

Taybank Growers Cooperative Grower Director

About Taybank Growers Cooperative

Dave Shand, Jonny Agnew and Roz Corbett are the three founding directors of Taybank Growers Cooperative (TGC), a small workers coop which aims to grow fresh seasonal produce for sale to the local community using ecological farming methods. You can read more about our Vision and Aims on our website: <http://www.taybankgrowerscoop.com/about-us.html>

We established a market garden leased on a long-term basis from Blackhaugh Community Farm in 2017 which grew to cover 1 hectare in 2018. We have put in infrastructure including deer and rabbit fencing, 2 large polytunnels, irrigation systems, and a timber frame packing and storage shed (this winter). We also have tools and materials including a small tractor with various attachments, wheeled seeder, ground cover, netting etc.

In 2018 we ran a veg box scheme of 30 boxes from mid-Summer to November, sold produce directly from the farm gate via a small honesty shop, and sold to restaurants and cafes locally. In the future we would like to increase the number of veg boxes that we sell, and also diversify the range of produce to include eggs, honey and other produce. We work with volunteers who help out on a regular basis in return for produce. We also host seasonal open days and work parties where the general public are invited to visit the farm.

Members of the coop all agree to work on a part-time basis 3 days a week, which affords us time to other commitments and off-farm income. We make decisions by consensus, meeting weekly to check in, share updates and prioritise work over the next week. We also have a monthly finance session that all members of the coop are expected to participate in. On a quarterly basis we have a strategic review to look at major tasks for the future, and carry out a peer review to identify areas of support needed for each member. All coop members should take an equal share of administrative tasks (organising meetings, marketing, finances, etc), though some other roles (eg sales, crop planning, tools and machinery) are allocated to individuals, and there can be some negotiation and role rotation with these roles.

Our market garden is based at **Blackhaugh Community Farm**, which is a 43 acre farm currently owned by Jonny Agnew and Alice Warren. There are plans to transfer ownership of the farm to community ownership in the future, and activities on the farm are currently overseen by Blackhaugh Farm Action Group, which is a voluntary group made up of people who live and/or work on the farm, or who wish to do so in the future. The overall aim is to support people to live and work from the land, foster a land based and inclusive community and create a farm that is ecologically beneficial. Another business – Plants with Purpose and Appletreeman – is based on the site, running a small plant and fruit nursery. In 2019 we plan to run an experimental Wheat growing project on another part of the farm. There are opportunities for other small enterprises to be established (eg small scale arable/sheep/cows/bees/other innovative agroecological farming projects).

In the winter of 2018 Dave Shand will be leaving the coop, and we're looking for a new team member to come and join us to support our workers coop to continue to develop and grow.

Please note that from January 2019-December 2019 we are also seeking to recruit a 1-day a week Project Coordinator for our Wheat project, which we will formally advertise for in October with a deadline for applications at the end of November. Please let us know if you are also interested in this post which could be carried out by the same person as our new coop member.

- Hours:** 21 hrs (3 days) per week, plus cover every third weekend
- Duration:** Starting at beginning of April 2019 at the latest and continuing for at least one growing season with 1 month probation period. Earlier start date possible.
- Location:** Blackhaugh Community Farm, Spittalfield, Perthshire
There is public transport to the site, however access to your own vehicle would be an advantage.
- Pay & Contract:** Members of the coop work on a self-employed basis to deliver services to the coop. Pay is based on an hourly rate which we aim to set at a minimum wage, and is paid subject to availability of funds. This year we have not managed to pay ourselves at the minimum wage for all of the season, though we are aiming to increase production to be able to raise the wage rate for next year. As a self-employed person you are responsible for registering with HMRC and completing a tax return.
- Holiday:** 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays pro rata (based on a 37.5 hour week), holidays to be requested in advance with members of coop. It is anticipated that in the height of the growing season (June – Sept) a maximum of 6 days can be taken to manage workload of the coop.
- Accommodation:** On farm accommodation for a single person or couple is available in a hut or converted container. This would be affordably rented from Johnny and Alice. Other options for low-impact living on the farm are supported and can be discussed (eg Yurt, Caravan etc). If you're interested in living on site please let us know in your application. Currently 3 adults and 2 children live on the farm and there are some shared facilities: Toilet, shower and laundry facilities etc.
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- How to apply:** Initially, please respond with a short (2 sides max) letter and CV via email to hello@taybankgrowerscoop.com. We will then arrange a mutually suitable time for applicants to spend a day on the farm carrying out practical tasks with the coop and other members of the farm community plus an informal face-to-face interview. You will then have the opportunity to ask any questions with regard to the role and responsibilities. We will cover your travel expenses for the day within reason.
- Deadline** We don't have a set deadline for applications, but are looking for someone to start at the beginning of April at very latest. We encourage people to apply soon.

Responsibilities and key tasks:

As agreed with the other Coop Directors:

- Work with other members of the coop to carry out day-to-day tasks in the market garden, including sowing, planting, weeding, harvesting, bed prep and maintenance to infrastructure.
- Work with other members to manage a small flock of chickens.
- Carry out regular maintenance of farm machinery and tools.
- Install and maintain infrastructure such as wind brakes, irrigation, heated sowing benches, packing areas, fencing, plant protection etc.
- Support Sales and Marketing role through assisting with packing and deliveries, box scheme marketing, maintenance of honesty shop, helping to organise open days, engaging with the public and developing good working relationships with customers.
- Manage volunteers on a one-to-one or small group basis on a weekly basis and larger groups during monthly farm work days.
- Participate in monthly finance sessions with other members of the coop in order to keep updated records of income, expenditure, invoices, budgets and funds.
- Undertake ongoing admin tasks including team communication, emails, purchasing and record keeping.
- Help to organise and participate in quarterly peer review and strategic review sessions.
- Actively research different organic farming methods, cooperative working methods etc to seek to improve and advance the development of TGC.
- Support promotion of the coop and cooperative working principles through contact with other individuals and organisations
- Take responsibility for your own safety and ensure that colleagues and visitors are not exposed to danger.
- Work effectively and considerately with other Directors, employees and volunteers to promote the aims and objectives of TGC.
- Liaise with Blackhaugh Farm Action Group and other tenants, groups and individuals undertaking / wishing to undertake work on the farm.
- Abide by the TGC's policies and endeavour to follow good working practice at all times.
- Undertake such other duties as may be reasonably actioned by the Coop.

Person specification

		Essential or desirable
1. Qualifications	Qualification in Horticulture, Agriculture, Mechanics or other relevant subjects	D
2. Practical experience	Working or volunteering for at least 2 years in a Market Garden or small scale agriculture setting.	E
	Working/volunteering in a Cooperative setting, or organisation with similar values and ethos	D
	Managing volunteers in an outdoor setting	D
	Organising events and workshops	D
	Keeping poultry or other livestock.	D
	Use of and maintenance of a range of agricultural tools	D
	Experience of being a company director, and understanding of requirements and responsibilities.	D
3. Knowledge	Knowledge of keeping poultry and other livestock	D
	Knowledge of use and maintenance of various machines including tractor and various attachments, mower, strimmer, rotivators and other hand tools.	D
	Good knowledge of growing vegetables using organic methods, including pest and disease control, weeding, etc.	E
4. Skills	Good PC skills, including Excel, online document sharing platforms, website management, online ordering systems	E
	A range of horticulture skills including propagation, bed preparation, plant care.	E
	Excellent interpersonal and communication skills and ability to communicate clearly within a team, with volunteers, customers and the public.	E
	Strategic and planning skills for complex projects	E
5. Personal attributes	Self-motivated, able to work unsupervised and to take initiative.	E
	Hard working, efficient and tidy	E
	Positive and enthusiastic teamworker with willingness to follow cooperative principles	E
	Pleasant and confident manner when dealing with the general public, volunteers and customers.	E
	Strong attention to detail and high quality standards	E
	Able to carry out physically strenuous work, outside in a range of weathers (both hot and cold!)	E