you want to join us??"

To find out how things are developing, contact Paul and Jenny Haith, 122 Jewell Road, Throop, Bournemouth BH8 0JS, telephone 0202 33465; also Vicki and Tony Creek, 'Varteg', 49 Nant y Ci, Saron, Ammanford, Dyfed SA18 3TP; and Richard and Judy Adams, 125 Kenilworth Drive, Ilkeston, Derby DE7 4EX.

THE GREAT LEIGHS PROJECT, ESSEX

Bob Howes has just moved to 2½ acres of woodland and grass with a caravan in Essex and wants other vegans to join him. Visitors are also welcome. The address is: The Old Claypit, Boreham Road, Great Leighs, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 1PP. He gives directions from the A131 between Chelmsford and Braintree: one mile down Boreham Road from St Annes Castle pub is a white house on right, big oak on left and gate with caravan and trees inside. We asked Bob to write a piece about it for this newsletter:-

"This project is for those people with little or no capital who want to start saving for joint purchase of a country house without getting involved with mortgages. It is for the unemployed, the self-employed and PAYE workers to co-operate together. The main criterion being commitment to the idea of creating a just world and a will to work to this end. The present property, The Old Claypit, has no planning permission

for caravans but it is well hidden so there's a good chance of getting no hassle, especially if we open up one or more houses in the district for people to use as official addresses and for signing on from as well as for actually living at and taking baths at etc. There is one caravan here already. Nor does the land have permission for businesses but again, I think we will get away with a certain amount of business associated activity such as storage of materials and vehicles and small workshops etc. The one thing we are allowed to do here is to grow our (vegan organic) food.

"Children will be welcome once we have a house but pets are too much hassle for everyone. Veganism will be the norm but there will be no requirement to eat only European grown food or macrobiotic etc., that will be for the group and the individuals in the group to decide. I get my food out of supermarket waste skips but hope to grow most of what I eat in the future and be all the better for it. There is $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres here and half of it is available for food growing, the rest being trees.

"If you are available and want to be in at the start of an exciting new venture aimed at bringing about radical changes in the lives of all those involved, then get in touch right away. You have nothing to lose but your chains. If you don't believe that we poor people can do anything for ourselves, then just keep swimming in the cesspit and hope you don't get dragged under."

UNICORN

We would like to send our very best wishes to Bob and Jean Allen, and Dave and Hanne Wilkinson, who have formed the small commune UNICORN at Don-Y-Deri, Whitemill, Carmarthen, Dyfed, Wales SA32 7HL. They have bought $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres, including a house, a stream, 2 acres of woodland including ash and hazel which they hope to return to coppice, a number of existing veg and soft fruit beds, and a meadow of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres which they plan to use for vegetable growing using the biodynamic method. They would be very pleased to welcome visitors, and could put up $\frac{2}{3}$ people in the house, or more when they get a caravan.

MADEIRA

Some of you will have seen, and maybe responded to, the advert in 'The Vegan' about starting a vegan settlement in Madeira. Kenneth Dalziel O'Brien has been a vegan for over 40 years and has done great service to the vegan movement in co-founding the Veganic system of horticulture. He writes:-

"I am planning to settle near a small town on the north coast of Madeira, on a 3,000 sq m ($\frac{3}{4}$ acre) plot of land at present planted entirely with young fruit trees. Then a house will need to be built on the plot for my home, and I hope to become self-sufficient in food, selling any surplus and augmenting any income with craft work Madeira is a delightfully unspoilt and rural island with a frost free but not tropical climate. It is ideal for vegetable, fruit and nut growing My idea is to have a number of people join me so as to form a loose association of craftsmen and craftswomen as well as small holders: open also to any local craftsmen and women who might like to join."

He also has plans for a vegan restaurant. Potential settlers need to have capital of about £20,000, and Kenneth is willing to help them find land and sort out planning permission, and will give advice on Veganic gardening. There is one aspect that I personally find disturbing, but if it strikes a chord with you, perhaps you would like to write to Kenneth at 36 Graves End, Great Linford, Milton Keynes MK14 5DX, enclosing as sae:-

"I am interested in helping to encourage people to join me in the venture who are of English, Irish, Scottish or European origins. The reason being that Madeira lies in a warm temperate zone/part med climate, and is therefore suitable for both the cool temperate and warm temperate type peoples. In other words, the tropical zone peoples ought to remain in the tropical zones of the world and not come into temperate/med zones, and vice versa, of course. I feel this is much more natural as the mixing up of the different races is a grave mistake."

Money Matters

We are trying to resist having a subscription to VCP, and are therefore asking for donations. So, if you are filthy rich, or better still, highly committed to the idea of a vegan community, perhaps you can help out. When you reply, could you please enclose: at least 2 saes if you have not already done so; if possible, 30p to 50p to help with costs of the Contacts List (13p or 18p stamps are OK); or ideally a larger donation to enable us to continue to put adverts in the Vegan and the Vegetarian (costing £25 - £30 a time each!). And if you have any friends interested in a vegan community, don't forget to tell them about us!

We look forward to hearing from you with your entries for the Contacts List, any donations you can manage, any thoughts or ideas you wish to convey, and any criticisms (or praise!) of the Vegan Community Project. If anyone wants to get inyolved in the actual work of co-ordinating the project e.g. doing this newsletter, producing the Contacts List, organising meetings etc., we would be only too pleased to hear from you!

It will take time, it will take a lot of co-operation, but we are getting there

Best wishes,

Liz Taylor

new address).

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INFORMATION FOR YOUR ENTRY IN THE CONTACTS LIST

Return to VCP, 122 Jewell rd, Throop, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH8 0JS

These questions are meant only as a guideline.....Please use them as a basis for your reply if possible.

- 1) Give details of yourself (and family if applicable) eg names, approx ages, interests etc.
- 2) In what areas would you be prepared to live ?
- 3) What do you see as the purpose of a community eg public education, escapism etc.
- 4) Do you have capital to put into a community, if so what safeguards would you want?
- 5) Have you any skills you could offer a community.
- 6) How far do you feel income should be pooled within a community?
- 7) To what extent do you think things should be communal eg shared meals, shared land for growing, shared work etc.
- 8) What would/could be your source of income within a community eg outside job, state benefit etc.
- 9) How much private space would you require in a community eg own room/s, own house etc & what type of property would you prefer?
- 10) Have you got views on education and childcare in a community?
- 11) What is your attitude towards animals in a community?
