

# The Community Farm looking forward - where we aim to be and how we get there

## Strategic Plan 2017 to 2020

*Local nature-friendly farming welcoming people onto the land*

*The Community Farm is a social enterprise located in the Chew Valley just south of Bath and Bristol. Founded in 2010 as a community benefit society we are owned and governed by our shareholder members.*

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# **The Community Farm looking forward – where we aim to be and how we get there**

## **Section 1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Preamble**

One evening in 2009 a handful of local people gathered around a kitchen table to help Luke Hasell, farmer in the Chew Valley, and Phil Haughton, founder of award winning 'Better Food Company', in their ambition to create a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project on Luke's family land. We were driven by awareness that further industrialisation of our food system is not a good way forward. Seventy percent of the world's food is produced by small-scale mixed farming, whilst industrial scale farming produces only 30% yet uses 70% of the land, water and fossil fuel<sup>1</sup>. We need small farms that foster biodiversity and use natural resources sparingly, yet market forces do not at present favour this model<sup>2</sup> (see also Appendix 1). More and more people are waking up to these issues<sup>3</sup> and we wanted to create an open farm that could produce local food and engage people on the land. Thanks to massive enthusiasm, commitment, far-sightedness and generosity from our many members, helpers, and workers we successfully launched The Community Farm as a member owned Community Benefit Society. We now have a project that with the right investment and nurturing can become a local treasure. This Strategic Plan sets out our plans and aspirations. The appendices contain essential background information. A succinct summary of our strategic priorities is in section 3.3.

### **1.2 Our Purpose and Values**

The Community Farm's purpose is nature-friendly organic farming, for a local market, where people of all ages and from all walks of life can get on the land for learning, work, and play, pioneering an ethical and socially motivated business, learning amongst ourselves and with others.

We are a not-for-profit social enterprise located in the Chew Valley just south of Bath and Bristol. Founded in 2010 as a community benefit society we are owned and governed by our shareholder members. Details of our legal and governance arrangements are contained in Appendix 2, and a summary timeline of our history is in Appendix 3.

The primary reason for setting up The Community Farm was to create a place for people to experience being on the land, and to gain insight into the value and the challenge of ethical farming. We believe these opportunities are needed everywhere if we are to shift to a society that truly values and safeguards land and food for the benefit of everyone. To make this possible we need to run an efficient business that can in time, cover the basic costs of production and distribution. Any financial surplus that the farm makes is used to support the social aspects of the project. Already the farm is having an impact far greater than just growing on a few acres

and just providing routes to market for other local producers. It is creating a way for many people to feel part of the real farming movement, and it is building a prototype that is helping others with planning and starting local projects elsewhere.

The values that we try to follow in our day to day work include honesty, respect for the living Earth, trust, integrity, efficiency, fairness, justice, inclusivity and openness.

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<sup>1</sup> International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) (2009) Agriculture at a Crossroads: Global Report. Washington: Island Press

<sup>2</sup> Tudge, C. (2016) Six Steps Back to the Land. Cambridge: Green Books

<sup>3</sup> Willis G. 2016 New Model Farming: resilience through diversity. Campaign to Protect Rural England. Food and Farming Foresight – Paper 1.

## Section 2 Our Ambition

### 2.1 Top Headlines - achieving our 'triple bottom line'

In order to achieve our social, environmental and financial aims, our operation has three core elements (see Appendix 4 for the financial split)

- **growing;** vegetables, fruit, salad, herbs, on the field and in polytunnels.
- **trading;** selling ours and others' produce through box deliveries, farmers markets, and wholesale to shops and cafes.
- **outreach to bring people on the land;** promoting and publicising our presence within the Chew Valley and beyond, opening our gates to volunteers and to host and run inclusive events and programmes that welcome people onto the land.

Deciding the **scale and balance** of our three core elements is important. Our project needs to be big enough to be viable, but we want to grow the organization 'organically' rather than risk over-reaching ourselves. Summary headlines for our ambition are as follows. The remainder of this document sets out more detail, and how we intend to get there. A summary is in section 3.3.

**GROWING - We want to build an efficient, market garden scale and nature-friendly growing operation, following organic principles, and producing food that can attract a fair price in local markets;** Profit margins on local organic produce are small to non-existent (see Appendix 1 for the reasons). Small scale organic farmers in the UK survive by having strong support from loyal customers, and extra income sources for example from holiday accommodation, nature-based learning or therapy, weddings, or outdoor adventure. Our polytunnel growing is already reliably and consistently returning a profit, and we are learning what crops are best for our soil, for our workforce and for local markets.

**TRADING - We want to build a profitable trading arm supplying produce from our farm and others, through a high quality vegetable box scheme and online shop, local farmers markets, high street food retailers, and potentially through a farm shop;** Our Trading Arm has already reached the point where it is returning a profit and helping keep other local farms in business. We are building our profile, our scale and our experience year on year, and minimizing the amount of wasted produce.

**OUTREACH - We want to build a project where our staff, volunteers, and visitors can experience working together on the land efficiently and productively, in a way that is good for health, for learning, and for a strong community.** With the help of grant funding we have built our volunteer programme, our work with schoolchildren delivered by Earthwise and our links with Bristol Drugs Project. Experience on the land creates a connection with local food production and fosters understanding and respect for the land and for the produce harvested from it. Using untrained volunteer labour is not necessarily the most efficient way of growing vegetables because of the costs involved in attracting volunteers to the site, co-ordinating and teaching them when they are here and maintaining a visitor-friendly site to ensure a positive experience for all. However, we believe that the social benefits to

individuals and organisations far outweigh other considerations. We are a social enterprise and part of our remit is to deliver social benefit. Working to encourage people to 'get on our land' ensures we do so.

## **2.2 Growing and the Land**

### **Field operation - Where we are now**

Our growing operation covers some 15 acres of land including growing in 3 polytunnels. The main area is called Home Field. We use a five year crop rotation and fertility building plan. We are covered by the Soil Association organic certification scheme. Our main crops at present include squash, kale, cabbages, spinach, chards, beans, leeks, fennel, salads, herbs, tomatoes and cucumbers.

### **Field operation - Where we aim to be**

We aim to stay relatively small in order to keep a friendly feel and minimise risk from low profit margins and adverse weather. We want to achieve

- an attractive, well cared for, semi-commercial, market-garden style growing operation producing fruit, vegetables and herbs for local markets.
- fertility building, organic nature-friendly practices, diligent weed control, and physical methods to deter pests.
- the land under cultivation in any one year to be driven by volunteer and staff capacity, efficiency, and probably in the region of four or more polytunnels, within a total site area of 10 to 16 acres, of which around 5 to 10 acres is in active production at any one time.
- crops to be selected for easy management and high returns, with fruit trees and nut trees integrated into the site as appropriate.
- specialist crops (e.g. herbs) and animals (e.g. bees, chickens) will be included if we can develop financially viable arrangements such as hosting or partnerships with local beekeepers, other smallholders or specialist growers.
- a team approach involving a small resource of paid, experienced staff working with volunteers/community farmers, trainees and involving the wider community, with life on the field being well organised, inclusive, productive and fun, with a strong ethos of leadership and supervision for the volunteers, and a clear cycle of planning, mentoring and review.
- field operation to be financially sustained within its income plus supplementation from businesses that 'Adopt a Crop', and grants, and donations.

### **Field operation - How we get there**

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase our field staffing by securing funding for traineeships</li><li>• Continue to follow specialist advice on fertility building, soil management and weed control</li><li>• Explore worker accommodation (see Site and Infrastructure).</li></ul> |
|---|

### **Site and Infrastructure - Where we are now**

The facilities on the field when we started were little more than a cold tap, and we used an old warehouse 600 yards down Denny Lane for storing produce and packing the veg boxes. The unique asset of the field site is its stunning natural beauty, with views in all directions, ancient boundary trees, and diverse native hedgerows. However, as with many rural locations, it cannot easily be reached by public transport, despite being less than 100 yards from Chew Valley Lake visitor centre. Local affordable housing for farm workers is hard to find. During our first five years we have put up polytunnels, a yurt classroom, field kitchen, cob oven, a simple irrigation system, paths, apple trees, learning and recreation area, and cold storage facilities. Our landlord has recently built a new agricultural barn on Home Field into which the packing and storage warehouse operation moved in summer 2016. This consolidates our field and trading arm operations into one location.

### **Site and Infrastructure - Where we aim to be**

Our aim is to continue to develop the infrastructure needed for a thriving CSA. We want to achieve

- the new warehouse fitted out, used efficiently for storage and packing, the area around it landscaped and planted, combining efficient logistics for vans, farm equipment and tools, plus seating areas and social and meeting space.
- further improved irrigation facilities that minimize use of mains water.
- a fourth polytunnel and maintenance of our three existing tunnels.
- access to affordable accommodation close to the farm for farm workers possibly including 'WOOFERS' (see glossary). This could be through lodgings, camping, caravan, camping barn, or other arrangement.
- attractive footpaths linking key parts of the site including lighting (solar powered) for essential routes during working hours in winter, and more seating spots.
- A learning and recreation area that is well laid out, welcoming, has shelter for use in rainy cold weather, linked to the yurt classroom, with a large, healthy pond for wildlife complete with child-friendly pond dipping platform, a cob oven, a field kitchen, washing up station and space for fireside story-telling.
- attractive and practical signage that enables people to find us, and signs that help people around the site. The aim is for all visitors and volunteers to feel welcome, and to participate safely and effectively in the life of the farm.
- a site entrance that is welcoming and practical for people arriving on foot, bike or in a vehicle, and that allows pedestrians to enter safely without risk from vans and machinery.
- landscaped parking area for bikes and cars.
- possible planting of hedging shelter belts to minimize risk to vulnerable structures from storm damage and to provide nesting for birds.

### **Site and Infrastructure - How we get there**

- Complete the move to the new warehouse, and maintain oversight of snags and innovations
- Secure skilled help with landscape gardening and design to help plan improvements to the site, and seek fundraising incrementally for implementation
- Develop links within the Chew Valley to explore potential affordable lodgings and accommodation for farm workers.
- Build links with organisations that can help us develop the accessibility of the site for people with disabilities

### **Nature Friendly Farming - Where we are now**

The land at The Community Farm is already part of the Defra Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, under the management of our landlord and co-founder Luke Hasell. Ancient hedgerows, mature boundary trees and organic farm management with clover leys planted for fertility building, support a fair number of species of plants and animals. A couple of brief bird counts in 2015-2016 found 27 bird species using the farm, including linnet and redwing. We want to build on these numbers and encourage more species over time.

### **Nature Friendly Farming - Where we aim to be**

Our vision is to develop the entire farm site as a 'Farm Reserve', with the land as part farm, part nature reserve. We aim to demonstrate that putting nature first will increase biodiversity, produce strong crops and animals, restore a richer ecological balance and deliver health benefits for people and wildlife. The farm will be a haven for plant and animal species, where visitors can come to enjoy the experience of encountering the natural world and to learn about the many species (from beetles to barn owls) that live alongside us and within a working farm. We will need to form strong partnerships with like-minded projects for sharing of expertise, and with potential funders in order for this project to come about. Some of our aims include

- creating linked ponds and other wildlife habitats, planting a traditional mixed variety orchard, supporting a wildflower meadow and building a bird hide.
- developing a family-friendly nature trail, as well as footpaths and a jogging route.
- exploring the possibility of acquiring the small stone barn adjacent to our Home Field with a view to possibly converting this, using recycled building materials and traineeships for labour, into a multi-purpose farm building acting as a Farm Reserve Visitor Centre and learning resource when needed.
- installing bird boxes and bat boxes on trees and structures around the site and maintaining and creating swallow nesting space in barns and buildings.
- installing a webcam and camera traps linked to interactive online and social media resources for friends, members and followers of the farm to engage with the farming and the wildlife
- sharing a wider vision to be part of an enriched Chew Valley that becomes a showcase for organic nature friendly farming. We have a great opportunity



to interest people not only in natural history on the Farm Reserve but also in the Valley's farming history.

### **Nature Friendly Farming - How we get there**

- Form a steering group to engage with partners and bring the idea to life, and create a network of experts to advise us.
- Conduct a feasibility study of grant funding opportunities and develop a business plan – likely timescale 2017.
- With partners, aim for farming nature reserve enhancements to start taking place from 2019 to 2020.

## **2.3 Trading and Routes to Market**

### **Veg Boxes, High Street Retail, Market Stalls and Farm Sales - Where we are now**

Our box packing and delivery service is now efficient and high quality, winning a prestigious national BOOM award in 2016. We have created an online shop backed by a bespoke IT system, our stall at Bath Famers Market makes a steady income and gives us a local profile, and our relationships with other organic growers and with wholesale customers are making us a key link in the local organic food supply chain. There are many risks to our project (see Appendix 5) and we are living in turbulent times. Our plans need to be flexible, so that the farm is part of the emerging local food economy, seeking markets and partnerships wherever these arise.

### **Veg Boxes, High Street Retail, Market Stalls and Farm Sales - Where we aim to be**

Building from here, our vision is to

- achieve increasing veg box and market sales year on year. National sales trends for organic produce are between 11% and 8% in recent years. A 10% growth would mean aiming for a turnover of £21k per week by 2020/21 compared with our 2015/16 turnover of £13k per week
- achieve strength and depth in our relationship with the Bristol-based organic supermarket 'Better Food Company', serving them and their customers, enabling their shops to be a doorway to the farm and being their main fresh produce supplier.
- make our popular Bath Market stall even better, and connecting the market customers with the farm and the land.
- have a thriving weekly farm produce stall at Southmead Hospital, achieving a positive relationship with staff and patients, and finding new ways of making healthy organic produce affordably available to people from all walks of life
- make the farm into a place where people can come to buy fresh produce directly, with a personal touch, initially from a small stall with an honesty box, and in due course with an on site farm shop.
- find ways of creating food products that will be popular and profitable, and that provide traineeships and routes to employment – for example we could have an on-site kitchen for turning misshapen and gleaned vegetables into soups and salads, chutneys and pickles, to be sold locally, we could have

drying and chopping or juicing facilities for herbs or fruit, and in time we could have a farm cafe.

### **Veg Boxes, High Street Retail, Market Stalls and Farm Sales - How we get there**

- Make continual improvements in the quality of produce, packing, presentation, 'customer pathway', customer service and overall efficiency.
- Pilot and develop a market stall at Southmead Hospital.
- Create an attractive on-site vegetable stall, with an honesty box, perhaps with engagement of local schoolchildren and volunteers, initial publicity by word of mouth and build from there.
- Investigate the costs and options for a farm shop and a farm kitchen, and explore funding mechanisms.
- Scale up our marketing through innovative people-centred, community-centred approaches and through fun and creative events.
- Investigate the costs and options for starting a café at the farm to help welcome visitors and to serve food made from farm and other local produce.

## **2.4 Outreach - People on the Land**

### **Volunteers and community farmers - Where we are now**

A hallmark of The Community Farm is the engagement from unpaid helpers of all kinds. Our volunteers (including Board Members) help with overseeing the accounts, writing grant applications, running events, making films, working on the field, keeping the site tidy, packing boxes – all working alongside our team of committed and experienced paid staff. An important source of help for field volunteering has been a grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, which has enabled us to employ staff dedicated to looking after and developing our volunteer/community farmer programme.

### **Volunteers and community farmers - Where we aim to be**

Under the leadership of our staff we want to build the effectiveness, capacity and efficiency of our volunteer workforce even further. Our ambitions include

- a critical mass of weekday volunteers who know the farm, feel confident on the site, are familiar with health and safety and procedures, and can help welcome newer or less regular volunteers.
- expanding our programme of regular Community Farmer days open to the general public, and also bespoke days for specific groups or organisations.
- further improving the way we communicate with and look after our volunteers, creating a 'circle of cooperation' underpinned by sound systems and practices.

### **Volunteers and community farmers - How we get there**

- Secure external funding sources to maintain our Community Farmer and outreach programme after the ending of our Esmée Fairbairn Foundation funding
- Maintain a continuous and focused programme of volunteer recruitment and publicity
- Publish our written code of good practice for supervising and retaining our volunteer/Community Farmer workforce, practice it, monitor it, share it and develop it further over time.

### **Presence in the Valley - Where we are now**

The involvement of local people has grown steadily since our first Open Day with 150 visitors in September 2009 when our plans were still taking shape. Our links with local schools are strong and our links with local community groups are growing. The family-friendly Valley Fest music festival that Luke Hasell, our landlord and a Director of The Community Farm, has hosted on his land adjacent to Home Field each summer since 2014 has attracted many people onto the land, and is starting to become known and valued locally. Many people know us as a box scheme, or as somewhere that does days for schoolchildren, or as a place to volunteer. Few people know the full range of things that we do.

### **Presence in the Valley - Where we aim to be**

Our ambition is for the farm to become

- a hub for local communities, where people come for favourite activities in a very special location –local groups organise coffee mornings, bird-watching, wildlife gardening, plant sales or seed swaps, choirs come and sing on the land, yoga groups have sessions here, there are concerts, celidhs, workshops and performances, pre-school and toddler groups, and much more.
- somewhere to buy produce directly on the farm (see Trading).
- a place of seasonal celebrations for midsummer, harvest, and wassail.
- a sister organisation to the annual Valley Fest music festival showcasing nature-friendly and inclusive farming as well as healthy and affordable catering, within a magical and celebratory festival.

### **Presence in the Valley - How we get there**

- Find opportunities to meet with, give talks, show short films, and explain the farm and its future potential, to local societies, businesses, organisations, interest groups etc.
- Plan and host 'open day' activities in partnership with local groups.
- Build our publicity and promotion within the Valley in a way that explains our purpose and our three main activities, linked to a clear Events Programme.
- Build partnerships with local groups and organisations.

### **On the Land for learning, for therapy, and for recreation - Where we are now**

We have already run two years of successful traineeships for people recovering from drug and alcohol addictions. We have built our work with schools and during the growing season we host farm days each week for 60 children at a time, run by Earthwise. We have hosted successful cookery days, foraging days, wellbeing days, and work days, sometimes followed by campfires and camping. Participants consistently tell us that they go home glowing with a sense of health and wellbeing.

### **On the Land for learning, for therapy, and for recreation - Where we aim to be**

We want to build on these successes and further develop the farm as a place that hosts a range of traineeships, and that could offer nature-based programmes of learning and activities to help people with defined health needs. Our vision for the future is that the farm becomes a place for

- learning opportunities for schoolchildren on the farm, enjoying planting, harvesting, cooking, wildlife activities and a range of nature-based skills learning.
- skills workshops, cookery classes, and other kinds of learning for people of all ages, run by and with community groups and organisations.
- supervised and structured programmes of activities that aid recovery and restoration, for example for people with heart conditions, anxiety-related mental health difficulties, addiction problems, weight problems, or diabetes.
- a place where trainees come to learn farming and related activities such as business skills, as part of funded apprenticeship programmes.

### **On the Land for learning, for therapy, and for recreation - How we get there**

- Continue and strengthen our partnership with Earthwise, our links with schools, and our programme of school learning activities.
- Maintain our strong relationship with Bristol Drugs Project through a series of farm experience programmes, and exploring potential means of funding formal traineeships for the future.
- Research the potential for nature-based therapeutic interventions at the farm, build relationships with key organisations in the West of England (see Partnerships), develop pilot activities, and work to become part of a collaboration of providers.
- Scope the potential funding streams for traineeships, and develop plans accordingly.

## Section 3 The means for achieving our ambition

### 3.1 Investment and finance

Although our trading arm is already profitable (Appendix 4) it needs investment to build it further. Also, our key purpose of enabling people to get on the land and experience small scale farming can only be delivered with help from external funding. With time there can be income-generation from visitors, an on-site café, and from offering defined programmes to meet specific health needs. But to enable The Community Farm to realise its potential over the next 5 to 10 years we need funding and investment under four broad headings;

- External funding support for our Community Farmer role beyond the end of the current grant, external funding to enhance our staffing on the field, and a small amount of paid professional help with fundraising to assist staff and board members with fundraising work. These elements are all essential for our core purpose of attracting, welcoming, supporting and training volunteers and for pioneering small-scale nature-first ethical farming.
- Short-term revenue support to provide 'pump priming'; allowing us capacity to develop costed plans for the farm shop, on site kitchen, drying/processing facilities, café, and new markets in order to build the trading arm to a more sustainable scale.
- Capital investment for essential improvements in our site, our facilities and our equipment. This will include capital for developing a farm shop, kitchen, processing facilities, and café, and for creating built structures on site so that visitors and volunteers can access shelter and social space whatever the weather.
- Project funding to enable planning and delivery of our ambitions for the farm as a wildlife and farming reserve, as a hub for the local community, for exploration of nature-based interventions for people with defined health needs and for development of a range of traineeships.

The funds that we need comprise revenue for the staff time involved in developing, planning and delivering the changes, as well as capital costs.

The key means by which we will secure investment are

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Adopt a Crop     | An initiative that invites well established businesses sympathetic to our aims to financially sponsor an aspect of the field operation in return for positive publicity, team days on the farm, shared lunch in the yurt, and a mini-farmers market in the workplace.  |
| Crowdfunding     | We will build our experience at using crowdfunding. There are many funding needs at the farm that can capture peoples imagination, would be well portrayed through a short film, and that lend themselves to seeking small sums from our numerous newsletter recipients, facebook friends and twitter followers. |
| Community Shares | Our start-up investment came from a community share offer, which we ran ourselves successfully without professional help. Many of our shareholders tell us how glad they are to have helped us, and how much they appreciate the dedication of everyone who works  |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
|                    | for the farm. Similarly, our staff feel a commitment to the shareholders, and want to make best use of their investment. It is likely that a further share offer will be desirable to assist projects such as the farm shop, a visitor centre, site enhancements or bird-hides.   |
| Mini bonds         | As the trading arm becomes stronger and more sustainable, we can consider offering investment opportunities to people who want to support a social enterprise and who would like to see a financial return. This could be in the form of a mini-bond.   |
| Grant Applications | There are sources of grant funding that match some of the needs of the farm. Applying for grants can be time-consuming. Most grants are heavily oversubscribed. We will secure specialist help to enable us to apply for funds when there is a strong match with our strategic aims. We will seek to submit joint bids with partner organisations wherever possible.  |
| Donations          | Donations have been an important source of funding for the farm particularly at key moments of challenge. Many people are inspired by and appreciate our work, do not have time to volunteer directly, and are happy to know that they have caused specific developments to happen. Across the globe people are starting to rethink their relationship with money, wanting to use it to build a better future. The goodwill relationship that we have with the many friends of the farm is in effect our main 'financial reserve'. It is an important strand of our investment strategy, and it works both ways in that we gain ever-stronger resolve knowing that we must use benefactors' money carefully and wisely. |

### 3.2 Internal development

In addition to investment, we need also to develop our workforce, our publicity, our partnerships, and the ways in which we measure our impact and value.

**Staffing and workforce** - Our workforce is a key asset of the farm. Working on the field and in a cold warehouse in all weathers and with very early starts is far from a soft option, and pay rates for our workers are less than we would like them to be. Despite this we have built a strong team ethos and a sense of dedication to a project based on ethical values and purpose. Our staff are

- members of the farm for the duration of their employment.
- involved in building the organisation, the teamwork and the direction through regular whole team meetings and events.
- supported by leadership from our Managing Director.

Our aim is to deepen the engagement of staff, strengthen our internal learning programme, and work towards paying all staff the living wage by 2020.

**Publicity and communications** - Our website, electronic newsletter, facebook and twitter are the main means by which we have established our identity and enabled people to find out about us. Presence at events and word of mouth has also played a

part. We have succeeded in promoting the successes of the project whilst still conveying the ongoing need for support; we have communicated our ‘ask’ even though it is varied and complex; and we have worked at explaining that we are both a business and a social project. Our publicity has to achieve many things and for many audiences.

Marketing in order to build our sales is essential for the viability of the farm as a business. Finding ways of conveying our deeper purpose and values has to be at the heart of our marketing approach. We want to

- become a strongly recognised ethical name in the area, known for the full range of things we do – as a successful social enterprise, and as a special place, and not just as a box scheme
- engage ‘hearts and minds’ for existing and potential customers. Achieve a shift in how people feel about buying, cooking and eating local organic produce – food and farming are so much more than a ‘commodity’ and we need to communicate the link between farming and wildlife
- instill a sense that we belong to everyone, our members, local people, and anyone who cares about the natural world, so that all can feel proud of and loyal to the project
- convey our values and purpose through positive, entertaining and good-humoured messages, giving people shared resolve and a sense of connectedness with the natural world

We will achieve this by

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Values and Purpose                    | Our veg box marketing will be positioned within the wider ethical and ecological aims for our social enterprise and we will unify and refine our marketing messages around our values, purpose, and the different ways that we meet these.                                    |
| Transmissible messages                | All of our staff, volunteers, members, friends, neighbours and customers will be provided with succinct materials and messages that they can use to explain the farm to others.   |
| The people behind the veg             | We will use the story of the farm to good effect, especially focusing on the people who make the farm what it is and the deeper reasons that drive their commitment.  |
| Letting others tell the story with us | By increasing our contact with local media, food writers, and bloggers, we will make it easy for them to come and experience the farm in a way that helps them in their communication work. We will also open our gates to students of journalism, marketing, and filmmaking. |

**Partnerships** - Collaboration between individuals or organisations with shared aims brings many benefits, some of which emerge in ways that are unpredictable.

Creating the conditions for this requires;

- opportunities for people and organisations to get to know each other
- shared mutual understanding of purpose, values, and ways of working
- open minds about potential outcomes

- honesty about intentions and a commitment to fair exchange

We have worked with many organisations during our short life. Our aim is to continue to strengthen our bonds with existing and new partners. This takes time to make contact, arrange learning visits, and develop productive joint projects. It is likely that specific sources of funding could help with this work. The types of partnerships we are building can broadly be grouped as follows

- Strategic partnerships with organisations concerned with wildlife, soil, sustainability, ethical farming and heritage.
- Commercial partnerships within the food sector including suppliers and retailers.
- Strategic partnerships with organisations involved in provision of health care, social care, education, and employment experience.

**Measuring Our Influence and impact** -The farm is already having an influence and impact far beyond that of producing just a few acres of organic produce and providing routes to market for other local producers. Most people are aware that human activities are depleting non-renewable resources and are damaging the ecological world. Most are aware that our current economic policies are causing inequalities to get wider. Yet most of us feel too small to make a difference. Projects like The Community Farm are offering people the chance to be part of something tangible, positive, and bigger than the individual. They also create prototypes that can inform and inspire others, not just locally but across the globe.

As we continue to develop the farm, we will aim to

- foster a sense of ownership and loyalty amongst customers, visitors, members, staff, volunteers, and partners.
- develop and demonstrate a new and successful model of enterprise which is financially viable, socially and environmentally focused, community owned and values driven.
- encourage a different philosophy towards shopping generally and food shopping in particular, moving away from 'lowest price and lots of it' to a sense of true value, enabling people to escape from being complicit with systems they do not like.
- measure our social impact and our positive impact on biodiversity so that we have evidence of our achievements and can present this in understandable ways to other parties.
- share our story locally and far afield.

### **3.3 Summary of our Key Strategic Priorities and how we will achieve them**

Our key priorities and investment needs are summarised below. The first table sets out six immediate priorities. The second table summarises priorities that need a longer timescale. Elements are subdivided into 'Core Activities' without which we



will not be able to meet our core aims, and 'Projects' which are important aspirations, yet not critical to our ability to meet core aims.

### Six Immediate Priorities

| Need  | How it will be achieved   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Period of Stabilisation - Core Activity</b><br/>           The early years of the farm have been a time of constant change as we have evolved our team, growing operation, facilities, trading arm, outreach work, and business model. We can now plan for a period of consistency, with the new warehouse completed and field growing predominantly on Home Field. We can focus our three-year growing plan, consolidate our staff team, refine our marketing, improve the site, and strengthen the quality of all that we do under the leadership of the managing director.</p> | <p>Through supportive governance by Board and by refinement of internal systems. Other investments (see below) will enable more 'headspace' for internal development. The routine work of farming allows little time for planning and reflection, hence the need for specific resource.</p> |
| <p><b>Additional workers for field team – Core Activity</b><br/>           Although the growing operation has exceeded all targets for the 2016 season, like many ecological projects our team does long hours for low pay and many extra unpaid hours. This self-exploitation is not sustainable. We need to create and fund two full time posts for horticulture trainees to add to our field workforce and to help generate young farmers for the future.</p>  | <p>A funding application has been submitted to the Princes Countryside Fund. If this is not successful we will continue to pursue all possible funding programmes. The cost is £50k per year for two traineeships.</p>  |
| <p><b>Continuation of Community Farmer role – Core Activity</b><br/>           With our Esmée Fairbairn Foundation funding we have built a positive reputation for the way that we involve volunteers in all aspects of the life of the farm, from seed to harvest, from soup making to cob oven building. Continuing this work requires funding for the staff time and the other associated costs of nurturing the volunteers programme.</p>   | <p>The funding needed is of the order of £20k per year. Our first port of call will be to make a case to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for funding this ongoing work.</p>  |

| Need   | How it will be achieved  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Specialist Fundraising help – Core Activity</b><br/>           To date we have managed our community share offers, fundraising and grant applications in-house, with the work done by staff and by volunteer board members. Now that we have proved our ability to run an effective growing operation, trading arm and outreach programme we need to set our sights on more ambitious fundraising. For this we need the help of someone for whom this is their main expertise.</p>   | <p>We are actively seeking a relationship with potential experienced fundraisers familiar with the field of food and farming. Necessary funding for their time will be built into our business planning.</p>   |
| <p><b>Essential Site Enhancements – partly Core Activity, partly Projects</b><br/>           Our next phase of infrastructure improvement includes a fourth polytunnel and maintenance of existing ones, improving our composting systems, enhancing the irrigation, improving the pond in the learning area, upgrading our delivery vans, the planting of pollinator strips, bee-friendly flowering plants and wildflower margins, landscaping around the entrance, the parking area, and the new warehouse.</p>  | <p>Some funding is already in our business plan from donations and through a grant from the Real Farming Trust. Other elements are in a funding bid we have made to the LEADER programme. Small grants are being sought for elements such as the pond.</p> |
| <p><b>Pump-priming business investment – funding for making the plans is Core Activity</b><br/>           In common with other food and farming start-ups, our experience of the economics of local ethical food growing is that profit margins are tiny, and the business runs so ‘close to the wire’ this gives little time or headspace for planning the developments that will stabilise and grow the operation. To work up the detailed planning for how the operation can grow to include expanded box sales, a farm shop, café, visitor facilities etc. needs time and skills. For this we need business development funding.</p> | <p>There are several potential social investment options that we are exploring, seeking genuinely ‘patient capital’ with objectives and values aligned to those of the farm. We aim to research this and submit applications during 2017.</p>              |

## Longer term priorities

| Need  | How it will be achieved  |
|---|--|
| <b>Growing and the Land</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Beekeeping, specialist growing, and animal husbandry – Projects</b><br/>We are exploring the potential for our site to be home to projects such as beekeeping and specialist herb growing, by partnering with specialists in a range of areas.</p>  | Through building up our relationships and partnerships.  |
| <p><b>Worker accommodation – Core Activity</b><br/>As we build our presence in the Valley we are exploring opportunities for seasonal farm workers and WWOOFERS to be hosted locally.</p>   | Through building up our relationships and partnerships.  |
| <p><b>The Farm as a farm nature reserve – Projects</b><br/>Plans range from small things that we can do immediately and needing only modest investment such as bird and bat boxes and webcams, through to the need for an orchard, visitor centre, bird hide, and linked ponds.</p>   | A steering group and a virtual network of expert advisers is being set up and funding opportunities are being investigated.                                  |
| <b>Trading and routes to market</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Building the box and wholesale trading to optimum capacity – Core Activity</b><br/>The pump-priming business investment (see above) is necessary to give us skilled time to work up the optimum scale and right marketing. Implementation may need additional resource.</p>   | Implementation in-house, with possible need for mini-bonds, community share offer or crowdfunding.   |
| <p><b>Farm shop, farm kitchen, farm café – Projects</b><br/>A detailed business and investment plan is needed (see above Pump-Priming business investment). These activities could start small, and develop. Opportunities to share infrastructure with other food and farming-related community based projects will be explored.</p> | Dependent on the outcome of research and planning, we may pursue mini-bonds, community shares, crowd-funding, and possible partnering with other businesses. |
| <b>Outreach and people on the land</b>  |  |
| <p><b>Extending and enhancing the learning and recreation area - Projects</b><br/>The southeast corner of Home Field is dedicated to our learning and recreation area and to biodiversity, being free from any traffic by farm vehicles. We want to design the area to accommodate an all-weather shelter, a bird hide,</p>           | This is likely to need grant funding applications and crowdfunding for essential infrastructure. Volunteers and partner organisations will be                |

| Need   | How it will be achieved  |
|--|--|
| <p>additional wildlife-friendly planting, seating spots and wild areas. In partnership with Earthwise and other potential users of the area we will develop plans and costings.</p>  | <p>involved in implementation of the changes and maintenance of the gardens, pond, etc.</p>  |
| <p><b>Improving transport to the site, accessibility for people with disabilities, signage, and footpath from the lake – Core Activity</b><br/> We need to continue to explore ways of making it easy to come to the site, including the opportunities for liftsharing . We will take account of accessibility and signage in all of our planning.</p> | <p>In-house work, plus possibly some external fundraising.</p>   |
| <p><b>Exploring opportunities for traineeships and other learning or therapeutic activities – Projects</b><br/> We will seek, and be open to opportunities for the farm to be used as a resource for training and education, and for structured therapeutic programmes, in partnership with others.</p>  | <p>We will need to ensure that these activities cover their costs, as is the case with our children’s’ activities. Feasibility and pilot projects may need external funding.</p> |

## Glossary

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agro-ecology               | Refers to agriculture based on principles of ecology and encompassing 'food sovereignty' which includes the right of people to control seeds, land, and culturally appropriate food production through participatory decision making.  |
| Anti-competitive practices | The Competition Commission reported in 2000 on the supply of groceries from multiple chain stores in the UK and noted many allegations and a climate of apprehension amongst suppliers, relating to the behavior of supermarkets. The CC therefore put a list of 52 alleged practices to the supermarkets and found that the majority of practices had indeed been carried out by many of them.  |
| Bristol Drugs Project      | Founded in 1985 in response to damage done by alcohol and drug problems, Bristol Drugs Project works to reduce harm, promote change, challenge prejudice and maximize peoples potential through provision of services and projects.  |
| Care Farming               | Farming-related activities with a therapeutic aim are known by a number of terms including 'Care Farming' and 'Social and Therapeutic Horticulture'. Clients are generally referred by health and social care services, with costs to the farm being covered from health or social care budgets, although self-referral and self-funding is also common.   |
| Community Farmer           | At The Community Farm we believe that everyone who comes and helps us is in effect a Community Farmer. In the early days we were unable to properly look after the people who wanted to get involved, so we applied for a grant from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to fund staff time for supporting the Community Farming function. This has transformed our ability to run Saturday Community Farmer days, to welcome groups to the farm and to run our weekday field and warehouse volunteering. |
| CSA                        | Community Supported Agriculture means a partnership between farmers and consumers in which the responsibilities, risks, and rewards of farming are shared. An umbrella network of CSA's exists for the UK, and globally. CSA's take many forms, and have arisen in response to lack of transparency, sustainability and resilience in our food system. They represent a radical way of reclaiming ownership and control of local food.   |
| Earthwise                  | Earthwise is a Bristol-based provider of farm-based and forest school activities for children and young people, aiming to reconnect youngsters with food, farming and the natural world. Claire Rosling founded Earthwise after working at the Community Farm for two years on a short-term grant as our Education Officer. Our partnership with Earthwise means that The Community Farm hosts frequent visits for up to 60 schoolchildren, as well as holiday activities.                       |

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Enlightened Agriculture    | Farming designed to provide everyone everywhere forever with enough food, of high quality and tasty and nutritious, without wrecking the rest of the world.  |
| Esmée Fairbairn Foundation | Founded in 1961 by Ian Fairbairn in memory of his wife Esmée, the foundation is one of the largest independent grant-making foundations in the UK.   |
| Gleaning                   | Collecting fresh produce left behind on plants and soil once harvesting is done.   |
| Industrialised food system | A model of farming that seeks to maximize economic gain by running large farms based on mechanization and monocultures. Common practices are repeat crops in a single season, artificial fertilisers, genetic modification, concentrated numbers of livestock in a small area, pesticides, antibiotics, weed killers, and growth regulating chemicals. Soil degradation, pollution, and resistant weeds, pests and infections, are amongst many negative consequences. |
| Land Workers' Alliance     | A UK based organisation of farmers, growers and land-based workers, campaigning for policies that support these livelihoods and raising awareness of the role these workers play in providing food security, environmental stewardship, rural livelihoods, strong communities, animal welfare, and high-quality affordable food. The LWA is affiliated to Via Campesina, an international millions-strong organization representing peasant farmers across the globe.  |
| Organic                    | Organic farming is based on principles that work with nature, promote ecological balance, recycle resources, and enhance biodiversity. Legally binding standards for organic produce are set for the European Union. Certification of organic farms is carried out by recognised bodies such as the Soil Association.  |
| Patient Capital            | A term used to describe capital investment for the long term with no expectation of a quick financial gain. Recently the term has begun to be used to describe capital investment for a long term social gain rather than solely for long term financial gain.   |
| Pump-priming               | A term borrowed from engineering, and meaning the investment of money into a business in order to enable it to grow and develop.   |
| TCF                        | The Community Farm   |
| Triple bottom line         | This term was coined in 1994 to highlight an aspiration for companies to address responsibilities to people and planet. The traditional bottom line is monetary profit. Triple bottom line refers in addition to social (people) and environmental (planet) impacts. A socially and environmentally responsible business should have a positive impact in these dimensions.  |
| WWOOFERS                   | WWOOF – World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms - is a worldwide movement linking volunteers with organic farmers  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>and growers. Typically the volunteers receive board and lodging from the host and an opportunity to learn about and experience organic lifestyles, in return for their labour. At The Community Farm we do not yet have the wherewithal to offer accommodation on or close to the farm, with a farming host.</p> |
|--|---|

## Appendix 1 The wider context of food and farming and why it matters

For those of us who enjoy the astonishing convenience and diversity of food available in every supermarket and high street it can come as an unpleasant shock to learn some of the downsides of the current food system.

It is often said that around a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions are caused by agriculture; a statement which seems to beg the response ‘what are we supposed to do – stop eating??’ Add to that the facts around soil depletion, loss of biodiversity, unethical employment practices, farmer suicide rates, food riots, enclosures of land, forced displacement of people, under-nutrition, food poverty, obesity, wasted food, vulnerability of just-in-time supply chains, destruction of rainforest for cash crops, biofuel production and for grazing and altogether it paints a sorry picture<sup>1 2 3 4</sup>. Yet seldom do we hear the positive side of the story.

Small-scale mixed farming coupled with small-scale hunting and fishing is producing some 70% of the world’s food, using only 30% of the world’s agricultural land, and providing employment to hundreds of millions of people<sup>4</sup>. In 2014 the production of food worldwide was enough to feed 14 billion people, which is 3 to 4 billion more than the UN predict as the maximum future projected world population<sup>2</sup>.

It is often claimed that world food production must increase 50% by 2050, and that agriculture based on monocultures, pesticides, artificial fertilisers and genetically modified crops is the only way. Yet this model of industrialised farming currently produces only 30% of the world’s food and uses (within the agriculture system) 70% of the water, 80% of the fossil fuels, and 70 – 80% of the land. By ecological standards, it is inefficient and destructive.

The Community Farm is one tiny part of a growing movement for ‘real farming’, sometimes called ‘enlightened agriculture’ or ‘agroecology’. The Community Farm is a member of the Land Workers’ Alliance, which is affiliated to the global organization Via Campesina. Put simply, ‘enlightened agriculture’ means farming designed to provide everyone everywhere forever with enough food, of high quality and tasty and nutritious, without wrecking the rest of the world.

At present the economics of small-scale ethical farming do not stack up. The cost of wages, land, rent, seeds, supplies, equipment, maintenance, packaging and marketing are not covered by current market prices for local ethical organic produce. This is because market prices are governed by an economic model that;

- relies on exploitative labour, sometimes including child slave labour<sup>5</sup>
- ignores the cost of natural resource depletion
- uses anti-competitive practices – a Competition Commission inquiry in 2000 identified 52 anti-competitive practices that practiced by multiple chain retailers<sup>6</sup>
- is influenced by a system of subsidies which rewards land ownership rather than rewarding nature-friendly practice<sup>7</sup>, and that creates incentives for destructive practices such as maize growing<sup>8</sup>
- uses offshore accounting to evade tax.



Reform of the current system is virtually impossible because resistance is met every step of the way. This is why our project and many others like it are an essential part of the change that is needed. The aim is to be part of creating a new model of farming, explicitly committed to care for the natural world and to social justice within the food system, and supported by people who care.

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<sup>1</sup> International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) (2009) Agriculture at a Crossroads: Global Report. Washington: Island Press

<sup>2</sup> Tudge, C. (2016) Six Steps Back to the Land. Cambridge: Green Book

<sup>3</sup> Who Feeds Bristol - towards a resilient food system. Joy Carey. March 2011 Bristol City Council, NHS Bristol and Bristol Green Capital Group

<sup>4</sup> Altieri, M,A. (2015) Earth Talk: Agroecology: Who will feed us in a planet in crisis. Schumacher College; Dartington TV <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKfiabQ-j0E> (accessed 20 August 2016)

<sup>5</sup> Clutterbuck C. Worker Exploitation in Food Production and Service Chapter in Practical Ethics for Food Professionals: Ethics in Research, Education and the Workplace. Eds Clark and Ritson. Wiley and Sons. 2013

<sup>6</sup> Competition Commission October 2000. Supermarkets: A report on the supply of groceries from multiple stores in the United Kingdom. [http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/rep\\_pub/reports/2000/446super.htm](http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/rep_pub/reports/2000/446super.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Shrubshole G. Who Owns England. <https://whoownsengland.wordpress.com> (accessed Dec 2016)

<sup>8</sup> Farnworth G. Melchett P. Runaway Maize: subsidized soil destruction. Soil Association June 2015.

## **Appendix 2 Legal and governance aspects for The Community Farm**

The Community Farm was founded as a Community Benefit Society in 2010. We define our local community as notionally falling within a 15 miles radius of the farm, including the cities of Bristol and Bath and the communities of the Chew Valley. The benefit derives from the production of organically certified vegetables, salad crops, herbs and fruit for a local market, and from an extensive programme of activities encouraging people to spend time on the farm.

Through share offers we have attracted just over 500 members, each of whom is a shareholder in the community benefit society. Regardless of how many shares a members holds, each is entitled to one vote on matters of governance of the organisation. An annual general meeting takes place each year.

The Community Benefit Society has an asset lock in its constitution. This means that its assets cannot be sold and the income distributed for the private benefit of the members. The shares in The Community Farm are not transferable (i.e. they cannot be sold or given to another party (save in the event of death)). The shares are withdrawable (i.e. they can be sold back to the organisation and cancelled, at the discretion of the directors). The directors also have the ability, if there is a surplus and they believe it is in the interests of the organisation to do so, to pay interest on shares where an individual or organisation owns £500 or more of shares.

TCF is currently managed by a board of ten volunteer directors and one executive director. The board (or Management Committee as it is referred to in the Rules) meets monthly to deal with strategic and governance matters arising for the organisation. A number of standing sub-committees of the board deal with matters such as Business and Finance, and People and Procedures, and ad hoc sub-committees are formed where particular issues need specific attention, recent examples being to address the move of our wholesale operation from one site to another.

Each year one third of the board is required to retire by rotation. Any board member wishing to stand for re-election, along with new candidates for the board, are elected by the members at the AGM. Full details of the Rules of the Company can be found on The Community Farm website or by contacting the Farm.

The key characteristics of Community Benefit Societies are that

- The business, or trade has social objectives.
- Company shares are not tradable and cannot be sold on for a profit.
- It is run and managed by its members.
- It submits annual accounts.
- It can raise funds by issuing shares to the public.
- It may hold charitable status, providing that it has exclusively charitable objects for the public benefit, allowing it to raise capital through public grants and charitable trusts.

TCF is also categorised as a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) scheme because it combines and fulfils the three essential elements of a CSA

- a) A landowner who is prepared to look at models of food production that engage the local community
- b) A farmer, or grower, who is keen to produce food for the local community and respond directly to their needs
- c) A local community with a commitment to engage with the food production and to become members of the CSA scheme.

In due course it may prove desirable to set up an additional legal structure of a wholly owned charitable trust as part of The Community Farm, with aims dedicated to education and outreach.

## Appendix 3 The Community Farm Timeline

|  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
|  | <b>2008</b> | Initiating group started to form  |
|  | <b>2009</b> | Growing began on Home Field under the Better Food Company   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Community Share Offer -> | <b>2010</b> | Steering Group formed, Business Plan drawn up, external assessment of finance needs, share offer launched   |
| Legal entity created April ->            | <b>2011</b> | The Community Farm became a legal entity and took on growing operation and box scheme, approximately 7 whole time equivalent staff, Community Farmer days began   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Community Share Offer -> | <b>2012</b> | Cold store, polytunnels, yurt, apple trees and new website  |
| Open Community Share Offer->             | <b>2013</b> | Funding obtained for Bristol Drugs Project Traineeships, Community Farmer role, and Education Officer, Bath Market started  |
|  | <b>2014</b> | Brand refresh, new online shop and bespoke box scheme software, created partnership with Earthwise to take over from Education Officer role   |
| Investment Appeal ->                     | <b>2015</b> | Box scheme sales exceeded 400 boxes per week and trading arm returned a profit  |
|  | <b>2016</b> | New Agricultural Barn on Home Field consolidates the operation onto one site, Box Scheme wins national BOOM award, 12 whole time equivalent staff, regular field/warehouse volunteers numbering around 25 people in total |

## Appendix 4 Finance split between our three core activities

This table shows headline operating costs and sources of income in 2015/16. Some figures are rounded for simplicity of presentation. Footnotes give more explanation.

|  | <b>Annual Expenditure</b>   | <b>£</b>        | <b>Annual Income</b>   | <b>£</b>             |
|--|---|-----------------|--|----------------------|
| <b>Growing and the land</b>            | Rent, water, power, insurance, maintenance, depreciation for field equipment  | 36,458          | Field produce, market value of (transferred to box & wholesale operation so appears in income below) | 45,815               |
|  | Seeds and supplies  | 6,178           | Profit on tractor sale   | 7,683                |
|  | Wages incl a % of central costs (excl BDP trainees and trainee leader)  | 21,102          | Small donations  | 1,419                |
|  | BDP trainee leader and five trainees <sup>1</sup>   | 64,581          |  |                      |
| <b>Total</b>                           |   | 128,319         |  | 54,917 <sup>2</sup>  |
| <b>Trading and routes to market</b>    | Rent, water, power, insurance, packaging, maintenance, bank charges, marketing, website, IT, printing, phones, depreciation for the warehouse | 69,557          | Income from sales;   |                      |
|  |   |                 | Boxes  | 300,162              |
|  |   |                 | Better Food  | 215,825              |
|  |   |                 | Market stalls  | 52,578               |
|  |   | Other wholesale | 64,779   |                      |
|  | Cost of sales   | 423,190         | Income from carrot club and small donations  | 14,392               |
|  | Wages for warehouse, customer service, accounts, marketing, market helpers and delivery drivers <sup>3</sup>                                  | 153,864         |  |                      |
| <b>Total</b>                           |   | 646,611         |  | 647,736 <sup>4</sup> |
| <b>Outreach and people on the land</b> | Wages and costs for Community Farmer role devoted to attracting, welcoming, supervising and training volunteers                               | 33,500          | Income from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Grant (until April 2017) <sup>5</sup>                         | 33,500               |
|  | Earthwise partnership to run childrens activities   |                 | Income to cover overheads to farm  | 175                  |
|  | Bristol Drugs Project (costs other than wages)  | 11,117          | Income from BDP plus donation  | 75,699               |
|  |   |                 |  |                      |
| <b>Total</b>                           |   | 44,617          |  | 109,374              |
| <b>Grand Totals</b>                    | Total operating costs   | 819,547         | Internally generated income  | 702,828              |
|  |   |                 | Esmée Fairbairn Grant  | 33,500               |
|  |   |                 | Bristol Drugs Project  | 75,699               |
|  |   | 819,547         |  | 812,027              |

Notes for Appendix 4;

1. The wages for the five BDP trainees and the traineeship leader appear under expenditure for Field because they contributed an important part of the field workforce in 2015/16,

although their primary aim was learning and skills development. The funding income for these posts is shown under Outreach.

2. In 2016 we have managed a successful growing season without the BDP traineeships but this has needed extra field workforce. The growing operation needs more workers. Our aim is to meet this by creating two full time traineeships thereby also helping train farmers for the future. This requires around £50k pa and we are seeking external funding.

3. Communications, IT, publicity and website costs are more than if we were just a small farm. This is because communicating with our members, volunteers and friends of the farm is a priority and because we aim to be welcoming to all and share our learning.

4. The trading arm needs investment to fully realize its potential and secure its future.

5. External funding to continue our Community Farmer role is a top priority.

## Appendix 5 Risks and contingencies

The future is uncertain and food and farming is a changing field. This table lists principal systemic risks that threaten the successful delivery of our strategic aims. For each we have indicated the likelihood, the severity and our proposed management or mitigation actions. We have not included in this list the 'routine' operational risks that would be addressed in annual or triennial plans even though some of these may also be substantial.

| Risk  | Description  | Probability     | Impact          | Mitigation/management activities   |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Very adverse climate affects growing area badly | Weather patterns are increasingly unpredictable. Prolonged periods of drought or storm, or exceptional warm weather in winter, may affect field operations seriously. The same may or may not also affect our suppliers. | Medium/<br>High | Medium/<br>High | Robust Field plans taking account of these risks, and allowing as substantial contingencies against weather shocks as can be achieved. Well-prepared contingency plans for the trading operation to survive interruptions to or shortfalls in Field performance. Our approach to nature friendly farming means we can build resilience through good soil management and increasing biodiversity through planting wildflowers will support our wild bee population which aids in pollination & maintenance of dense tall hedgerows and healthy field margins will all help the farm to be more resilient to extreme weather events. |
| Reputation disaster                             | TCF presents itself as representing high ethical, environmental and honourable employer values, and any lapses may impact our community support/licence to operate (e.g. perceived betrayal of values, food poisoning).  | Low             | Medium/<br>High | Never taking our reputation for granted; it has to be earned constantly. Instill appropriate values into the culture of the Farm at all points. Robust planning for confronting a 'media firestorm', occasional rehearsal of response to a reputation crisis.  |

| <b>Risk</b>                                    | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Probability</b>                                       | <b>Impact</b> | <b>Mitigation/management activities</b>  |
|--|---|--|---------------|--|
| Multiple demands for shareholding withdrawals  | This may or may not arise from the reputation risks outlined above. Other possible causes are prolonged economic recession or failure of TCF to cultivate shareholder support assiduously.  | Low  | Medium        | Prepare reasoned responses to a multiplication of such demands. Systematically maintain our contact and relationship with our shareholders.  |
| Collapse of organic food market                | While appearing unlikely at present, this risk cannot be ignored since it would undermine a central foundation of our continued existence.  | Low  | High          | Be as alert as possible to any early signs of this happening, and be ahead of the game. Maintain and build our presence as part of the West of England local and resilient food system. Engage in scenario testing to plan for any shocks to the market. |
| Failure to retain key employees                | Abrupt departures/incapacitation of MD or senior staff can put excess strain on the team in a small organization such as TCF  | Medium   | Medium        | Renew and maintain our attention to succession planning, for MD plus next-level senior roles. Ensure that procedures are shared and understood across the workforce so that unforeseen absences can be coped with.                                       |
| Termination of rental agreements               | Regardless of probability, this will always remain a systemic risk to our continued viability until and unless the Farm becomes so well established and highly regarded that it can survive a prolonged operational difficulty    | Low  | Medium/High   | Continue to cultivate excellent relations with our landlords. The Board should, in the near future, reconsider the case for land ownership as a strategic precaution, whether or not it is regarded as strategically probable.                           |
| Failure to foresee a critical cash flow crisis | This is a risk at present as we have good Profit and Loss planning but limited capacity to generate regular and reliable cash flow forecasts. Cash flow crises could trigger insolvency even if longer term prospects remain good | Medium (until cash flow forecasting is well established) | Medium/High   | Develop our capacity to generate regular and reliable cash flow forecasts, at which point this risk transfers to a routine operational risk rather than a systemic risk.   |



## Appendix 6 Some of our achievements in numbers

|  |        |  |
|--|--------|--|
| Veg Boxes....                                    | 96,300 | - delivered to doorsteps since we began                            |
| Children.....                                    | 3,000  | - enjoyed wonderful days on the Farm                               |
| Days on the field....                            | 914    | - by weekday volunteers in 2015                                    |
| Community Farmers....                            | 176    | - people came in 2015 to our Community Farmer Days                 |
| Bird species.....                                | 27     | - on the Farm in short counts                                      |
| Acres maintained as organic...                   | 15     | - plus many more on other farms that we give routes to market to   |
| Whole time equivalent jobs...                    | 12     | - created at the Farm  |
| People helped back to work after addictions..... | 10     | - through our traineeships for Bristol Drugs Project service users |
| Tonnes of squash.....                            | 5      | - harvested on 8 October 2016 by 45 volunteers and staff           |
| And Gallons of Soup                              | 150    | - enjoyed at Community Farmer events (we guessed that one)         |