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Bristol and District Market Gardeners' Association 1897

The Bristol Context

Urban/peri-urban/rural farms contribute but a lot of produce comes in through wholesale market

Access to land is biggest issue

Bristol has lost a lot of agricultural land to development

Bristol City Council own quite a lot of land, including peri-urban areas, but poor management (due to lack of resource) has led to underutilised land

A lot of privately owned land is used for grazing horses or being held on for potential development

Rise in young people wanting a career in farming but difficult to access land - over 100 people filled in survey looking for land

A lot of work has happened - Who Feeds Bristol report, Gold Sustainable Food Cities report, One City Plan. However little action from council

Fringe Farming programme



Online Stakeholder event, May 2021. This was kept small as a lot of the consultation has already happened.



Production of a briefing document, summarizing local context, our research, and national situation. Circulated August 2021. This has been well received within the council.



Continued engagement with local MPs, councilors, cabinet member and officers.

Our Key Asks

Provide clear aims and objectives for the asset of the council smallholdings that also takes account of social and environmental factors

Resource the Smallholdings and Allotments team to adequately manage their land, including reviewing existing holdings and identifying under-utilised land

Implement a process for matching up available BCC land with new entrant farmers

Protect existing BCC owned agricultural land from development

Recognise horticultural training as a skills priority for Bristol with a commitment to making this training accessible to everyone in the city.

Our Progress

Strategy

- BCC currently creating Parks and Green Spaces strategy and Smallholding Strategy

Resource

- BCC reinstated Smallholding and Allotment Manager role
- Team currently gathering leases on BCC owned land and mapping their land

Matching process

- As Smallholding Strategy develops, input into this process with council
- Help them assess allocation of land between Allotment / Community / Commercial growing

Protection

- Continuing to pressure for protection of Best and Most Versatile land

Training

- Convene training working group in the city
- Support work at West of England Combined Authority level

Key learning



Local authority processes take time. A lot of time.



Be realistic what is possible with the available resource



Leverage support at every level