



**Contract:** E-commerce and Web Development Support  
**Area of expertise:** e-commerce, Wordpress, PHP, Google Docs, database  
**Start Date:** ASAP

## What we need

We operate a weekly Veg Box scheme to distribute our produce. We are looking for a reliable, experienced web developer to:

1. **Stage I: Review our Veg Box ordering system.** This involves:
  - a. *Reviewing the code and design:* we have a custom built e-commerce plugin for Wordpress, integrated with GoCardless, our payment processor. Order data is downloaded each week as a .csv and the data manipulated further in Google Sheets to generate order summaries, labels, driver routes and sheets. We expect the consultant to comfortably understand how the existing system works by reviewing the code and spreadsheets.
  - b. *Identifying areas of inefficiency and improvements:* the code needs improving and there's efficiency needed, particularly in the way data is managed after it's downloaded. At present we use a number of spreadsheets that are technically advanced, but clunky and lack robustness. A database system might enable better management of customers - integrated into our website.
  - c. *Reviewing options for development:*
    - i. *Consider overall systems:* we have invested a lot of time and energy into the existing system. Given our situation, needs and limited budget, should we continue working with this system and improving it, or are there alternative designs worth pursuing? E.g. off-the-shelf packages or bespoke? If transferring to a new system, please consider how this transition be managed with zero customer disturbance?
    - ii. *Anticipate costs for implementing improvements/development.*
    - iii. *Present all findings and recommendations in a clearly and comprehensively.*
2. **Stage II: Developing the Veg Box ordering system.** This involves:
  - a. Fix any immediate bugs that are causing problems;
  - b. Delivering recommendations from Stage 1: improvements to the existing system, or transition towards a new system.
  - c. Ongoing technical support: on agreed terms as appropriate.

We expect the contractor to have:

- Strong PHP skills;
- Experience with ecommerce and ideally GoCardless API;
- A fine attention to detail;
- Intuition for designing excellent user/customer experiences;
- Strong understanding of our product and service;
- Experience in testing and systems thinking.

## A note about our e-commerce system

There are a few things about our online shop that make it different from a normal online shop:

- **Recurring payments:** customers set up an order which they receive on a regular basis (e.g. weekly or fortnightly) and they are billed automatically as a direct debit;
- **Orders schedule:** orders are placed by midnight on Sunday, for delivery the following Thursday/Friday. See graphic for further information.
- **Editing future orders and variable payments:** customers need to be able to adjust any one of their upcoming orders (or their regular order). For example, they might want to add or remove products or cancel one of their upcoming orders.
- **Customer management:** we need to be able to edit a customer's order on their behalf.
- **Discounts:** we have a discount code system that can take a fixed amount off an order (£), a percentage off an order (%), or another promotion. The discount can be triggered on certain products, pick-up points or at a certain value.
- **Changing stock:** we deal with food. A customer might order apples weekly but then they become unavailable for a few months. We need to be able to easily edit customer orders to remove items in bulk.

Other functions for customers:

- Customers can add **special preferences** (e.g. no onions) to their order, and/or **special delivery instructions** (e.g. by the back door).
- **Delivery:** we would like to have a function that informs the customer of their nearest pick-up point by typing in their post code. Otherwise they can choose home-delivery (which has a small extra cost).
- Customers can change their account details: e.g. address, name, password, delete user account. etc.
- Customer can view their order history.

Other functions:

- Ability to add credit to a customer's account (or otherwise refund them)
- Automatically add new customers to our Mailchimp list (this functionality already exists)
- Some customers receive an order every 2 weeks. We would like to be able to shift the frequency (i.e. which week) when they receive their order
- Track/download historical sales data for all customers
- Be informed of new and cancelled customers.

Other similar services in the UK to learn from:

- [Abel & Cole](#)
- [Riverford](#)

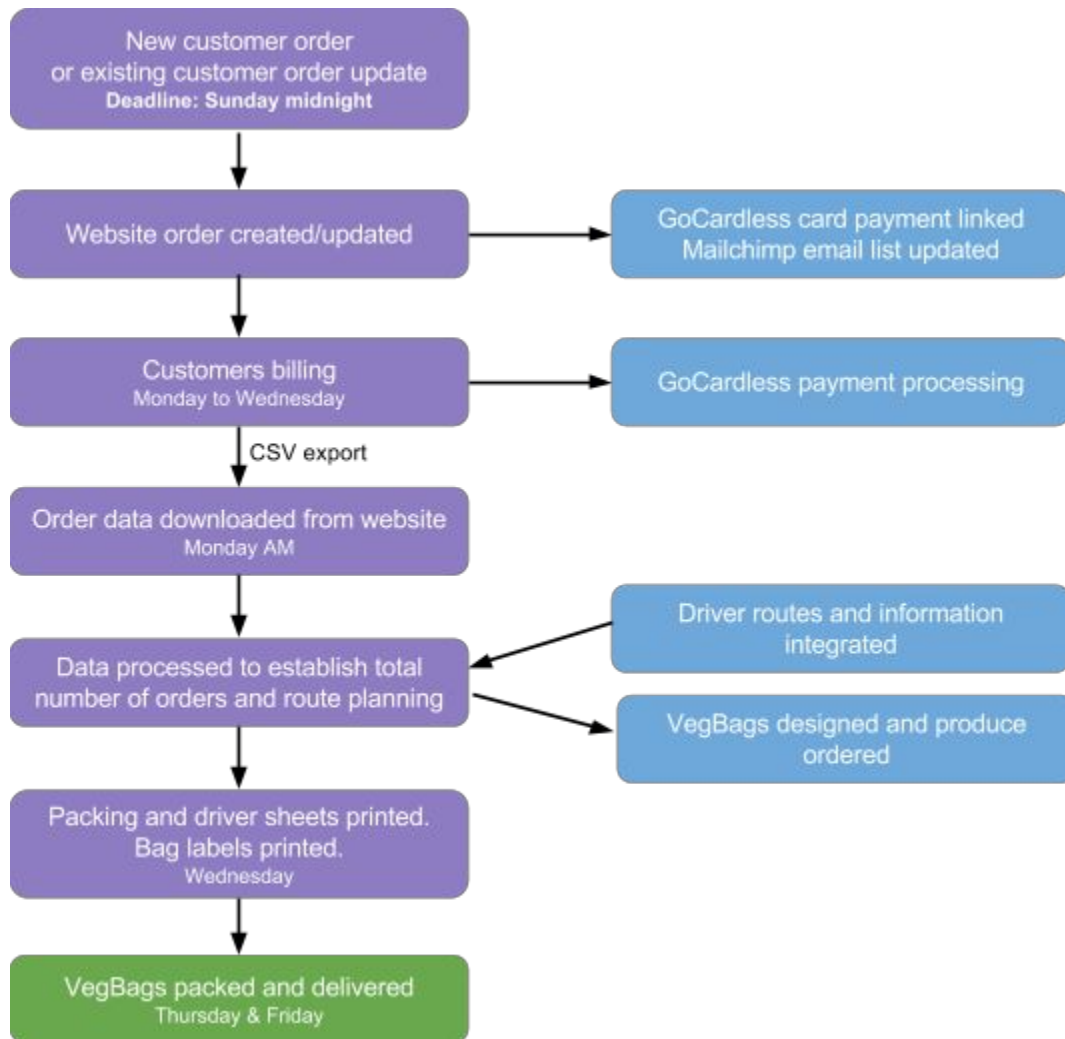


Figure: This is the weekly routine for ordering

## Further expectations and arrangements

- **Timing:** It's anticipated that the Stage I review will take 6-12 days, depending on experience;
- **Pricing:** interested parties can quote for Stage I first and give an indication of your expectations/costs for Stage II.
- **Affordability:** we understand that web development is a specialised skill and expensive. We are a small, non-profit community food project. We operate with tight margins and have a small number of customers. Therefore we do not have the budgets typically needed for web development. To this end, we expect the contractor to have an understanding and supportive nature. We are open to providing benefits such as our high quality Veg Boxes and contractor advertising. Fundraising may be required before agreeing to higher quotes and this will delay or stall the project.
- **Location:** it would be preferred if the contractor is able to visit the farm and meet face-to-face. We are happy to offer desk-space on the farm for the duration of the work.
- **Quality:** Due to our small operation, it's paramount that have a reliable, robust and efficient system.

## Sutton Community Farm - About us

We are a community-owned social enterprise with a mission to increase access to fresh, healthy, sustainable food and provide a space for the community to cultivate skills.

We are a highly motivated team, passionate to help create positive relationships between people and food. We farm with organic principles and strive to be a deeply sustainable business. We are driven by

values of respect, transparency, quality and integrity.

We aim to make our Farm accessible to as wide a range of the public as possible and are committed to ensuring that everyone is treated fairly. You can find out more by reading [our Equal Opportunities Policy](#). Please visit our website for further information: [www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk](http://www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk)

## **Expressions of interest**

Please contact us with your proposal, outlining your skills, experience, suggested approach to this work and your anticipated costs.

We would like to see evidence that you understand the unique challenges to this type of e-commerce (i.e. variable payments, direct debits, seasonal stock, discounts), evidence of work on similar platforms and ability to deliver work on time.

Please write to Samuel Smith: [sam@suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk](mailto:sam@suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk).