Update on Bradford on Avon Community Area agroecological market gardens (21.11.2025)

for WC committee on increasing community resilience and developing everyday food security

Compiled by Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon (CFBoA) to give an overview of present and prospective growing/community education schemes in the area, for participants of the meeting convened by Caroline Le Quesne, Wiltshire Council, on October 3rd 2025.

(Blue font is the 21st November update on CFBoA feedback previously submitted to Caroline on 7th October.)

Caroline's message on 13th November includes:

- community garden/food growing space- not sure how much funding this would require at this stage or whether we look to support this project more practically at present ie support the identification of suitable land (see below for new schemes being planned)
- Support **Avonleigh Orchards [Jonathan Francis]** with composting toilets to enable the community to come and utilise the orchard and surround area (although currently Avonleigh is not set up as a charity/CIC so I'm unsure how the money could be transferred)

Our other local grower currently is:

- **Kate Collyns (Grown Green @ Hartley Farm**, Winsley, https://growngreen.wordpress.com/) – organic market garden
  I would be interested - I'm currently putting together a match-funded grant application to Wilts Council for the Rural Hub grant, to install mains water in out new field... but in future I will be looking for help to fund a barn on the new field, so we can store more crops, and also hold community events etc there. Not sure if the below thoughts have been captured fully on the Food Ladder (apologies if so), but might be useful to add somewhere work by food banks eg The Hub where we drop off fresh produce sometimes; also farm tours that aren't explicitly educational - could also include a community/social connection element?

New growing schemes in development:

1. **Freshford Community Farm** – https://www.freshfordfarm.org/ Tania Pascoe, Co-ordinator
   Ideal 3.5 acre growing site in middle of Freshford (and within Wiltshire) preliminary agreement to purchase – need to establish planning permission for access first). Detailed plans for development have been drawn up. (The steering group hope their development process can be used as a model for others to use also.) Now need to raise funding to implement, with priority needs to be identified.
   Now registered as Community Benefit Society. Two recent public engagement events. Will need to raise significant funds. Community Survey issued to establish level of support for funding and interest in weekly veg box scheme (Community Supported Agriculture [CSA} model). Hope to also supply Freshford Community Shop, The Galleries, and the Hop Pole Inn, Limpley Stoke and potentially other wholesale, in time. Community events, workshop and classes (growing, cooking, health, nature and soil) and children's activities proposed.
   Still at early stages, but very able team actively working hard to realise this vision – see website.

2. Lizzie Munday
   Lizzie, who has done an amazing job over the last few years of redeveloping Christchurch School Garden, working with pupils and staff and connecting with parents and the community, has recently handed over the reins.
   Lizzie says: I stayed on a year after mine had left the school to hand it over. It's going strong and I'm going in tomorrow for a visit! In a year's time, I am going back to start an after-school garden club aimed at the year 6s who will have cut their teeth horticulturally in the school garden and will move on to real 'horticulture' and will have their own one metre square plots that I will teach them on.
   I have completed the RHS horticulture diploma now and am training for a year at Iford but in my heart, my real wish is to found a community garden space where I can teach adults/kids garden skills/growing your own and it be available for green prescribing by the GP / open to community groups who want to use it for therapeutic horticulture. Trouble is I need to come up with an area for this and then how to proceed - probably set up a social enterprise as a structure. (See below.)
3. Anna Glasbrook (BoA):
   The meeting sounds like it was really interesting!
   If there aren't already too many expressions of interest in the funding, we'd be keen to explore the possibility of applying for a portion of it. We've been discussing the idea of fencing off an area of our field for food growing, although we're still working out the best way to encourage meaningful community involvement.
   Green prescribing is something we're particularly interested in, and we'd love to make some of our land available for a growing scheme that supports wellbeing and connection to nature.
   Anna has now met up with Lizzie Munday (see above).
   Lizzie writes:
   I did want to flag that proposals are afoot for myself and Cloe McReynolds (who runs the Fitzmaurice school garden) and Anna (who you put me in touch with) to create a community garden up on Anna's property. The current idea is to fence off an area there and create a teaching garden which would be used for homeschool teaching one day a week year round and in parallel (on a different day) to be used as a green prescribing community garden space. Potentially grow your own teaching workshops on a weekend now and then. Lots of possibilities. It's relatively central - being just off the road above Moulton Hall. Just thought I should mention it as I know Anna is looking for **funding for the deer fence and for a polytunnel**. Would this be suitable for the community garden/food growing space that {Caroline, WC] mentions? Would this be an avenue to obtain the funding to make this possible?
   Anna confirmed that she is happy to share the outline of ideas in message above, and adds:
   I've just arranged for a student from Lackham to come and do work experience here once a week, which is exciting and I'm hoping that might help me to progress with the physical work side of things here.
4. **Charlie Allan-Gething** is planning to produce veg and flowers by June 2926 on Richard and Roni Ross' land (formerly used for the CSA – BOACA) at Frankleigh House.
   Charlie says:
   Here is a brief overview of what we want to achieve.
   We plan to build on the current model we have in place of supplying fresh salad and greens to wholesale customers in the local area. We will be targeting local businesses in the new year to encourage them where possible to buy local salad leaves. We will also be doing the same with flowers.

We plan to open a couple of days a week to allow the public to come and buy direct from us and also offer pick your own flowers. We also hope to be able to offer coffee and cake and eventually food/deli services with produce from the land. We will be running supper clubs on a monthly basis from June/July. Once our shed is in place and set up we are hoping to run growing related courses and workshops and also art and ceramics workshops run by my partner Nat.
We will eventually run volunteer days on a weekly basis to encourage community engagement but I doubt that will be in year one.

With regards to funding I don't know if that is something we will be able to access as we are not a CIC. Also the process of applying for these things seems like it might be a bit tedious and take up more time than it is actually worth in the long run. We also want to have freedom to adapt and move as we wish and funding usually comes with conditions etc.
If I am incorrect and we are eligible and it's not a huge time drain to apply then funding for a community shelter/outdoor kitchen would be wonderful. But I do feel that any funding available might be more deserved by projects that are already established in the local area.

- (**Becca Cassar** (Lead for the Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon Families Group):
Plans to develop a leaflet with information about Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon, and a map of where well-produced, local food can be sourced. Would need funding for printing and delivery to every household. (Becca has postponed this, as busy with other major projects at present.)

Additional information

- Louise Weissel considers that for growers to manage food production and 'host' volunteers can be stressful. She wonders if it makes sense to discuss a small pilot project with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP), for example, at Avonleigh Orchards. Louise says: AWP have the specialist staffing to deal with people with higher needs. This is what is now happening at Bath City Farm (BCP) – and indeed the initial small weekly mental health group (which was separate from general volunteering) was the first step. Now BCF has an entire therapy team, part of which is run by AWP and part is staffed by BCF. AWP is the NHS Trust covering Wiltshire, Swindon, BaNES, & South Gloucestershire. So quite a large NHS Trust and a good partner to have on board.
- CFBoA Sustainable Food and Drink Group wrote to Brian Mathew, MP, in June 2025, saying:
    - Our wonderful, local agro-ecological growers are passionate about growing high quality, flavoursome produce for local people and working on community engagement, education and fostering the mentally restorative aspects of growing food and people being in a nature-rich environment. Given the right support and encouragement, small-scale growers could provide much greater food security. These growers try to minimise the environmental impact of their production, but find that the grant systems, such as the Rural Prosperity Funds, tend to push them to a scale beyond which they wish to go. The grants are orientated to larger-scale businesses. The call is for help towards scale-appropriate technology. [The availability of £7K from govt now is a welcome start, but the level of interest indicated above demonstrates that this needs building on and expanding.]
    - We are calling for spatial mapping of commercial fruit and veg production in the UK, with identification of agro-ecological producers. This is both to inform policy-making

to provide a base-line reference to foster the potential local provision of high-quality key nutrients to communities, and to help protect against adverse planning decisions. [Please can Wiltshire Council lead the way on this?]

Ros Edwards
Chair, Sustainable Food and Drink Group
Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon
Striving for the Bradford on Avon community area to be carbon neutral by 2030
https://climatefriendlybradfordonavon.co.uk/

21/11/2025