

Bristol's local food *update*

SAVE THE GREEN BELT SPECIAL

MAY-JUNE 2009

WHEN hundreds of us last year took the *Eat the Change* challenge and tried to spend a week eating only local, organic food free from plastic packaging, we discovered just how limited local sustainable food is. There are myriad reasons for this, but the reality remains that with fossil fuels likely to become extremely scarce within our lifetimes and food miles contributing so intensely to climate change, we will soon have little choice but to produce most of our food locally. In light of this, it is essential that we start preparing now by ring fencing land for sustainable food production *now*.

Transition Network is beginning to explore how Britain can best feed itself, analysing Britain's land potential for food production in light of nutritional needs, climate change, flood predictions, soil quality, population densities etc. But what is already overwhelmingly obvious is that we will need every inch of land suitable for food production, in both the countryside and cities, if we are going to be able to feed ourselves in the future.

This edition of *Bristol's Local Food Update* shines the spotlight on how Bristol's Green Belt and agricultural hinterlands are increasingly being given over to development in the pursuit of further economic growth (largely in response to central government targets), despite the increasing imperative to save our soils for food production.

The Avon Green Belt, an area five times the size of Bristol and predominantly classified as farmland (but much of which currently lies fallow) is being increasingly earmarked by Local Authorities for developments such as 117,000 new houses in the South West. **We all need to act now** to ensure that Bristol City Council ring fences all suitable land for food production: read on and stay in touch to find out how to make your voice heard.

Claire Milne

Transition Bristol and Bristol Food Hub

Save our soils – use our soils

Richard Spalding

It is great to hear that in the near future we might see beef cattle grazing historic Stoke Park as Bristol City Council begin to think through reconnections between town and countryside. I would want to press them to go a little further by panning the camera lens up and over this idyllic scene to settle on “the Blue Finger”.

I have coined this phrase to get us all thinking about high quality agricultural land on the north Bristol fringe which used to be at the heart of what was called the Bristol Dairying and Market Garden Sub-Region. We can follow a blue [colour-coded] finger of high quality soils on the 1953 Agricultural Land Classification map of England and Wales which shows a strip of fertile land stretching from Frenchay, through Hambrook and Winterbourne and out into open country. The post Second War assessment of land and soil quality shows just how such land was valued as a strategically important resource under the banner of “Best and Most Versatile” soils for local food production.

The soils are deep, red, largely stone-free and close to the city. They have the capacity to help feed us, especially in the context of climate change, peak oil and food insecurity. The soils themselves now lie largely derelict, the market gardens having fallen prey to the global food economy and the land now de-valued for food production. We need to audit this private and public land to establish just how possible it might be to re-create a local foodscape for our region.

There is much to gain from doing this and my campaign seeks to mobilise another “dig for victory” campaign to allow food communities, new food businesses and all of us eaters to begin the process of re-shaping our local food culture. I have a vision for this foodscape which sees the northern gateway along



Smallholdings in Frenchay

the M32 becoming an edible landscape for the city. It would be a beacon for a new AGRI-CULTURE which would help to nourish our bellies and our communities. It would mark the beginning of a truly sustainable agriculture which reconnects people and the land. It would celebrate the importance of city and countryside working together to deliver food security. Impossible you say?

One thing is certain in my mind; the idea of covering up the best farm land in the country with city extensions, park and rides and notions of green infrastructure need to be challenged, in order that food produced from these soils takes its rightful place at the discussion table. There are some signs that we are beginning to think again about the importance of the soil and the land to ALL our futures and I would like to see Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils working together to enable the re-creation of the food economies on and around the “Blue Finger”.

I am very keen to establish a wide-ranging set of debates about this topic and am convinced that it might be possible to begin looking forward to another, and arguably more important, “dig for victory” campaign. I sense that the cattle of Stoke Park might just be the idea that sparks a new and regionally important symbol around which to secure and re-invent our local foodscapes. If you want to contribute to this debate, then please contact me at: richardspalding@blueyonder.co.uk

Save the Greenbelt Alliance

Pip Sheard, Bristol Friends of the Earth



In March this year, an alliance of local groups across the West of England was set up to protect our local countryside from development. A demonstration was held outside the Architecture Centre where developers were displaying their proposals for Ashton Park, the first urban extension of 10,500 new homes planned under the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

Groups from all the villages in the green-belt around Bristol and Bath are working together www.saveourgreenspaces.org with the Transport for Greater Bristol Alliance www.tfgb.org.uk and Bristol Friends of the Earth www.bristolfoe.org.uk to oppose the RSS, the regional planning document used by the Government to force the four councils to plan for a target of 117,000 new houses to be constructed in the next 20 years, the bulk outside of Bristol will be built as large new urban extensions in the existing countryside. The full extent of the RSS proposals is at

www.cpreavonside.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/cpre-housing-map.pdf

The proposals for Ashton Park will include new major road construction including the South Bristol Link which is opposed by the city's environmental groups. We believe that in view of climate change, rising oil and food prices, existing Government transport money should be spent on improving public transport including local rail services, a tram rather than a Bus Rapid Transit and the establishment of an Integrated Transport Authority to improve the buses. The groups oppose the RSS on a whole range of environmental, transport and planning grounds including the loss of local farmland for food production close to the city. How can we have local food if we are to lose so much local

land? We want a return to a sane and sensible housing policy with local rather than central Government control, more tailored to local housing needs rather than unrealistic economic growth predictions and using brownfield (existing built-up) land first to protect local farmland for future agriculture, amenity, recreation, wildlife and our health and to serve the existing city's need for clean air, cooling and drainage during times of flood and heavy rain. If you live in any of the areas affected, we can put you in touch with your local group who are working with local councillors and MPs all of whom are opposed to the RSS.

For further information or if you are interested in getting involved, contact Pip Sheard at pip_sheard@hotmail.co.uk. We will be involved in a major letter writing campaign to local MPs and councillors in early May in order to put pressure on Government ministers who plan to introduce the RSS as early as June. If you can help by sending emailing or writing, please contact us as soon as possible.

The Greenbelt Alliance covers the four councils of the West of England Partnership: Bristol, S. Gloucs, BANES & N. Somerset

Save Our Green Spaces public meeting

Thursday 7 May, 5.30pm onwards
Kingswood Civic Centre

Stalls from Greenbelt Alliance groups. Speakers from: Save Our Green Spaces, the National Trust, Avon Wildlife Trust and the National Union of Farmers.

Details at: www.saveourgreenspaces.org

Events



Roots – a tale of love and vegetables

28–31 May 7.30pm & 2.30pm Sat & Sun
4–7 June 7.30pm & 2.30pm Sat & Sun
Lower Common Allotments,
Royal Victoria Park, Bath

Kilter, Bath's outdoor theatre company, lead audiences on a gentle journey down the bean-rows to investigate food-security in the approaching post-oil world. After the performance the audience will be offered free seeds to get growing.

Tickets £9 (Concessions £7) on sale from ICIA's Box Office 01225 386777

www.bath.ac.uk/icia/events/?page=event&art_form=Theatre&event_id=311

Bristol Vegan Fayre

30 & 31 May
Amphitheatre, Bristol Harbourside

140 stalls, talks & cookery demos, music & performance, kids area and, of course, lots of vegan food. Advance tickets £8/day.

www.bristol.veganfayre.co.uk

Love Food Festival

Paintworks, Bath Road, Bristol
10.30am–10.30pm Sunday 21 June
Free entry

Paintworks' family-friendly farmers market brings the finest West Country produce to Bristol's creative quarter.

The Urban Herb garden will be back with a huge selection of culinary and medicinal herbs for sale. Two local experts will be giving talks in the space – Phil Haughton from the Better Food Company will be demonstrating how easy it is to start growing some of your own food with special hands-on workshops for children. Max Drake the renowned local medicinal herbalist will be talking about herbs, how to care for them and how we can use them to heal everyday ailments.

For further information visit www.lovefoodfestival.com or email lorna@lovefoodfestival.com

Bristol's Green Belt - have your say

Alison Belshaw, Sustain

Local residents, communities and landowners are being asked for their views on future uses of Green Belt land around Bristol. The survey, being carried out by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), gives you a chance to help shape the future of the countryside where you live, work or visit.

Green Belt is rural land around cities that is protected from excessive housing and other development by planning and development policies, thus preventing urban sprawl. Around 13% of land in England is estimated to be in one of the 14 Green Belt areas. Some professional organisations and developers argue that Green Belts are no longer needed, but a MORI poll for CPRE in 2005 found that 84% of people in England believe that Green Belt land should remain open and undeveloped, and that building on Green Belt land should not be allowed.

The Avon Green Belt stretches over about 270 square miles – an area about 5 times the size of the city of Bristol. Most of the Green Belt is classed as farmland but in practice some of this farmland may not actually be farmed, but left idle or for grazing horses. A small proportion (roughly 10%) is covered by woodland or parkland, including the Forest of Avon. There is also a growing interest in where our food comes from, against a background of concern about global food supplies and interest in buying locally produced food. Much of the Green Belt land around Bristol is good quality farm land and could be used for food growing much more than it is at present. If local communities show an interest in buying food from the Green Belt, this could encourage landowners to farm their land more actively where they are not already doing so.

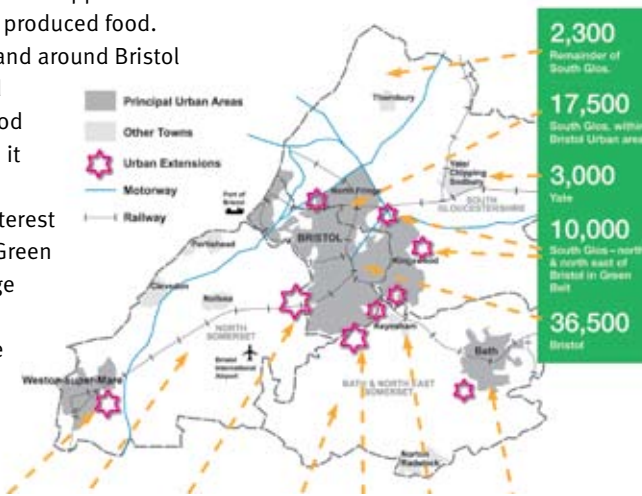
Through this new survey, being carried out in Bristol, London and Merseyside, we are trying to find out how people in Bristol would like to see undeveloped Green Belt used in the future, such as for farming, woodland, or recreation. In particular, we would like the views of people from inner-city areas. We also want to hear from landowners or users based in Green Belt areas.

CPRE is widely recognised as an organisation that is listened to by Government Ministers. Your responses will help CPRE to influence a current Government investigation of how to make the best use of Green Belts and other countryside in the future. The information will be analysed and reported back in local media in the autumn.

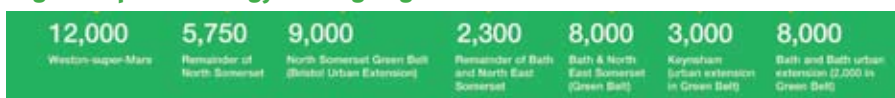
There are two surveys, one for individual members of the public and community groups, the other for landowners, land management professionals, tenant farmers and local authorities. The surveys can be completed on-line. Deadline: 31 July 2009.

www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/planning/green-belts/green-belts-green-belts-for-a-greener-future-survey

Please pass details of this survey to as many people as possible. If you would like a hard copy of the form, the survey is being co-ordinated locally by Sustain: the alliance for food and farming. Contact Alison Belshaw: alison@sustainweb.org for more details.



Regional Spatial Strategy housing targets



Events

Henleaze Garden Club plant sale

10am–12.30pm Saturday 9 May
3 Grange Park, Westbury on Trym, Bristol

Plants to buy. Tea, coffee and cake stall. Proceeds towards club funds. Everyone welcome.

www.henleazesociety.co.uk/diary.htm

Lawrence Weston seed swap Saturdays

Saturday 16 May and every 3rd Saturday of the month until 19 September
Lawrence Weston Library and Learning Resource centre, Broadlands Drive, Lawrence Weston, Bristol

An opportunity to swap spare plant seeds with other gardeners and talk about seasonal gardening issues. The swaps are free sessions for all ages.

For more details contact vicki.bowd@cityofbristol.ac.uk



Leigh Court Farm Open Day

1–4pm Saturday 27 June
Leigh Court Farm, Pill Road, Abbots Leigh, Bristol

Tours round the walled garden, orchard, paddock and woodland at Leigh Court Farm. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to talk about how this year's growing season is faring, and how your veggies are grown!

The walled garden only represents a small part of the work at Leigh Court Farm. We farm over 16 acres at our other two fields.

Maps and descriptions of what crops are being grown there will be available.

Tea & delicious homemade cakes!!

www.leighcourtfarm.org.uk
 Email: mail@leighcourtfarm.org.uk
 Tel/fax: 01275 375756

Courses & skill-sharing

Freeskilling events

The Better Food Company
Proving House, Servier Street,
St Werburghs, Bristol
www.betterfood.co.uk

7pm Tuesday 26 May
Vegan Baking

Biscuits, cakes, muffins and brownies – all are possible without breaking an egg (or into a sweat!) The Vegetarian & Vegan Foundation explains how.

The evening is FREE and EVERYONE is welcome, though donations are accepted for the venue. Any ingredients required on the night will be sold at cost price.

www.justforthe loveofit.org



Organic food growing courses
Stuff the credit crunch, eat fresh organic food all year round

Thursdays 10am–12.30pm, 7 May–25 June
Eastside Roots Garden,
Trinity Arts Centre

£80 (waged) or £35 (unwaged)

Learn to grow fruit, veg & herbs. Work outside, meet people, and gain knowledge and practical experience. The sessions will be a mix of ideas and information indoors, followed by hands-on work in the thriving community garden. We have a poly-tunnel, compost loo, lots of fruit trees and a friendly bunch of volunteers. The course is accredited by City of Bristol College.

To join or find out more, call Tom on 07988 460373, or email t_daly@hotmail.com.

www.eastsideroots.org.uk

www.3ca.org.uk/projects/trinity-gardens

Introduction to Permaculture

30–31 May
Eastside Roots gardens at Stapleton Road Station and the Trinity Centre
£65/£50/£35

A chance to learn more about what inspired the creation of Eastside Roots.

www.eastsideroots.org.uk

Introduction to Permaculture Weekends

11–12 July & 17–18 October
Windmill Hill City Farm, Bedminster
£65–£25 on a sliding scale depending on income

From the ethics and philosophy to principles and design. Informal, relaxed and participatory courses with inspiring examples of how it works in practice and some practical work on the permaculture plot at the City Farm.

Email course_enquiries@yahoo.co.uk for more information and bookings.

Practical Introduction to Permaculture

9.30am–12.30pm, starting
Tuesday 29 September for 10 weeks
Windmill Hill City Farm, Bristol
£110 (to be confirmed) or £15 concessions for those with under £15,000 income

Run jointly with the Workers Educational Association. Indoors sessions explore what Permaculture is. Outdoor sessions are spent on the farm's permaculture plot. Practical work may involve making and planting a deep mulch raised bed, taking fruit bush cuttings or making a worm composter to take home. We go on walks to observe nature in the local area, and visit community gardens in Bristol to see permaculture in action.

Phone 0117 9633252 for bookings.

Ragmans Lane Farm courses

Ragmans Lane is a 60 acre farm in the Forest of Dean. The farm uses permaculture as a guiding design principle. Costs include bunkhouse accommodation and food. Ffi: 01594 860244

2–3 May
Sustainable bee keeping, £125

29–31 May
Medicinal herbs, £140

7–20 June or 30 August–12 September
Permaculture design course, £690

19 September–3 October
Permaculture for groups, £550

10–12 October
Cider making weekend, £190

13–15 November
Permaculture weekend, £110–£65 (concs)

www.ragmans.co.uk/courses/courselist.html

Events

Real Food Festival

8–10 May
Earls Court, London

The Real Food Festival is a celebration of everything from the farm to your plate:

- Over 400 producers
- UK's best chefs
- Barny Houghton on beating the credit crunch and still eating wonderful food
- Real Food Debates with Zac Goldsmith, Patrick Holden, Joanna Blythman, Rosie Boycott and Graham Harvey
- Growing food with Garden Organic
- Education area for kids

www.realfoodfestival.co.uk



Stroud Communiversity

15–17 May
The Exchange, Brick Row, Stroud

With Land, Food and Money at the heart of this recession, we offer an examination of practical, creative and innovative solutions to support the growth and development of a resilient local economy.

Friday 15 May
Richard Keating & Martin Large:
Connecting with place, people and land through walking and art – Exploring models for sustainable livelihoods by researching and experiencing how we connect with nature and the landscape.

Saturday 16 May
Nick Weir & Odilia Jarman: Food for life
Closing the gap between production and consumption by directly supporting our farmers and taking part in cultivating, harvesting, preparing and sharing food.

Sunday 17 May
Molly Scott Cato & Max Comfort:
Working for ourselves; working for each other

3 days: £280/£190 concs inc 5 meals
1 day: £100/£70 concs inc 2 meals

For more information & bookings go to:
www.stroudcommonwealth.org.uk
email: vitalsqueeze@gmail.com
phone Odilia: 01453 766598

Funding

Access to Nature funding

Access to Nature is a £25 million grant scheme which aims to encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors, particularly those who face social exclusion or those that currently have little or no contact with the natural environment.

Grants of £50,000–£500,000 will be awarded to projects that deliver one or more of the scheme's main outcomes.

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/enjoying/outdoorsforall/accesstonature/default.aspx

Neighbourhood Partnerships

Bristol's Neighbourhood Partnerships bring together local councillors with residents, community groups, and agencies such as the police, health services and schools, to help improve local services. The City is covered by 14 Partnerships, each of which has Council funding of £10,000 per ward to spend on locally-agreed priorities.

Partnerships can also raise additional funds for a 'community chest' to spend on their own local priorities. For example, The Better Bedminster Community Chest has given grants to Windmill Hill City Farm's Young City Farmers' Club, local parks projects and Show of Strength theatre performances in local shops.

To find your local Partnership & the right officer at Bristol City Council: www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Planning/file-storage-items/bristol-neighbourhood-partnerships-map-and-contact-list.en

The Department of Communities and Local Government has launched a scheme for Neighbourhood Partnerships to become **Inspiring Communities**. Initially it will fund and support 15 Partnerships around the country to deliver a programme of activities working with young people, their parents and communities, to create new opportunities, broaden horizons and build up the self-confidence of local people. Deadline for bids is Wednesday 3 June.

Further details at: www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/inspiringcommunities

Bristol news

Russell Town Avenue Community Allotment

Russell Town Avenue Community Allotment (RTACA) origins date back to 2003, having moved from its original church hall site, via the Black Development Agency, to its present location at City Academy Bristol (CAB) on Russell Town Avenue 2 years ago.

Consisting of 6 core residents, key objectives for the group over the next year are to promote RTACA, welcome new members and increase the number of visitors to the allotment.

CAB students use the site, exploring through practical activity such as rainwater harvesting and composting, where food comes from, self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on non-renewable resources.

Prior to cultivation, drainage of the area was very poor. Now there is better uptake of water and improved soil quality. An interesting, lively space that is used for

training, social events as well as growing food has been created. RTACA allows local residents to share ideas about preparing and cooking produce, whilst some have also had opportunities to develop skills in landscaping and garden construction projects.

We collaborate with other local groups and contacts in sourcing recycled or organic materials, and sharing information about events such as plant/seed swaps and workshops.

It's an enriching experience being outdoors, connecting with nature and discovering the seasonal impact on the plot, and also through working and learning together to achieve a common goal – producing fresh, tasty, healthy, lower mileage food!

For more information, email Nicola Feris rtacommunityallotment@googlemail.com

GROFUN



Bristol's evolving Local Food Growing Initiative GROFUN (Growing Real Organic Food in Urban Neighbourhoods) is going from strength to strength.

We were very proud to be included on BBC2's long standing show Gardeners' World on Good Friday in the same week as a very complimentary article about the scheme appeared on *The Guardian's* Gardening Blog. Read more here: www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/gardening-blog/2009/apr/07/gardens

We have 15 people signed up to the **Many Hands** scheme (which co-ordinates neighbours to grow food

co-operatively in their gardens) and many more people getting stuck in to our fantastic new community allotment in St Werburghs. The scheme is being replicated in other communities, most excitingly by Alys Fowler (from Gardeners' World) in her home town of Kings Heath, Birmingham with individuals 'mulling' it over (to coin a Transition term) in Nailsworth and Wraxall.

Our website has been massively improved with a new look, more info and photos: www.grofun.org.uk

We are on the allotment or doing Action Days most weekends, so get in touch if you want directions at: info@grofun.org.uk



Food stories on the web

Consumption Dwarfs Population As Main Environmental Threat

DIGEST: It's overconsumption, not population growth, that is the fundamental problem. By almost any measure, a small portion of the world's people — those in the affluent, developed world — use up most of the Earth's resources and produce most of its greenhouse gas emissions.

www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2140

Is Local Food Better?

DIGEST: Yes, probably — but not in the way many people think.

www.worldwatch.org/node/6064?emc=el&m=227941&l=4&v=1476577ebc

Food Industry Pursues the Strategy of Big Tobacco

DIGEST: Kelly Brownell has long studied the relationship between rising levels of obesity in the US and the way food is grown, processed, packaged, and sold. In this interview he discusses the common marketing and lobbying tactics employed by the food and tobacco industries.

www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2136

Eating Animal Products Ethically

www.sharonastyk.com/2009/04/02/eating-animal-products-ethically

Public health and the episteme of growth

DIGEST: Taken from the website Health After Oil: The Impacts of Energy Decline on Public Health & Medicine

www.healthafteroil.wordpress.com/2009/03/28/public-health-and-the-episteme-of-growth

Tesco's 'flights for lights' promotion — every little hurts

DIGEST: Supermarket's offer of air miles in exchange for low-energy light bulbs is like giving away a pack of Benson and Hedges with every Nicorette patch.

www.guardian.co.uk/environment/ethicallivingblog/2009/apr/06/tesco-advert-energy-saving-bulbs-flights-greenwash

Bristol news

Sustainable Redland

We are starting a **susred gardening club** focusing on fruit and veg and ecofriendly methods. If anyone is interested they just need to email susred, or better still join our yahoo email group (details on website) and post a message.

Redland and Cotham Amenities Society Open Gardens, 2–5.30pm Sunday 14 June

A delightful event and there's more edible stuff and wildflower patches in Redland gardens each year.

Susred is involved with the plans for a **Community Supported Agriculture farmlink initiative with Woodbarn Farm in Chew Magna**, in conjunction with Better Food Co, Avon Wildlife Trust and helped by the Soil Association. An open day, or festival even, is planned for 5 September

at the farm. The **Metford Road Community Orchard** is very busy and still keen to get more local members, we're putting up a new shed on Sunday 19 April, and we'll be planning some sort of open day soon.

Susred is hoping to team up with the **Kingsdown Conservation Group** to maybe start some sort of **community gardening project using NHS land near St Michaels Hill**. And of course there is the **Whiteladies Farmers Market**, first Friday, third Saturday every month, 8.30am–2pm corner of Whiteladies and Apsley Road.

Susred welcomes any help from local people who are keen to make a difference — just check out the website and join the email group.

www.sustainableredland.org.uk

Bristol Libraries involved in 'Get Bristol Growing'

Bristol Friends of the Earth has been involved with the Bristol Library Service in placing collections of new books on food growing, storage, cooking local produce and food policy in two local Libraries. An opening of the new collection at Lawrence Weston Library took place last month with food related events including a Veg Doctor giving advice to the public, local allotment holders available to talk to and a talk on organic veg production. Regular seed swaps are now taking place.

For further details contact Vicki Bowd, Library Supervisor
www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Leisure-Culture/Libraries/library-finder.en?XSL=library&LibraryId=26



The second book collection of 50 new books was opened by Andy Hamilton local author of the *Self-sufficientish Bible* on Friday 24 April at Eastville Library. A free packet of seeds is on offer for every new person who joins the Library (bring a bill etc as proof of address) for the following month.

Contact Jo Sergeant, Library supervisor
www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Leisure-Culture/Libraries/library-finder.en?XSL=library&LibraryId=60

Land Use plans for Bristol announced

Bristol City Council (BCC) have published a site schedule, maps, and the suggested land uses which were submitted as part of their land use consultation.

BCC have published an updated briefing note and a Community Involvement Programme. The briefing sets out how BCC intend to progress with the assessment of these sites and suggested uses. The Community Involvement Programme explains how the community will be involved, including the ways we intend to consult, notify and inform people at significant stages in the process.

The documents are available at:
www.bristol.gov.uk/bdf

Over 1,100 submissions were made by a wide range of individuals and organisations on some 600 sites across the city.

The Site Allocations Options are expected to be issued for consultation during the autumn, and further details will be available on the website nearer the time.

For more information, contact Sarah O'Driscoll, Team Manager — Strategic and Citywide Policy Team, bdf@bristol.gov.uk

Odds & ends

BBC 'Dig in' campaign

The Dig in campaign aims to get more people growing and eating their own veg. It's especially aimed at people who have not grown before, and who have limited space. The BBC has coverage of the campaign across the network, on Gardeners' World, CBeebies and BBC Food. The Dig in website has tips on how to grow your own tomatoes, carrots, beetroot, lettuce and squash (from seeds given away – and now all gone), lots of recipes, and you can subscribe to an e-newsletter with more tips.

www.bbc.co.uk/digin



New Food Co-op website

More and more people are setting up food co-ops so they can get good food at an affordable price. Sustain's food co-ops website can help you find out if there's already a food co-op in your area, or if not will give you all the information you need to set up your own food co-op.

www.sustainweb.org/foodcoops

Landshare

Landshare is a land dating service, that puts Growers who need land, in touch with Landowners who have land.

You can register as a Landowner, Grower or Helper – though currently there's a bit of an imbalance of 3,620 landowners to 28,452 frustrated growers.

The Bristol entries are almost all from those looking for land, with a few tantalising exceptions: "City plot in Clifton, overgrown, slight hill. Will be a building plot someday, until then, best make use of it. No water or leccy. No rent required, but agreement must be drawn up. Plot fully accessible at any time."

This is a great opportunity to highlight the increasing demand for land for food growing. Don't be put off registering as a grower, despite the lack of land currently advertised: the more growers who register looking for land – the more powerful case we have to make to Bristol City Council to provide land for food growing.

To find out more and register visit:
<http://landshare.channel4.com>

Vegetable landrace survey

The Universities of Birmingham & Warwick, with funding from Defra, are carrying out a survey of traditional vegetable varieties grown in England and Wales because of their historical and cultural value, but also to conserve the full range of diversity of the UK's crop plants. If you are a grower of traditional vegetable varieties you can complete the survey online at:

www.surveymonkey.com/vegetable_landrace_survey

or contact Shelagh Kell
s.kell@bham.ac.uk 01297 678117

New strategy for the Food Standards Agency

The Food Standards Agency (FSA), the Government's agency aiming to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food, has recently launched a full public consultation on its new strategy (2010–15).

Unfortunately the FSA's parochial focus on food and health through an almost exclusively nutrition lens, means that it fails to recognise that people's health is also seriously compromised by food's negative impact on local communities, their environments and economies. Our disconnection with food and where it comes from is a result of the globalisation and industrialisation of our food system. The re-localisation our food system would bring myriad direct and in-direct health benefits ranging from the physical exercise involved in growing our own food, through to decreased traffic pollution and stress, increased household budgets for food resulting from strengthened local economies and the social benefits of markets and small shops in terms of bringing communities together and providing social interaction for people otherwise isolated within their community.

The FSA's current consultation is an amazing opportunity to highlight the importance of broadening it's strategy's focus from 'food safety' and 'balanced diets' to embrace food's wider impacts on people's health.

The deadline for responses is Friday 5 June. To feed in your comments visit:

www.food.gov.uk/consultations/ukwideconsults/2009/proposedfsastrategy20102015

E-news subscriptions & newsletters

There are lots of e-newsletters and email alerts that can help keep you up-to-date with local food developments. Where an email contact is given below, just email to say that you would like to subscribe. Where a website is given, there is an on-line form for subscription

The Growing Schools newsletter

The Growing Schools project is a government initiative from the Department for children, schools and families (DCSF), which is run by Farming and Countryside Education (FACE).

Their website has lots of resources for teachers running growing projects in their schools. The e-newsletter has updates from the project, plus news and from partner organisations.

Sign up to the newsletter at:
www.growingschools.org.uk

f3 Local Food News

f3 are local food consultants who provide market research, business planning and consultancy services to organisations and enterprises involved in local food and farming, and related sustainability initiatives. Their monthly e-newsletter summarises local food stories appearing in the media.

Sign up to the newsletter at:
www.localfood.org.uk/index.html

Food Ethics Council newsletter

The Food Ethics Council challenges government, business and society to make wise choices that lead to better food and farming. They are a charity and work as an independent think tank and advisory body.

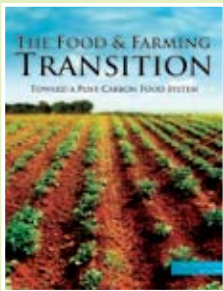
Sign up to the monthly e-newsletter at:
www.foodethicscouncil.org/supportus/maillinglist

Children's Food Campaign

The Children's Food Campaign wants to improve young people's health and well-being through better food – and food teaching – in schools and by protecting children from junk food marketing.

Register as a supporter and to join the mailing list at:
www.sustainweb.org/childrensfoodcampaign/register_your_support

Publications



The food and farming transition: toward a post carbon food system

Richard Heinberg & Michael Bomford, PhD

The American food system rests on an unstable foundation of massive fossil fuel inputs. It must be reinvented in the face of declining fuel stocks. The new food system will use less energy, and the energy it uses will come from renewable sources. The transition to the new system can be through a process of planned, graduated, rapid change. The unplanned alternative – reconstruction from scratch after collapse – would be chaotic and tragic.

Download the report at:
postcarbon.org/files/PCI-food-and-farming-transition.pdf

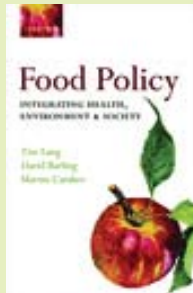


Future scenarios for the UK food system: A toolkit for thinking ahead

Paul Steedman & Wendy Schultz,
Food Ethics Council

The only certainty about the future is that it won't turn out as we expect. Even our best projections are likely to be wrong. But people and organisations striving for a fair and sustainable food system are aiming for long-term ambitions, not only short-term goals. So how can we plan ahead wisely in a world that is bound to surprise us? This report sets out four possible scenarios for the future of UK food in 2022.

Download the report at:
[www.foodethicscouncil.org/files/FECscenariosreport\(web\).pdf](http://www.foodethicscouncil.org/files/FECscenariosreport(web).pdf)



Food Policy: integrating health, environment and society

Tim Lang, David Barling & Martin Caraher, Centre for Food Policy,
City University

For over 50 years, food policy has been based on the assumptions that more food would yield greater health and happiness by driving down prices, increasing availability, and feeding more mouths. This policy is now coming unstuck. This book explores the enormity of what the new policy mix must address, taking the approach that food policy must be inextricably linked with public health, environmental damage, and social inequalities to be effective.

For more information see:
www.oup.com/uk/catalogue/?ci=9780198567882



Implications of a Nutrition Driven Food Policy for the Countryside

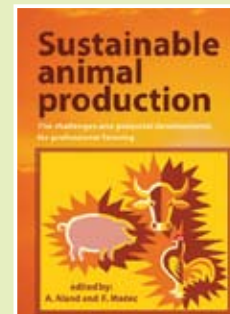
The Rural Economy and Land Use Programme have produced a briefing summarising findings of their project which set out to examine how the UK could produce healthy foods that consumers wish to buy at prices they are willing to pay, and to assess the impact on land use and the rural environment and economy.

Download the briefing at:
www.relu.ac.uk/news/policy%20and%20practice%20notes/PPN6%20Traill.pdf

The potential to increase productivity of wheat and oilseed rape in the UK

In spring 2008, the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor John Beddington, commissioned two reports on the theme of food security in response to high world food prices. The first of these reports considers the potential to increase UK production of two key arable crops, wheat and oil seed rape.

Download the report at:
www.dius.gov.uk/partner_organisations/office_for_science/science_in_government/key_issues/food_security/increase_productivity



Sustainable animal production: The challenges and potential developments for professional farming

Edited by **A. Aland & F. Madec**

An understanding of sustainability in animal production is becoming increasingly necessary since the global demand for food is expected to dramatically increase in the coming decades. Raising animals for the production of food will become increasingly challenging. This book addresses the major issues related to animal health and welfare maintenance in relation to their environment.

For more information see:
www.WageningenAcademic.com/sap

Shout out for plants!

Any spare plants, cuttings, extra veg seedlings, plants too big for your garden? Please bring them to Eastside Roots' Stapleton Road Station site. If they are labelled this will really help. We also have a specific wish list of plants for our 'flower garden' and our 'demonstration garden' on the slope, available on our website:

www.eastsideroots.org.uk



Bristol local food directory

www.bristollocalfood.co.uk

Publicise your community project or promote your favourite stalls, shops, pubs & cafés. Help us to keep the directory up-to-date with reviews by you – people who care about local food. Fill in the form on the website, or email: info@bristolfoe.org.uk



Bristol's Local Food Update

If you didn't receive this PDF by email, you can send a subscription request for future issues to be sent to you, to: bristollocalfood@googlemail.com

This is also the address for sending anything you would like included in the next newsletter – deadline 13 June. We'd also love to hear your feedback...

Regular things

GROFUN Action Weekends

Ashley Vale Allotments, St Werburghs
Every week, from noon Saturdays & Sundays

Ashley Vale Allotments are just behind The Farm pub, Hopetoun Road, St Werburghs. Drag on your wellies and come and give an hour or two. Refreshments provided

Phone Nadia 0797 3847894 for more info.

Eastside Roots regular volunteer days

Stapleton Road Train Station
10.30am–4.30pm Wednesdays & Fridays
Trinity Community Arts Centre garden
12 noon–5pm every Thursday

Improve your local community, meet new friends, learn new skills and keep fit.

Phone Nick Ward on 07810 806 354 or email nick@eastsideroots.org.uk

www.eastsideroots.org.uk

Westbury-on-Trym Local produce Market

9am–1pm every fourth Saturday
Health Centre Car Park off the Westbury village main car park

More details tel. 0117 9504 238 or www.suswot.org.uk

GRUB CLUB

Grub Club Organic Veg Club

Every Tuesday 4.30–6.30pm
Midnimo Centre, 163 Ashley Road, St Pauls

Enjoy wholesale veg prices on organic veg, by joining the The Grub Club veg co-op – which now has its own website:

<http://bristolgrubclub.blogspot.com/>

Royate Hill Community Orchard

Regular monthly workdays
1st & 3rd Saturdays of the month
11am–4pm (drop by anytime, but cleaning up starts around 3pm)

As well as the fruit trees, we also plant vegetables, and whoever shows up for workdays when there is a harvest, gets to take food home. Drinks available, bring snacks to share. Tools and gardening gloves provided. There is also a compost toilet at the orchard. Everybody welcome, regardless of experience.

For more information:
www.kebelecoop.org/collectives_permaculture.html

Map at:
www.kebelecoop.org/images/flyer_permaculture_may08.pdf

Help improve food in your local schools

Want schools in your area to be growing, cooking and eating fresh, seasonal, local and organic food and visiting the farms where their food is produced? Bristol City Council are soon to start working with a number of schools to pilot the **Soil Association's Food for Life Project**, which supports schools to transform food culture. Participating schools will get resources and guidance to help make positive changes and win awards for their achievements.

Bristol City Council is approaching the following schools to be part of the pilot and is keen to involve local communities in this work. If your community project is near one of these schools or you would like to be involved in some way, please contact sharon.sexton@bristol.gov.uk



- Air Balloon Junior, St George
- Cheddar Grove Primary, Bedminster Down
- Greenfield Primary, Novers Park
- Henbury Court Primary, Henbury
- Hotwells Primary, Hotwells
- Sea Mills Juniors, Sea Mills
- St Nicholas of Tolentine, Lawfords Gate (Lawrence Hill)
- St Joseph's, Fishponds
- Wansdyke Primary, Whitchurch
- Ashton Park Secondary, Bower Ashton

This issue of Bristol's local food update was compiled by Claire Milne & Jane Stevenson

Design by Jane Stevenson: janestevenson@madasafish.com Thanks to Martin Haswell for the fruit & veg photos: www.mhdi.co.uk