

Reading Town Meal is taking over Forbury Gardens again this year on Saturday 28th September, 12-4pm!

Join in Reading's fantastic celebration of home-grown and healthy, sustainable local food on Saturday 28th September at Forbury Gardens. Enjoy a delicious free meal, live music all afternoon, interactive workshops, family fun activities, local producers' market and more.

The Reading Town Meal is a vibrant, community-powered event celebrating the wonderful fruit and veg grown in Reading. The centrepiece of the event is the meal made from the donations of local growers and allotment holders, cooked by Reading College students, which aims to serve around 1,000 free meals.

Not only is there a delicious meal to be had; there will also be live music from upcoming local musicians, practical workshops around sustainable, healthy food and lifestyles, community group and local food producer stalls, and a variety of family fun activities. The Town Meal provides a space where Reading's 'sustainability' groups come together, showcasing their work to audiences they otherwise cannot reach. Come along to this year's event, and you will leave feeling more positive about living in Reading and the fantastic work that goes on in your community.

If you would like to help and support the community on the day you can sign up to volunteer at the event at <http://www.readingtownmeal.org.uk/volunteerform.cfm>. There are volunteering roles to suit everyone's skill set, ranging from helping with the set up and clean up, supervising parking, handing out flyers, generally overseeing the running of this fun filled event, and more.

You can also get involved with the event by growing vegetables for the meal beforehand. Whether you're a grower and can plant a few extra seeds, or if you have never grown before and would like the opportunity to gain a new skill, you can 'pledge your veg' at <http://www.readingtownmeal.org.uk/growersform.cfm>. If you are already growing extra fruit or vegetables, have too much or would like some seeds please contact growers@readingtownmeal.org.uk.

For more information about the Reading Town Meal visit <http://www.readingtownmeal.org.uk> or contact Caitlin Herman at caitlin@risc.org.uk.



Photograph: Peter Ruczynski, Reading Town Meal 2018



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Notes for Editors:

1. The Town Meal Steering Group is organising this event and comprises: Food4Families (managed by Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC)), Reading College, Reading Food Growing Network, Reading Borough Council Culture & Sport Services, True Food Community Co-operative and other volunteer members.
2. Food4Families aims to work with communities across Greater Reading to increase the amount of food grown locally and sustainably and has created 20 community gardens across Reading where people learn how to grow their own food under the guidance of professional tutors.
3. RISC is the biggest Development Education Centre in the UK, working with schools and community groups to build understanding of sustainable development and promote social justice.
4. Reading Food Growing Network aims to promote and expand locally grown food through sharing knowledge, information and ideas alongside advice and support to local growers

5. Reading College Hospitality, Travel & Tourism department are contributing their expertise and use of kitchen facilities where their catering students will prepare and cook the Town Meal, which they will then serve in Forbury Gardens.
6. True Food Community Cooperative is a social enterprise, owned and run by its members, that enables its members and others to buy affordable organic food and other produce and supports local food production.
7. Reading Borough Council is supporting the event through logistical advice and support.
8. Each of the previous Reading Town Meals held in 2011 - 2018 have served over 500 people with a free hot lunch cooked from tasty local ingredients grown locally and filled Forbury Gardens with stalls and activities all celebrating local, sustainable food. A short film of the first Reading Town Meal can be seen here <https://vimeo.com/36269113>