

eBites

Spring 2022

Published by Vegetarian for Life, the advocacy and educational charity working on behalf of older vegetarians and vegans

Veganising classic dishes

Tasty traditional and classic dishes to inspire those new to vegan catering

The
Vegetarian
for Life story
Celebrating 60+
years of caring

Keep sharing your
experiences of care

Continue the pressure to improve care settings

PLUS: Shop for Life | WIN a box of
vegan delights from GreenBay



Welcome

You're sure to have seen positive news about the rise of meat-free diets. Google reports that searches for 'vegan food near me' rose by more than 5,000 percent in 2021. Supermarkets, online stores and most catering suppliers are now havens for plant-based foods and both the ingredients and cooking possibilities are endless.

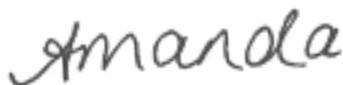
With this in mind, VfL's newest guide, Veganising classic dishes, was written to inspire chefs to cook up some tasty alternatives to the dishes loved by all. It focuses on classic, traditional dishes, which can be made vegan with a few simple swaps (see [page 6](#)).

Since 2007, VfL has been the leading (and currently only) charity dedicated to supporting older vegans and vegetarians and those who care for them. Sadly, even today there are many challenges to maintaining a vegan or veggie diet into later life, especially where a person's lifestyle or diet is dependent on someone else providing for them (see [page 3](#)). We look back over 60 years of caring on [page 4](#).

If you feel moved to support VfL's work, our online shop stocks a wealth of useful and affordable products (see [page 8](#)). Everything you buy is a great way to support the charity on its mission to help people just like you.

I hope that you enjoy the issue.

Amanda Woodvine, Editor



Vegetarian for Life is an advocacy and educational charity working on behalf of older vegetarians and vegans throughout the UK.



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Supporting VfL on its mission to help people just like you.

Reader exclusive

With thousands of 100% plant-based products, hand-picked by its team – including hard to find and exclusive items, cruelty-free cosmetics and cleaning supplies – GreenBay's store (both physical and online) offers everything you'd expect to find in a conventional supermarket. They have kindly offered three lucky readers a selection of vegan delights worth up to £15 each.

For your chance to win, answer this question: As well as selling vegan products online, GreenBay has a physical store that you can visit in:

A) West London B) Manchester
C) The Isle of Wight

Email info@vegetarianforlife.org.uk with your answer by midday on 30/06/2022. Hint – you can look here to find out more: greenbaysupermarket.co.uk/pages/contact-us

Terms and conditions: To view the GreenBay range and for all enquiries visit greenbaysupermarket.co.uk. Three winners will be drawn at random from all entries received. One entry per household only. UK addresses only. There is no cash alternative.

WIN!



Inquiry report: keep sharing your experiences of care

Are vegan and vegetarian beliefs respected in care? In a report published last November, VfL supported the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Vegetarianism and Veganism to answer this question.

The report, titled *Respect for Religious and philosophical beliefs while eating in care*, collated case studies documenting people's experiences in care. They demonstrated numerous instances where people with dementia, who had lived meat-free for most of their lives, were being fed meat.

In these cases, those with dementia were unable to articulate their beliefs. They relied on the support of care staff to know their ethical values and to support them to maintain these beliefs. Unfortunately, the case studies demonstrated that in many care homes this support was lacking.

VfL works with hundreds of care providers that have committed to respecting the beliefs and values of those in care. They actively seek training and guidance on how to cater for vegans and vegetarians. Yet the inquiry report demonstrates that this is not the case across the board.

In response to these cases, the report makes four recommendations to improve the situation for those in care. The first two recommendations suggest changes to the wording of legislation and regulations. This should tighten the laws regulating care establishments and ensure that they are being properly regulated.

The report also recommends the establishment of mandatory training for all care workers, including a focus on recognising ethical diets.

Finally, visual guides are recommended for catering areas in care establishments. These would act as a constant reminder to those preparing food to respect the diets of those in care.



Now that the report is published, it is important that we keep the focus on this issue and continue to demonstrate the importance of the recommended reforms. VfL is continuing to publicise the report's findings. We will work with politicians and regulators to promote change.

In order to do this, we need to continue to gather data and case studies. This will help us show how widespread these problems are and keep up the pressure to improve care settings.

If you would like to contribute to this work, please send us your stories. You can do this by visiting: [Share your story | V for Life](#). If you submit a story, please let us know whether or not you would be happy speaking to the media.

Stand up for your rights...

Are you confident about protecting your vegan or vegetarian identity and beliefs – now and in the future?

VfL's self-advocacy pack outlines the laws that safeguard dignity and choices in care. It details the steps you can take to ensure that you are cared for in line with your beliefs.

- Understand your rights as a vegan or vegetarian.
- Where to access support and information (care homes, legal, nutrition).
- Step-by-step guide to ensuring your rights are respected in case of loss of capacity or cognition or when receiving care.
- Template letters to use if admitted to hospital or receiving care.



Just
£2.75
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vforlife.org.uk

VfLUK @VfL_UK

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The Vegetarian for Life story – over 60 years of caring

Since the distant days of 2007, VfL has been the leading (and currently only) charity dedicated to supporting older vegans and vegetarians and those who care for them. Sadly, even today there are many challenges to maintaining a vegan or veggie diet into later life, especially where a person's lifestyle or diet is dependent on someone else providing for them.

Before VfL was formed to help tackle such issues, there were still likeminded groups trying to offer support in other ways. A look at VfL's own origins reveals a fascinating history of some of the people involved.

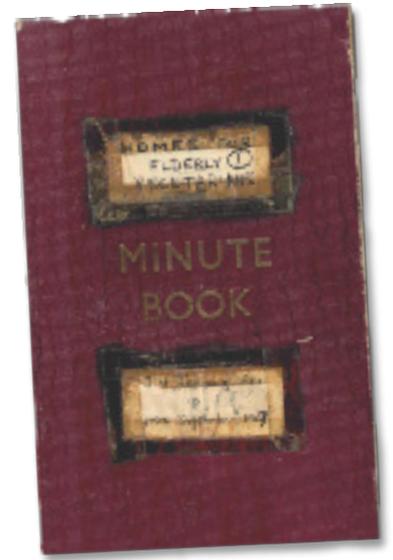
Sixty-one years ago, in January 1961, the first meeting of the 'Elderly Vegetarian Homes Subcommittee' took place in Kensington, organised by the London Vegetarian Society. Its aim was the creation of some completely vegetarian housing for people above the age of 60, who could

"give evidence of consistent vegetarian practice".

Known as the Vegetarian Housing Association (VHA), after a few years of gathering applications and scouting potential homes, the group purchased its first home, Quarry Wood in Hastings, for the princely sum of £10,000. The first residents moved in in 1965 with a Mrs Meredith, a vegetarian for 35 years, taken on as warden. Rent for the most expensive unit was set at £9 per week, and for the cheapest unit a modest £6.5s.6d.

VHA would go on to set up several homes, including Compton's Clew Home for Elderly Vegetarians in Horsham (see photo).

In 1980, a charity called the Beulah Trust



Below: Compton's Clew, Horsham around 1991. With thanks to Sally Hull who provided the photograph





was established, which aimed to establish a home “where frail, elderly vegetarians and vegans would be welcomed”, with their physical and spiritual needs met and their diets fully catered for.

Inspired by Rebecca Bennett, who spent many years providing home care to older people, Beulah explored various means of funding for setting up its home. Throughout the 1980s it sought to gather associated parties to join in its endeavour, with support from The Vegan Society and the Friends (Quakers) Vegetarian Society.

However, in 1992, with the passing of Ms Bennett and without enough funds, Beulah ended all hope of opening its Home for Frail and Elderly Vegetarians. Instead, Beulah used its funds to offer grants to older vegetarians and vegans to help ‘maintain their lifestyle’.

Vegetarian for Life emerged as an advocacy charity from the VHA in 2007 and quickly began signing care homes to its UK List membership, encouraging each of them to cater fully for vegan and vegetarian residents. When both VHA and Beulah were later dissolved, their funds were transferred to VfL and have helped us deliver a wide range of support to older vegans and vegetarians.

VfL works to ensure that the thousands of other care establishments throughout the UK commit to providing for their vegan and vegetarian residents

Although there are only two fully vegetarian care homes in the UK today, VfL works to ensure that the thousands of other care establishments throughout the UK commit to providing for their vegan and vegetarian residents. This goes some way towards fulfilling the wishes of VHA, Beulah and the earlier organisations sympathetic towards this aim.

To find out more or to support VfL’s work, please visit vegetarianforlife.org.uk or call us on 0161 257 0887.

Veganising classic dishes



VfL's Veganising classic dishes guide was written to enable chefs to cater for vegans and vegetarians without having to serve completely different dishes at mealtimes. The new guide focuses on classic, traditional dishes, which can be made vegan with a few simple swaps.

Inside are a wide variety of food favourites that have been 'veganised' in straightforward, easy-to-follow ways. Packed with recipes including breakfasts, mains, puddings and BBQ ideas, this guide will give your chefs plenty of inspiration to cook up some tasty alternatives to the dishes loved by all.

Providing vegan food needn't be complicated, with many food wholesalers ready to deliver the essentials you'll need. As many restaurants, cafés, schools and hospitals have found, offering healthy and nutritious versions of classic meals that suit vegans doesn't have to create extra work. From cottage pie to vegan 'fish' and chips, through to Lancashire hotpot and Eton mess – this new recipe guide has you covered.

Nab your copy for just £2.75 including P&P at vegetarianforlife.org.uk/shop, or by calling the charity on 0161 257 0887.

Spinach pie

A traditional Greek pie commonly made with filo pastry. Shop bought filo saves a lot of time and is much easier. Most brands are vegan but be sure to check. Any spare pastry should be wrapped quickly because it will dry out. If you do have spare pastry, it lends itself well to a variety of sweet desserts.

Time to prepare 15 minutes

Time to cook 20 minutes

Makes 6 slices

- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 400g/14oz frozen spinach (thawed)
- 150g/generous 5oz firm smoked tofu, chopped
- 100g/3½oz vegan feta, chopped
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 75g/2½oz pine nuts, toasted (optional)
- Salt and pepper
- 4 filo sheets
- 10g/½oz vegan margarine, melted

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2 Gently fry the onion and garlic in a little of the margarine. Set to one side.
- 3 When the spinach has thawed, press out as much water as you can.
- 4 Gently mix the onion, garlic, spinach, tofu, vegan feta, lemon juice, parsley, and pine nuts together. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 5 Line a pie dish with non-stick paper, allowing it to drape over the side.
- 6 Place a sheet of filo into the pie dish, allowing it drape loosely over the edge. Lightly brush with a little melted margarine and repeat with the other sheets.
- 7 Add your filling and then fold over the draped edges to create a lid. Brush over any remaining margarine. Finally, let the non-stick paper rest over the top. This will help prevent the top from burning. The extra paper will also allow you to lift the cooked pie out easily.
- 8 Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden and crispy on the top.

CHEF'S TIP Spinach pie, or spanakopita, is generally vegetarian. A simple swap to vegan cheese will mean vegans can enjoy this tasty dish. You can also adapt the recipe to make individual pasties

Eton mess

This classic dessert takes a while to make and the oven temperature needs to be very low. However, the result is amazing.

Time to prepare 15 minutes

Time to cook 2 hours (minimum)

Serves 8

- Liquid from 400g/14oz tin chickpeas (save the chickpeas for another day)
- 100g/3½oz white caster sugar
- 1 tsp xanthan gum
- 400ml/17fl oz Elmlea Plant Double Alternative to Dairy Cream OR 400g/14oz coconut milk, full fat – chilled for at least 2 hours
- 200g/7oz fresh raspberries
- A little icing sugar to dust on the top

1 Preheat the oven to 140°C/275°F/gas mark 1 or lower.

2 Whisk the liquid from the chickpeas for 2 minutes, then slowly add the sugar and continue to whisk.

3 After 5 minutes, add the xanthan gum. Your meringue mixture should stiffen up like traditional meringue.

4 Spoon small cases onto a lined baking sheet and place into the oven. Cook for 2 hours. This may take longer depending on how large the cases are.

5 When completely cooked, remove from the oven. They will crisp up as they cool.

6 Whip the cream or coconut milk until stiff.

7 Finally, create individual servings with meringue, vegan cream and fresh raspberries. For additional presentation create a raspberry coulis to spoon over the top. Serve straight away.

CHEF'S TIP Of the two suggested creams, my preference is Elmlea. It will whip well and has a pleasant taste. The coconut cream needs to be thoroughly chilled, or it won't whip. You may decide to add a little sugar to sweeten. Serve the meringues shortly after baking because they can lose their crispy texture



Excited to show the world that you're veggie or vegan?

Or perhaps you're worried about a loved one not having their dietary wishes fulfilled in care? We have a whole range of useful and affordable items available to help you and those around you to take pride in your ethical choices. From t-shirts and jumpers to hats, badges, wristbands and mugs – we've got you covered. We also have some unique information guides on nutrition and food fortification, as well as recipe booklets full of delightful meat-free dishes from all over the world. Everything you buy is a great way of supporting the charity on its mission to help people just like you.

Publications

We have an rapidly growing range of colourful information and recipe guides written by professional nutritionists and our team of top chefs that will help with everyday living – both inside and outside of the kitchen. Packed full of useful hints and tips, they contain delicious recipes for all occasions, from summer BBQs to festive feasts.

- VEGAN BAKING, £2**
- NUTRITION GUIDE, £2**
- FOOD FORTIFICATION FOR VEGANS, £2**
- VEGANISING CLASSIC DISHES, £2**



Clothing

What better way to display your proud veggie or vegan beliefs than with some high-quality apparel? Our t-shirts and sweatshirts come in a range of colours and sizes, and are all sustainably sourced and cruelty-free. Our warm winter beanie hats are a double layer knit and embroidered with our logo design.

UNISEX COTTON T-SHIRT – VEGETARIAN FOR LIFE, £15

100% cotton. Pre-shrunk. Seamless twin needle collar. Taped neck and shoulders. Twin needle sleeves and hem. Tubular body.

UNISEX SWEATSHIRT – THE VEGAN ONE, £19.99

80% ringspun cotton/20% polyester. Drop shoulder style. Stylish fit. Soft cotton faced fabric. Taped neck. Ribbed collar, cuffs and hem. Twin needle stitching. WRAP certified production.

VEGETARIAN FOR LIFE BEANIE, £15

100% soft touch acrylic. Double layer knit. Cuffed design for optimal decoration.



Accessories

Our badges and wristbands are another way of displaying your veggie or vegan credentials, while reminding those around you that you have special dietary requirements.

PIN BADGE – VEGAN, £3.95

Strong enamel in gold-effect. Green colour. Light and not intrusive. Size: 25mm / 1 inch diameter. Butterfly clasp.

SILICONE WRISTBAND – “VEGETARIAN FOR LIFE” OR “VEGAN FOR LIFE”, £2.95

Easy to put on and take off. Lilac colour. Light and not intrusive. Strong silicone. Inset text for longevity.

To see the full range of VfL products, please visit vforlife.org.uk/shop