

St Werburghs City Farm

Our 3 year

STRATEGY

2016 -2019



Our Vision: "we inspire and educate happy, healthy communities, through green spaces, local food and each other"

1. Executive Summary

St Werburghs City Farm has grown steadily over the last 36 years, from a derelict strip of land to four locations all within walking distance of each other. It has grown too, as an organisation – starting as a small community group we are now a registered charity and company limited by guarantee which employs 22 members of staff. With more than 3,500 service users, 15,000 people enjoying our events/facilities and more than 40,000 local visitors passing through the gates each year, we are a vital community resource, freely accessible to all.

The next three year presents an exciting yet challenging time for the Farm. With an updated vision and with greater insight into our community, we are better able to meet the needs of those facing disadvantaged. To maximise our impact, we will review, consolidate and strengthen our services identifying areas for growth/development alongside sustainable income strategies. We will launch a 3-year programme of volunteer and training opportunities, develop a calendar of activities and focus our services to better inspire and educate people through green spaces, local food and each other. We will also improve our visitor and service user journey through improved communication, monitoring and evaluation. For our sites, this period will see the single largest physical transformation to the Farm over the last decade with the opening of the Connection Centre. These facilities will inspire further investment to make the site more inspiring, informative and fit-for-purpose. We will also unveil new facilities at Boiling Wells, improve accessibility at the Community Garden and develop shared growing facilities and opportunities in collaboration with Ashley Vale Allotment Association.

Despite this planned development, we cannot ignore the changing economic climate. Over the next three years, we will see further reductions to public funds and stronger competition for trust and foundation funding. This will present significant challenges and will require a fundamental shift in the way we operate; difficult decisions will be inevitable. Supporting a happy, healthy workforce will be essential. Underlying all aspects of work will be the goal of maintaining financial stability through greater income diversification, income generation and securing 2 year + funding towards core costs/services.

In light of this, our objectives for 2016-2019 are ambitious, whilst realistic. We do not seek to achieve all outcomes of the community consultation. Instead, we have outlined priorities that channel our energy to ensure that we can meet the needs of our beneficiaries both now, and in the future.

Purpose of this document

This strategy is designed to present an overview of our focus and goals, reminding us of our vision, aims and objectives and outlining our priorities. Detail of how we will meet these ambitions including specific aims, objectives, budgets and timescales, will be set within our annual Operational Plans. It is the culmination of: the review and amendments made to our vision and mission; consultation with staff and trustees, in particular, the review of our organisational capabilities; feedback and priorities drawn out of consultation with local residents, service users and partners; review of past work and analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and analysis of socio-economic data and an awareness of context in which we currently operate. Individual objectives set by each staff member will ensure that our vision, 3 year ambitions and annual objectives are embedded in all aspects of our work.

Abbreviations:

SWCF/the Farm – St Werburghs City Farm
ServicesDM – Services Development Manager
SiteDM – Site Development Manager
ELM – Estates and Livestock Manager
CLM – Childhood Learning Manager

STM – Supported Training Manager

BCC – Bristol City Council

AVAA – Ashley Vale Allotment Association

CC – Connection Centre

BP – Business Plan

2. Introduction

St Werburghs City Farm came into existence in May 1980 when a group of local residents decided that the land, which had been left derelict after an existing terrace was demolished following subsidence, could be used for an inner-city farm. Their vision opened a community facility that has developed into a much loved and well used oasis just 1.5 miles from Bristol city centre.

Over the last 36 years, the Farm has developed its ranges of services which take place across four different sites including: the Farm site with the award winning City Farm Cafe and playground; the Community Garden on Mina Road; Boiling Wells – a 2.5 acre conservation site; and 13 acres of community allotments. From these sites, the Farm offers a range of services that equip people with the skills, experience and capacity to transform their lives including: accredited training in animal care and horticultural for adults with learning difficulties; therapeutic outdoor experiences for those with physical disabilities and mental health concerns; volunteer opportunities for unemployed adults and disadvantaged young people; outdoor education sessions for children growing up in city centres; practical training placements for young people marginalised from mainstream education; play opportunities for children facing disadvantage; free activities for families on low-incomes; and intergenerational and community events.

The Farm is entering an exciting period in its development as we complete work on the Connection Centre – £450k investment in fit-for-purpose education, training and community facilities. We have also secured 3 year funding through the Big Lottery Fund, Reaching Communities, to deliver volunteer and training opportunities and 2 year funds through the People's Health Trust to launch a social enterprise propagation polytunnel and growing facilities in collaboration with Ashley Vale Allotment Association. Despite these successes, the economic climate has resulted in diminishing public funds and stronger competition for trust and foundation funding. Several of our core services find themselves in a position where they must transition towards sustainable delivery models as long-term funding comes to an end. At the same time, the organisation needs to increase our unrestricted income through generated income and income diversification to ensure we are resilient to further changes ahead.

Developing this 3-year strategy, we have undertaken a two stage consultation with a broad range of stakeholders to ensure we develop and structure our priorities correctly. Stage 1 stakeholders included: 40 existing/potential service users (35% with a physical, mental or learning disability); 142 visitors and local community members; 32 partners; 133 plot holders; and 16 staff and trustee members. Stage 2 stakeholders included 104 visitors, service users and local residents and 28 targeted young people. Priorities that were derived from the consultation to inform this strategy include:

Activities and Services

- Continue to work with volunteers, supported trainees, schools, children, young people, and families
- Continue to target those facing disadvantage and target underrepresented groups (Appendix 2)
- Develop new growing and cooking initiatives and increase access to food through a shop/market
- Deliver more training, education and art activities including animal-focused activities

Site Improvements

- Invest in the Farm site to make it more inspiring, fun and informative
- Improve and better manage Boiling Wells as a conservation site & outdoor learning facility
- Improve the Community Garden offering better access for disabled people
- Manage Ashley Vale Allotment Association site whilst improving facilities and growing capacity

Communication and Planning the Future

- Continue to improve how we communicate (newsletters, signage, social media, website, leaflets)
- Work with residents and partners to create a long-term vision and plan for wider area

- Improve facilities and training, supporting a happy, healthy and well-equipped workforce

Further work with staff and trustees sought to identify our organisational strengths and weaknesses. The resulting Building Capabilities Report 2016 offers recommendations to develop our capabilities to ensure we grow as a resilient and well managed organisation well-placed and equipped to meet our vision.

3. Our Vision, Mission, Aims and Objectives

St Werburghs City Farm is an inner-city oasis. Situated in the Bristol ward of Ashley next to 4 other wards which fall within the 10% most disadvantaged in the UK, the Farm has developed to meet local needs.

Our vision is to inspire and educate happy, healthy communities through green spaces, local food and each other

Many of the neighbourhoods that surround the Farm fall within the 10% most disadvantaged areas in the UK. Child poverty is a particular problem with more than half of children living in income-deprived households in 3 areas within walking distance to the Farm. The disadvantages experienced by people in these areas include: unemployment and low household income; low attainment in education/training; poor living environments; increased exposure to alcohol dependence, drugs misuse and crime; in foster care or at risk of going into care; caring for a family member; and lack of access to safe, green space. At the same time, Bristol's population is growing 1.5 times the national average which means more people are squeezed into the same space, especially in the Inner City area where the Farm is located. Around 16% of the overall population are from BME backgrounds but amongst children it is 28% on average, but 50% in Inner City/East Bristol. Bristol residents born outside the UK now rests at 15%, almost doubling in the last decade. Alongside this, sedentary lifestyles, food poverty and poor diet have resulted in an increase in health inequalities including mental health. For many people, they face multiple and complex disadvantages.

Using a 2 acre small holding, a 1 acre community garden, a 2.5 conservation site and 13 acres of community allotments, our mission is to offer targeted community services that equip people with knowledge, skills and confidence, and provide green sites accessible to all.

Our **aims** are to:

- **increase knowledge of where food comes from** through activities and educational interpretation
- **increase confidence and knowledge in growing, cooking and eating fresh food** through activities and services that showcase local produce
- **increase access to locally produced food**, especially Farm grown or reared food by supporting allotment holders, providing a cafe and other services
- **enhance access to and enjoyment of green spaces** through activities that develop people's awareness of, interest in and confidence to explore their environment
- **enhance health and well-being** through opportunities that enable people to develop, learn and play outdoors
- **enhance our sites** by developing them to be welcoming, accessible, playful and informative whilst supporting wildlife and biodiversity
- **improve communication, helping to create a supportive, friendly and understanding community** through events and activities that bring a diverse range of people together
- **improve skills and qualifications** through education and training experiences, leading to greater opportunities
- **improve engagement**, by building people's capacity and confidence, and supporting them to achieve change

With more than 3,500 service users, 15,000 people enjoying our events/facilities and more than 40,000 local visitors passing through the gates each year, we are a vital community resource, freely accessible to all.

4. Our Organisation

Our Business Model - Areas to update with figures from the final financial statements (once completed).

St Werburghs City Farm became operational and began delivering services on 2nd May 1980. It is a company limited by guarantee incorporated on 29th June 1987 registered as 2114442 and is registered with the Charities Commission as number 297091.

The income model for the organisation is reasonably balanced between trust and foundation grants, generated income, fundraising events and service delivery. Excluding Connection Centre income, trust and foundation grants account for 33% of the turnover in 2015-16, 21% derives from Supported Training spot purchase and block contract payments and a further 13% is generated through a range of well established fundraising events. The remaining 29% derives from donations, membership, activity fees, produce and sales, allotment rent, site hire and cafe rent; all of which is largely sustainable. Again excluding Connection Centre grants, the largest single funding stream during 2015-16 was £35,884 (BCC, Centre for Community Action) which accounts for approximately 10% of turnover.

During the strategy period, the Farm's ambitions are to increase generated/sustainable income, reducing reliance on central funding and single funding streams for core services. We will review our services in view of developing individual income strategies that ensure each service is able to cover expenditure through income generated, secured grants or contracts. In support of this, we will focus fundraising activity on major grants (2 year +) to support core services, pilot new services and undertake outcome/time specific projects such as capital investment. At the end of the strategy period, we wish to have a business model that is far more resilient and free to meet our vision and address the needs of our beneficiaries.

Governance and structure

St Werburghs City Farm is managed by a Board of Trustees, a small team of staff and lead volunteers.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the Farm fulfils the objects of the charity as set out in our Articles of Association, and that we work towards our vision. Collectively, the trustees are responsible for financial governance, risk mitigation, and setting the vision, strategy and approving the operational plans in consultation with the staff team.

The staff team is led by a Director who is directly responsible to the board. Operational management is overseen collectively by the Site Development Manager and Service Development Manager. Together, they support and guide a number of Service/Project Managers and project staff. The staff team fluctuates between 12 to 25 people depending on season and level of service delivery. Of this number, 5 are full-time, 9 are part-time and the remaining are sessional staff on 0-hour contracts. During the strategy period we wish to explore opportunities to provide greater stability to our sessional workers, and invest in our workforce through training, support, opportunity for growth and greater engagement to ensure a happy and healthy team. Each year, we will review the Organisational Structure to ensure that it is fit and responsive to the aims of the year ahead, presenting it within the Operational Plan.

With the launch of Enclude and Propagation Place, volunteers will take centre stage during this strategy period. Dedicated funding will enable the organisation to develop procedures and policies that ensure that beneficiaries are not only engaged in activities, but develop their design and lead in their delivery. We anticipate the impact of this to be evident in the next community consultation.

The Farm has a membership scheme, which elect our Board of Trustees than an Annual General Meeting. It is hoped to expand membership during this strategy period, not only as a sustainable income stream but also to provide greater community engagement on issues that affect the management of the Farm.

5. Assessing the past

The following SWOT analysis has been compiled using feedback ascertained through the recent community consultation:

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Organisational	Commitment to incorporating the views of our service users, visitors, community members staff and trustees in the Farm's development - as signified by the community consultation	Organisational	Our external communication is inconsistent (in particular our website); we do not clearly convey the story of what we do, why we do it and who we do it for (either on site or online) and we rarely celebrate success/share good news
	A strong team, with experienced and driven staff members that believe in the Farm's vision, are dedicated to supporting disadvantaged people and have willingness to change and improve		With 40,000 estimated annual visitors, the lack of a reception/receptionist, insufficient storage and lack of dedicated space for activity delivery, the office can be a busy, noisy and therefore challenging working environment
	Cafe continues to offer food with integrity in a unique setting, highlighting food grown within the community garden or reared on the Farm		Internal communication is inconsistent and ineffective (esp. for PT staff). We look at projects in isolation, missing opportunities for joined up thinking
	Our willingness to work with partners, and their desire to engage with us		We do not allow sufficient time for longer term strategic planning - such as the Farm Masterplan or vision if they are working in conjunction with partners
Services	Reputation for high quality services that have a positive impact in particular: events, the café, children's play, support for groups, being welcoming, variety of animals, looking after the animals and creating a sense of community.	Services	Without a clear marketing strategy, services and activities are inconsistently marketed which can result in missed opportunities to promote key events, target primary audiences, attract underrepresented groups etc
	The consultation revealed that people feel we deliver particularly well on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increases your access to quality green space in the city ➤ Gives a sense of community and belonging ➤ Creates a safe, friendly and inspiring place to visit ➤ Contributes to your happiness, health and well-being 		Inconsistent evaluation and monitoring results in us not being able to effectively demonstrate our impact, measure participate progress, share our learning or shout about our successes
	The service user forum highlighted the importance of the Farm. Comments included: "Helping me to be independent" "Making friends/meeting people" "Being a part of community" "Favourite day of the week"		Lack of project plans with clear outcomes that link directly to the vision and mission. Lack of consolidation and need to identify what is a core service and what is a project to inform funding/income prioritises
Site	The range of facilities and the location of the Farm provide a free community resource and access to quality green spaces for all	Site	Lack of inspirational, educational interpretation means we do not effectively 'tell the story of food from farm to fork'
	The Connection Centre will transform how we are able to deliver existing services and offer new activities		The Farm site (including the Cafe and playground) will look tired, shabby and unwelcoming alongside the Connection Centre, all areas require investment
	Investment at Boiling Wells will result in greater ease of use for service users, extension of building life and improved accessibility for all		The Office and community building require significant investment to ensure they are fit for purpose
	As a result of implementing the disruption plan, the Farm now has improved animal housing, a larger plant sales space, and stronger media presence which along with improved site signage has increased visitor donations		Parking is an issue for local residents, especially when offering activities that attract people from across the city such as Shaun the Sheep. If we cannot provide more parking, we need to ensure we encourage access on foot

Opportunities		Threats	
Organisational	Launch a 3 year Strategy that embeds our updated vision and values in day-to-day operations, and acts on recommendations and outcomes of the recent community consultation	Organisational	Lack of sufficient funding for several of our core services/projects results in lack of project direction, decreased staff morale and a higher reliance on smaller funding streams which presents increased administration
	Develop a marketing and communications strategy embedding our vision and mission in communications, ensuring effective, consistent and targeted external marketing and greater internal communications		Overreliance on grants from central government which are likely to significantly reduce/cease all together over the next 2-4 years. If not addressed, could result in the loss of services/facilities and staff redundancies
	Encourage greater diversity of our staff/trustees/co-optees etc to be more reflected of our target audience and local community		Management of the Allotments need to be redirect from Director to a suitable project manager to ensure sustainability of partnership
	Secure funds and launch proposals within the 'Better Connecting to Food Strategy' to ensure we better deliver on this key aim, including a Farm shop		The size and deterioration of the Café may restrict business growth
	To further partnerships/networking opportunities, engaging with partner organisations to strengthen our services or allow them to deliver from our facilities		74% of Farm staff are women. We currently adopt a statutory maternity policy, however in a sector that is scrutinised for low salaries, the Farm could find itself at risk of losing valuable staff unless we adopt a new policy
Services	Launch the Propagation Place and Community Growing facility in collaboration with AVAA which seeks to engage marginalised groups in growing/cooking opportunities	Services	There is demand for more family activities and opportunities for non-target audiences. We need to ensure that our response reflects our visions and is measured and achievable in line with our existing range of services
	Develop, fund and pilot activities which the community consultation revealed a demand for including: more activities for young people, veg growing opportunities, events, boiling wells open more often, produce for sale, food related workshop, arts and crafts workshops, heritage and training opportunities, more interactions with the animals etc		Without regular hours or permanent contracts, turnover of trained and experienced engagement staff will remain high jeopardising service delivery
	Improve monitoring and evaluation, developing new methods to collect and monitor data in order to demonstrate impact, including service user forums		Many of our core services do not have clear outcomes and objectives, do not have a suitable income strategy or funds secured to ensure continuation
Site	Complete and launch the Boiling Wells Management plan ensuring greater communication with all staff and groups in the use and management of the site	Site	Without a Farm Masterplan, future development will not be maximised, consistent or coherent. Lack of a volunteer maintenance team will limit the ability to undertake and complete tasks.
	Develop a Farm and Livestock Strategy which offers project proposals that seek to better tell the story of where our food comes from, ensuring focused fundraising		The office, tea room and community building are not fit-for-purpose. They will continue to deteriorate with lack of financial investment and need a strategy in place to secure future development
	Launch Propagation Place and secure additional funds which enable the AVAA committee to develop community growing facilities for all		The Community garden requires significant investment to ensure that it can continue to be used by supported training services users
	Improve accessibility on all sites for older people or those with disabilities including paths, handrails and seating, including £25k infrastructure investment at the Community Garden		The change to how we hire Boiling Wells has resulted in significant loss of income. We need to develop a sustainable income strategy, within the Management Plan, to ensure we manage the site well, balancing conservation, nature, service users, neighbours and income generation.

6. Analysing the need

A detailed socio economic analysis was undertaken to provide an overview of current needs and challenges within the city, and to focus our service delivery and development to best address disadvantaged and inequality during the strategy period. The full analysis can be read within the Community Consultation 2016; the following is a summary:

- **Population** - The population of Bristol has grown by 11.8% since 2004, 1.5 times higher than the national average, with the growth concentrated in the Inner City where the Farm is located. Around 16% of the overall population are from BME backgrounds but amongst children it is 28% on average, but 50% in Inner City/East Bristol. Bristol residents born outside the UK increased from 8% to 15% in the last decade. These increases in population numbers will have implications for health, education, social care, and family and community services.
- **Deprivation** - Over 24% (19,700) of children in Bristol live in income-deprived households. In 3 areas within walking distance to the Farm, more than half of the children live in income-deprived households. There are 9 LSOAs where more than half of the older people living there are income deprived - 4 of these areas are in Lawrence Hill, 3 are in Ashley, and 1 is in Cabot.
- **Education** - In 2014, 58% of children under 5 were assessed as having a good level of development at Foundation Stage (Early Years) with the lowest at 44% in Eastville and Hillfields. Of Key Stage 2 pupils in Bristol, 76% achieved level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths combined (2014), however the figure was only 59% in Lawrence Hill compared to 96% in Westbury and Bishopston. In 2014, 55.2% of Bristol pupils attained 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above, of which the average was 35% in Lawrence Hill ward.
- **Learning difficulties** - There are around 8,480 adults in Bristol with some level of learning difficulty; many of whom have increased number of health conditions and a significantly worse health profile compared to the overall % of Bristol patients. There are inequalities in life expectancy, as men with learning disabilities die an average of 13 years sooner than the wider population, and women with learning disabilities die 20 years sooner.
- **Mental Health** - The NHS Bristol Mental Health Needs Assessment July 2011 identified Lawrence Hill and Lockleaze as high mental health risk wards. Up to half of all mental illnesses start before the age of 14 and around half of these are potentially preventable. Black Caribbean, Black African and Other Black groups have lower than average rates of mental health referrals from primary care and are over 40% more likely than the general population to be referred to mental health services through the criminal justice system. Asylum seekers are particularly susceptible to depression and suffer higher than average rates of associated substance misuse.

Based on the evidence of need, the Farm will continue to develop and deliver services that target:

- Children, young people and families (targeting services at those facing disadvantage)
- Disabled people including those with learning difficulties
- Unemployed adults / young people not in education, training or employment
- People experiencing mental ill health
- People who are socially isolated

We will also encourage greater engagement of other disadvantaged groups including: BME groups including refugees and asylum seekers; older isolated people and people with dementia; those suffering from alcohol and substance misuse; and LGBT people.

In line with socio economic and in view of where we are situated, we will focus our services for target groups living in the following neighbourhoods:

- Ashley ward and in particular St Pauls
- Lockleaze and parts of Eastville ward
- Lawrence Hill and Easton wards with a focus on St Judes and Barton Hill

7. Considering the future

The following external and internal drivers that are likely to influence and inform the strategy period:

➤ Financial

- Austerity measures will see further public spending cuts and history has shown that the voluntary sector is often the first to be affected. Despite a potential loss of income, the nature of delivering services means we are likely to see an increase in the growing need for our services
- BCC is launching a prospectus to grant community investments from 1st April 2017 onwards. The Director is participating in the co-design process and will apply to the prospectus in Summer 2016 however it is unlikely that we will receive funding towards core costs beyond April 2017
- BCC is terminating block contracts (£28,200 pa) for health and social care placements in a move to more financially favourable spot purchases. We are communicating with BCC about this transition and will participate within the CCS commissioning process in summer 2016
- The lack of long-term funding for some of our core services (Youth Development, Childhood Learning and Estates and Livestock) will require a shift change in the way these services operate, seeking to diversify income streams as we move towards resilience

➤ Local / political agenda

- The Clinical Commissioning Group is re-commissioning mental health services for Bristol. Current delivery has been extended to 2019 whilst this process is undertaken. The Farm needs to stay abreast of developments to compete in commissioning if relevant
- There is growing awareness of the benefits of social prescribing. We should ascertain the potential of collaborating with partners to use the Farm and our green spaces as venues
- The Government's intention to establish every school as an academy may affect the Pupil Premium and other funding which currently enable off-site visits and placements. This could present challenges to the viability of our Childhood Learning and Youth Development services

➤ Our staff

- Pay scales within the Voluntary Sector are significantly less than other sectors. The Board of Trustees wish to develop schemes, facilities and procedures that ensure staff view the Farm as a great place to work and support the growth and development of a happy and healthy team
- Management positions within a city farm are considered a niche role. To ensure effective succession planning, we will encourage staff to develop their skill level and give preference to grow staff within the organisation, unless there is clear advantage to recruit externally
- In response to national pressure to eradicate 0-hour contracts we must review how we use and wherever possible, move sessional workers onto permanent contracts and ensure that all staff, irrelevant of their contract type, receive adequate inductions, support and supervision

➤ Our facilities

- Our office is dilapidated, un-insulated and not fit-for-purpose, especially during colder months
- Investment in accessibility, interpretation and site facilities to better cater to target audiences is required at Boiling Wells, the Community Garden and the Farm site, including the playground
- The Office and Community Building is at risk of becoming 'underutilised' once the Connection Centre opens. At the same time, the cafe business model is limited due to the size of kitchen, there is no dedicated space for a Farm shop and there is strong support for nursery facilities in the area

➤ Our services

- In a climate where accountability is essential, we must ensure that it can clearly demonstrate its impact to meet funding requirements and ascertain output vs. input of each service
- Following the community consultation, the Farm must navigate between running services that meet our objects/vision and those which engage non-target audiences, but generate income
- In June 2016 AVAA members will vote to or for the Farm maintaining management responsibilities. We must decide if the benefit vs. cost is sufficiently addressed before proceeding

8. Strategic Aims and Objectives

The following aims and objectives are seen as the priorities for the organisation over the next three years. Each aim has been split into 'Organisational', 'Service' and 'Site', however several objectives overlap and many milestones are dependent on each other for success. Annual aims and objectives will derive from this list, which will be detailed within each Operational Plan and further developed in service/project plans and staff objectives.

Strategic Aims	Strategic Objectives		
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Organisational Aims: Supports the vision by improving strategic planning, management and communications to ensure we are resilient, well run and effective			
Work towards financial stability through income diversification, income generation and securing 2 year + funding towards core costs	Maintain unrestricted funds to adhere to Reserves Policy and review annually	Undertake review of core costs (repeat every 3 years)	
	Annual: Undertake review of income generation activities, setting annual targets for diversification and growth in order to increase unrestricted funds to support core costs (secure trust and foundation funding where applicable)		
	Develop and introduce new management accounting systems and presentation	Review membership/Friends of the Farm scheme to increase revenue / engagement	Implement recommendations
Improve how we communicate our vision, services, events and successes	Strengthen the representation and communication of our vision throughout service delivery, site development, promotion and partnership opportunities	Launch Operational Plan 2017-18 with annual objectives (organisational and staff) that link to the 3 year strategy, and the vision and mission	Launch Operational Plan 2018-19 with annual objectives (organisational and staff) that link to the 3 year strategy, and the vision and mission
	Develop a Marketing Strategy to better tell the story of who we are, what we do etc	Implement recommendations, review and develop	Implement recommendations, review and develop
	Develop and launch 'user-friendly' website		
Strengthen work with partners and stakeholders (including local residents)	Develop strategic collaborations to win commissions and contracts	Review and develop as appropriate	Secure funds to undertake community consultation
	Improve partnerships where this will support the delivery of services for target audiences	Identify gaps in project-led delivery and identify if this can be filled by a partner or external organisation	Identify gaps in project-led delivery and identify if this can be filled by a partner or external organisation
Encourage a happy, healthy, well-equipped and communicative workforce	Ascertain staff satisfaction and identify areas for improvement	Undertake staff satisfaction survey and compare to Yr 1	Undertake staff satisfaction survey and compare to Yr 1 & Y2
	Develop a Communications Strategy (internal facing) seeking to improve cross-team communication, define decision making procedures, embed values etc	Implement recommendations, review and develop	Implement recommendations, review and develop
	Improve performance management procedures and inductions, through training, time allocation and support	Update Staff handbook and trustee handbook	

Service Aims: meeting our mission of offering "targeted community services that equip people with knowledge, skills and confidence"

General			
Review, consolidate and strengthen our services identifying areas for growth/development whilst ensuring quality, impact and consistency	Annual: Continue to run core services for our target audiences and community events as outlined within the annual Operational Plan		
	Undertake a review of each service/project, identifying measurable outcomes, making recommendations for growth/change and developing an a sustainable funding model to ensure stability beyond April 2017	Review and amend plans to feed into Annual Operational Plan	Review and amend plans to feed into Annual Operational Plan
Improve how we best demonstrate impact, strengthening our evidence base	Launch and embed the Step Change Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy	Monitor and review impact, feed into future development and continue	Monitor and review impact, feed into future development and continue
	Develop and grow focus user group sessions	Invest in a client database to record activities, feedback, outputs and outcomes	Explore Social Enterprise Works and Alternative Happy Cities Happiness Pulse
Food: seeking to increase people's confidence and knowledge in growing, cooking and eating fresh food and increase people's access to locally produced food			
Increase access to local food and develop new growing and cooking initiatives	Secure funds to fit out ensure Connection Centre kitchen to enable projects to integrate growing and cooking initiatives	Monitor and evaluate impact of cooking and growing activities to inform future development, securing funds where required	Monitor and evaluate impact of cooking and growing activities to inform future development, securing funds where required
	Launch Propagation Place project in conjunction with AVAA	Secure funds to undertake a feasibility study to develop a Farm Shop/Farmers Market	Secure funds /partnership to launch 'pilot' shop /farmers market in old tea room
Green Spaces: seeking to enhance people's access to and enjoyment of green spaces and improve their health and well-being			
Develop activities that give people access to and encourage enjoyment of green spaces	Launch Propagation Place and Enclude activities including Community Action Days	Propagation Place and Enclude activities continue	Enclude activities continue
	Continue to offer activities / events at Boiling Wells. Consider demand for wider use within management plan development	Develop self-financing activities that enable people greater access to green space (in line with BW Management Plan)	Evaluate Year 2 to inform on-going activities
Community: seeking to create a supportive, friendly and understanding community; improve people's skills and qualifications; and improve people's engagement			
Continue to target services at those facing disadvantage	Prioritise the delivery of services for disadvantaged people living in priority areas	Annual: Review impact and engagement seeking to ascertain success of marketing, outreach, partnership and targeted delivery. Amend, invest and improve as appropriate	
Encourage engagement of underrepresented groups	Ensure marketing and promotional tools represent and reach diverse audiences	Annual: Coordinate and deliver outreach/on-site activity in collaboration with specialist partner organisations to target underrepresented groups	
	Hold a diversity training day in order to build skills, knowledge and confidence	Develop a strategy that supports greater diversification of Farm decision makers	Implement Strategy
Deliver more training, education, and heritage/arts activities including 'hands-on' animal based activities	Complete Connection Centre Management Plan seeking to maximise use of facilities	Identify need for a 'Community Engagement Officer' or 'Venue Coordinator Officer' to maximise activities, engagement and income	Monitor and evaluation to inform on-going activities (ensure effective promotion and marketing)
	Develop and pilot self-financing animal-based activities that engage general visitors	Identify and develop a heritage project that celebrates city farming and the SWCF impact	Submit application in view of securing funds by our 40th anniversary (2.5.2020)

Site Aims: meeting our mission of providing "green sites accessible to all", seeking to enhance our sites by developing them to be welcoming, accessible, playful and informative whilst supporting wildlife and biodiversity and increasing people's knowledge of where their food comes from

Invest in our buildings to ensure they enable us to deliver quality and consistent services and support greater income generation	Secure funds and undertake works to improve office facilities/community building	Secure funds and undertake feasibility of Farm spaces in view of maximising productivity and better using space	Complete Business Plan for future use and start fundraising as relevant for priority development
	Launch Connection Centre with clear management plan to maximise use, outline booking /maintenance procedures	Review use of facilities, identifying opportunities to maximise use	Review use of facilities, identifying opportunities to maximise use
Invest in the Farm site making it more inspiring, fun and informative	Launch 'Farm and Livestock Strategy' inc. budgeted proposals for : Farm Masterplan; maintenance volunteer opps; training/ animal based activities for visitors etc	Use Farm and Livestock Strategy / Better Connecting People to Food Strategy as a fundraising case to secure funds	Launch programme of capital investment
	Secure and invest £5k in educational site interpretation, unifying all Farm sites and better telling the story of where our food comes from	Seek £7.5k funding towards playground development	Capital works carried out
Invest in infrastructure at Boiling Wells and better manage the site as a conservation site & outdoor learning facility	Develop and launch a Boiling Wells Management plan ensuring effective and coordinated management	Monitor and evaluate and inform future development.	Complete 3 year nature survey
	Secure and invest funds in site infrastructure	Annual: Schedule and undertake required maintenance/infrastructure works	
Invest in the Community Garden and growing spaces improving accessibility for all	Secure funds to undertake accessibility improvements within the garden	Undertake capital works	Monitor and evaluate impact and share success
		Secure funds and undertake works to replace the greenhouse/polytunnel sheeting	Undertake capital works
Manage Ashley Vale Allotment Association Site as a self-financing project, whilst improving site facilities and growing capacity	Continue to undertake management functions allowing plot holders to vote in June for the Farm to continue with management role. If positive, negotiate appropriate 15 year lease from BCC	Deliver management responsibilities (in response to Year 1 outcome)	Deliver management responsibilities (in response to Year 1 outcome)
	Launch Propagation Place project in conjunction with AVAA whilst identify funds to develop further shared facilities that support greater capacity of plot holders and site productivity	Complete infrastructure development, review income against forecasted targets, develop exit strategy working towards sustainable business model	Monitor impact/income and report quarterly

9. Measuring Success

Each Aim and Objective will have milestones, targets and timescales detailed within the relevant Operational Plan. These will be tracked through a RAG rating system, monitored to an assigned sub-committee and reported to the Board of Trustees. The following list offers an outline of these indicators:

Organisational Aims and Objectives

- Financial Stability
 - Level of unrestricted funds and diversification of income streams
 - Reserves consistently between 3 - 6 months operational costs
 - Level of 2 year + funding secured
- Communication and visitor/service user journey
 - Greater visitor /stakeholder awareness of what we do, the sites we manage and our impact
 - Increased donations/individual donors
 - Implementation and review of Marketing Strategy
- Stronger partnerships and stakeholder consultation
 - Level of partners engaged in delivery/development of services or using our sites to deliver
 - Contracts/funding secured through collaborative bids
 - Completion of Community Consultation 2019
- Happy and healthy workforce
 - Staff retention, professional development levels and growth within the organisation
 - Improvement on baseline data collected through Staff Satisfaction survey
 - Implementation and review of Communications Strategy

Service Aims and Objectives

- General
 - Number of service users/visitors and the quality of their experience
 - Number services/activities/events delivered and their quality
 - Implementation and review of M&E strategy including number/influence of focus group
- Food
 - Quality and quantity of growing and cooking facilities/activities/initiatives
 - Improved access/connection to local food stated within community consultation
 - Completion of feasibility study/launch of business plan to secure funds towards Farm Shop
- Green Spaces
 - Quality and quantity of activities that give people access to green spaces
 - Improved access/enjoyment of green spaces stated within community consultation
- Community
 - Measures of social impact
 - Number and diversity of service users engaged
 - Quantity and quality of activities

Site Aims and Objectives

- Buildings/Farm Site / Boiling Wells / Community Garden
 - Level of funds secured and capital work undertaken
 - Feedback of site users (greener, more inspiring, informative and accessible)
 - Quality and income generated through Farm and Livestock Strategy proposals
 - Completion of feasibility study/business plan
- Ashley Vale Allotment Association
 - Successful vote of plot holders to retain management
 - Increased retention levels, capacity of plot holders and productivity of site
 - Increased number of gardeners who identify as disabled, disadvantaged or currently underrepresented

St Werburghs City Farm

Our 3 year

STRATEGY

2016 -2019



Our Vision: "we inspire and educate happy, healthy communities, through green spaces, local food and each other"

1. Executive Summary

St Werburghs City Farm has grown steadily over the last 36 years, from a derelict strip of land to four locations all within walking distance of each other. It has grown too, as an organisation – starting as a small community group we are now a registered charity and company limited by guarantee which employs 22 members of staff. With more than 3,500 service users, 15,000 people enjoying our events/facilities and more than 40,000 local visitors passing through the gates each year, we are a vital community resource, freely accessible to all.

The next three year presents an exciting yet challenging time for the Farm. With an updated vision and with greater insight into our community, we are better able to meet the needs of those facing disadvantaged. To maximise our impact, we will review, consolidate and strengthen our services identifying areas for growth/development alongside sustainable income strategies. We will launch a 3-year programme of volunteer and training opportunities, develop a calendar of activities and focus our services to better inspire and educate people through green spaces, local food and each other. We will also improve our visitor and service user journey through improved communication, monitoring and evaluation. For our sites, this period will see the single largest physical transformation to the Farm over the last decade with the opening of the Connection Centre. These facilities will inspire further investment to make the site more inspiring, informative and fit-for-purpose. We will also unveil new facilities at Boiling Wells, improve accessibility at the Community Garden and develop shared growing facilities and opportunities in collaboration with Ashley Vale Allotment Association.

Despite this planned development, we cannot ignore the changing economic climate. Over the next three years, we will see further reductions to public funds and stronger competition for trust and foundation funding. This will present significant challenges and will require a fundamental shift in the way we operate; difficult decisions will be inevitable. Supporting a happy, healthy workforce will be essential. Underlying all aspects of work will be the goal of maintaining financial stability through greater income diversification, income generation and securing 2 year + funding towards core costs/services.

In light of this, our objectives for 2016-2019 are ambitious, whilst realistic. We do not seek to achieve all outcomes of the community consultation. Instead, we have outlined priorities that channel our energy to ensure that we can meet the needs of our beneficiaries both now, and in the future.

Purpose of this document

This strategy is designed to present an overview of our focus and goals, reminding us of our vision, aims and objectives and outlining our priorities. Detail of how we will meet these ambitions including specific aims, objectives, budgets and timescales, will be set within our annual Operational Plans. It is the culmination of: the review and amendments made to our vision and mission; consultation with staff and trustees, in particular, the review of our organisational capabilities; feedback and priorities drawn out of consultation with local residents, service users and partners; review of past work and analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and analysis of socio-economic data and an awareness of context in which we currently operate. Individual objectives set by each staff member will ensure that our vision, 3 year ambitions and annual objectives are embedded in all aspects of our work.

Abbreviations:

SWCF/the Farm – St Werburghs City Farm
ServicesDM – Services Development Manager
SiteDM – Site Development Manager
ELM – Estates and Livestock Manager
CLM – Childhood Learning Manager
STM – Supported Training Manager

BCC – Bristol City Council
AVAA – Ashley Vale Allotment Association
CC – Connection Centre
BP – Business Plan
VCS - Voluntary and Community Sector
ICOP - Industry Code of Practice

2. Introduction

St Werburghs City Farm came into existence in May 1980 when a group of local residents decided that the land, which had been left derelict after an existing terrace was demolished following subsidence, could be used for an inner-city farm. Their vision opened a community facility that has developed into a much loved and well used oasis just 1.5 miles from Bristol city centre.

Over the last 36 years, the Farm has developed its ranges of services which take place across four different sites including: the Farm site with the award winning City Farm Cafe and playground; the Community Garden on Mina Road; Boiling Wells – a 2.5 acre conservation site; and 13 acres of community allotments. From these sites, the Farm offers a range of services that equip people with the skills, experience and capacity to transform their lives including: accredited training in animal care and horticultural for adults with learning difficulties; therapeutic outdoor experiences for those with physical disabilities and mental health concerns; volunteer opportunities for unemployed adults and disadvantaged young people; outdoor education sessions for children growing up in city centres; practical training placements for young people marginalised from mainstream education; play opportunities for children facing disadvantage; free activities for families on low-incomes; and intergenerational and community events.

The Farm is entering an exciting period in its development as we complete work on the Connection Centre – £450k investment in fit-for-purpose education, training and community facilities. We have also secured 3 year funding through the Big Lottery Fund, Reaching Communities, to deliver volunteer and training opportunities and 2 year funds through the People's Health Trust to launch a social enterprise propagation polytunnel and growing facilities in collaboration with Ashley Vale Allotment Association. Despite these successes, the economic climate has resulted in diminishing public funds and stronger competition for trust and foundation funding. Several of our core services find themselves in a position where they must transition towards sustainable delivery models as long-term funding comes to an end. At the same time, the organisation needs to increase our unrestricted income through generated income and income diversification to ensure we are resilient to further changes ahead.

Developing this 3-year strategy, we have undertaken a two stage consultation with a broad range of stakeholders to ensure we develop and structure our priorities correctly. Stage 1 stakeholders included: 40 existing/potential service users (35% with a physical, mental or learning disability); 142 visitors and local community members; 32 partners; 133 plot holders; and 16 staff and trustee members. Stage 2 stakeholders included 104 visitors, service users and local residents and 28 targeted young people. Priorities that were derived from the consultation to inform this strategy include:

Activities and Services

- Continue to work with volunteers, supported trainees, schools, children, young people, and families
- Continue to target those facing disadvantage and target underrepresented groups (Appendix 2)
- Develop new growing and cooking initiatives and increase access to food through a shop/market
- Deliver more training, education and art activities including animal-focused activities

Site Improvements

- Invest in the Farm site to make it more inspiring, fun and informative
- Improve and better manage Boiling Wells as a conservation site & outdoor learning facility
- Improve the Community Garden offering better access for disabled people
- Manage Ashley Vale Allotment Association site whilst improving facilities and growing capacity

Communication and Planning the Future

- Continue to improve how we communicate (newsletters, signage, social media, website, leaflets)
- Work with residents and partners to create a long-term vision and plan for wider area
- Improve facilities and training, supporting a happy, healthy and well-equipped workforce

Further work with staff and trustees sought to identify our organisational strengths and weaknesses. The resulting Building Capabilities Report 2016 offers recommendations to develop our capabilities to ensure we grow as a resilient and well managed organisation well-placed and equipped to meet our vision.

3. Our Vision, Mission, Aims and Objectives

St Werburghs City Farm is an inner-city oasis. Situated in the Bristol ward of Ashley next to 4 other wards which fall within the 10% most disadvantaged in the UK, the Farm has developed to meet local needs.

Our vision is to inspire and educate happy, healthy communities through green spaces, local food and each other

Many of the neighbourhoods that surround the Farm fall within the 10% most disadvantaged areas in the UK. Child poverty is a particular problem with more than half of children living in income-deprived households in 3 areas within walking distance to the Farm. The disadvantages experienced by people in these areas include: unemployment and low household income; low attainment in education/training; poor living environments; increased exposure to alcohol dependence, drugs misuse and crime; in foster care or at risk of going into care; caring for a family member; and lack of access to safe, green space. At the same time, Bristol's population is growing 1.5 times the national average which means more people are squeezed into the same space, especially in the Inner City area where the Farm is located. Around 16% of the overall population are from BME backgrounds but amongst children it is 28% on average, but 50% in Inner City/East Bristol. Bristol residents born outside the UK now rests at 15%, almost doubling in the last decade. Alongside this, sedentary lifestyles, food poverty and poor diet have resulted in an increase in health inequalities including mental health. For many people, they face multiple and complex disadvantages.

Using a 2 acre small holding, a 1 acre community garden, a 2.5 conservation site and 13 acres of community allotments, our mission is to offer targeted community services that equip people with knowledge, skills and confidence, and provide green sites accessible to all.

Our **aims** are to:

- **increase knowledge of where food comes from** through activities and educational interpretation
- **increase confidence and knowledge in growing, cooking and eating fresh food** through activities and services that showcase local produce
- **increase access to locally produced food**, especially Farm grown or reared food by supporting allotment holders, providing a cafe and other services
- **enhance access to and enjoyment of green spaces** through activities that develop people's awareness of, interest in and confidence to explore their environment
- **enhance health and well-being** through opportunities that enable people to develop, learn and play outdoors
- **enhance our sites** by developing them to be welcoming, accessible, playful and informative whilst supporting wildlife and biodiversity
- **improve communication, helping to create a supportive, friendly and understanding community** through events and activities that bring a diverse range of people together
- **improve skills and qualifications** through education and training experiences, leading to greater opportunities
- **improve engagement**, by building people's capacity and confidence, and supporting them to achieve change

With more than 3,500 service users, 15,000 people enjoying our events/facilities and more than 40,000 local visitors passing through the gates each year, we are a vital community resource, freely accessible to all.

4. Our Organisation

Our Business Model

St Werburghs City Farm became operational and began delivering services on 2nd May 1980. It registered as a charity on 29th June 1987. The company was incorporated on 23rd March 1987 under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

The income model for the organisation is reasonably balanced between trust and foundation grants, generated income, fundraising events and service delivery. Excluding Connection Centre income, trust and foundation grants account for 32% of the turnover in 2015-16, 23% derives from Supported Training spot purchase and block contract payments and a further 13% is generated through a range of well established fundraising events. The remaining 29% derives from donations, membership, activity fees, produce and sales, allotment rent, site hire and cafe rent; all of which is largely sustainable. Again excluding Connection Centre grants, the largest single funding stream during 2015-16 was £35,884 (BCC, Centre for Community Action) which accounts for approximately 10% of turnover.

During the strategy period, the Farm's ambitions are to increase generated/sustainable income, reducing reliance on central funding and single funding streams for core services. We will review our services in view of developing individual income strategies that ensure each service is able to cover expenditure through income generated, secured grants or contracts. In support of this, we will focus fundraising activity on major grants (2 year +) to support core services, pilot new services and undertake outcome/time specific projects such as capital investment. At the end of the strategy period, we wish to have a business model that is far more resilient and free to meet our vision and address the needs of our beneficiaries.

Governance and structure

St Werburghs City Farm is managed by a Board of Trustees, a small team of staff and lead volunteers.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the Farm fulfils the objects of the charity as set out in our Articles of Association, and that we work towards our vision. Collectively, the trustees are responsible for financial governance, risk mitigation, and setting the vision, strategy and approving the operational plans in consultation with the staff team.

The staff team is led by a Director who is directly responsible to the board. Operational management is overseen collectively by the Site Development Manager and Service Development Manager. Together, they support and guide a number of Service/Project Managers and project staff. The staff team fluctuates between 12 to 25 people depending on season and level of service delivery. Of this number, 5 are full-time, 9 are part-time and the remaining are sessional staff on 0-hour contracts. During the strategy period we wish to explore opportunities to provide greater stability to our sessional workers, and invest in our workforce through training, support, opportunity for growth and greater engagement to ensure a happy and healthy team. Each year, we will review the Organisational Structure to ensure that it is fit and responsive to the aims of the year ahead, presenting it within the Operational Plan.

With the launch of Enclude and Propagation Place, volunteers will take centre stage during this strategy period. Dedicated funding will enable the organisation to develop procedures and policies that ensure that beneficiaries are not only engaged in activities, but develop their design and lead in their delivery. We anticipate the impact of this to be evident in the next community consultation.

The Farm has a membership scheme, which elect our Board of Trustees at the Annual General Meeting. It is hoped to expand membership during this strategy period, not only as a sustainable income stream but also to provide greater community engagement on issues that affect the management of the Farm.

5. Assessing the past

The following SWOT analysis has been compiled using feedback ascertained through the recent community consultation:

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Organisational	Commitment to incorporating the views of our service users, visitors, community members staff and trustees in the Farm's development - as signified by the community consultation	Organisational	Our external communication is inconsistent (in particular our website); we do not clearly convey the story of what we do, why we do it and who we do it for (either on site or online) and we rarely celebrate success/share good news
	A strong team, with experienced and driven staff members that believe in the Farm's vision, are dedicated to supporting disadvantaged people and have willingness to change and improve		With 40,000 estimated annual visitors, the lack of a reception/receptionist, insufficient storage and lack of dedicated space for activity delivery, the office can be a busy, noisy and therefore challenging working environment
	Cafe continues to offer food with integrity in a unique setting, highlighting food grown within the community garden or reared on the Farm		Internal communication is inconsistent and ineffective (esp. for PT staff). We look at projects in isolation, missing opportunities for joined up thinking
	Our willingness to work with partners, and their desire to engage with us		We do not allow sufficient time for longer term strategic planning - such as the Farm Masterplan or vision if they are working in conjunction with partners
Services	Reputation for high quality services that have a positive impact in particular: events, the café, children's play, support for groups, being welcoming, variety of animals, looking after the animals and creating a sense of community.	Services	Without a clear marketing strategy, services and activities are inconsistently marketed which can result in missed opportunities to promote key events, target primary audiences, attract underrepresented groups etc
	The consultation revealed that people feel we deliver particularly well on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increases your access to quality green space in the city ➤ Gives a sense of community and belonging ➤ Creates a safe, friendly and inspiring place to visit ➤ Contributes to your happiness, health and well-being 		Inconsistent evaluation and monitoring results in us not being able to effectively demonstrate our impact, measure participate progress, share our learning or shout about our successes
	The service user forum highlighted the importance of the Farm. Comments included: "Helping me to be independent" "Making friends/meeting people" "Being a part of community" "Favourite day of the week"		Lack of project plans with clear outcomes that link directly to the vision and mission. Lack of consolidation and need to identify what is a core service and what is a project to inform funding/income prioritises
Site	The range of facilities and the location of the Farm provide a free community resource and access to quality green spaces for all	Site	Lack of inspirational, educational interpretation means we do not effectively 'tell the story of food from farm to fork'
	The Connection Centre will transform how we are able to deliver existing services and offer new activities		The Farm site (including the Cafe and playground) will look tired, shabby and unwelcoming alongside the Connection Centre, all areas require investment
	Investment at Boiling Wells will result in greater ease of use for service users, extension of building life and improved accessibility for all		The Office and community building require significant investment to ensure they are fit for purpose
	As a result of implementing the disruption plan, the Farm now has improved animal housing, a larger plant sales space, and stronger media presence which along with improved site signage has increased visitor donations		Parking is an issue for local residents, especially when offering activities that attract people from across the city such as Shaun the Sheep. If we cannot provide more parking, we need to ensure we encourage access on foot

Opportunities		Threats	
Organisational	Launch a 3 year Strategy that embeds our updated vision and values in day-to-day operations, and acts on recommendations and outcomes of the recent community consultation	Organisational	Lack of sufficient funding for several of our core services/projects results in lack of project direction, decreased staff morale and a higher reliance on smaller funding streams which presents increased administration
	Develop a marketing and communications strategy embedding our vision and mission in communications, ensuring effective, consistent and targeted external marketing and greater internal communications		Overreliance on grants from central government which are likely to significantly reduce/cease all together over the next 2-4 years. If not addressed, could result in the loss of services/facilities and staff redundancies
	Encourage greater diversity of our staff/trustees/co-optees etc to be more reflected of our target audience and local community		Management of the Allotments need to be redirect from Director to a suitable project manager to ensure sustainability of partnership
	Secure funds and launch proposals within the 'Better Connecting to Food Strategy' to ensure we better deliver on this key aim, including a Farm shop		The size and deterioration of the Café may restrict business growth
	To further partnerships/networking opportunities, engaging with partner organisations to strengthen our services or allow them to deliver from our facilities		74% of Farm staff are women. We currently adopt a statutory maternity policy, however in a sector that is scrutinised for low salaries, the Farm could find itself at risk of losing valuable staff unless we adopt a new policy
Services	Launch the Propagation Place and Community Growing facility in collaboration with AVAA which seeks to engage marginalised groups in growing/cooking opportunities	Services	There is demand for more family activities and opportunities for non-target audiences. We need to ensure that our response reflects our visions and is measured and achievable in line with our existing range of services
	Develop, fund and pilot activities which the community consultation revealed a demand for including: more activities for young people, veg growing opportunities, events, boiling wells open more often, produce for sale, food related workshop, arts and crafts workshops, heritage and training opportunities, more interactions with the animals etc		Without regular hours or permanent contracts, turnover of trained and experienced engagement staff will remain high jeopardising service delivery
	Improve monitoring and evaluation, developing new methods to collect and monitor data in order to demonstrate impact, including service user forums		Many of our core services do not have clear outcomes and objectives, do not have a suitable income strategy or funds secured to ensure continuation
Site	Complete and launch the Boiling Wells Management plan ensuring greater communication with all staff and groups in the use and management of the site	Site	Without a Farm Masterplan, future development will not be maximised, consistent or coherent. Lack of a volunteer maintenance team will limit the ability to undertake and complete tasks.
	Develop a Farm and Livestock Strategy which offers project proposals that seek to better tell the story of where our food comes from, ensuring focused fundraising		The office, tea room and community building are not fit-for-purpose. They will continue to deteriorate with lack of financial investment and need a strategy in place to secure future development
	Launch Propagation Place and secure additional funds which enable the AVAA committee to develop community growing facilities for all		The Community garden requires significant investment to ensure that it can continue to be used by supported training services users
	Improve accessibility on all sites for older people or those with disabilities including paths, handrails and seating, including £25k infrastructure investment at the Community Garden		The change to how we hire Boiling Wells has resulted in significant loss of income. We need to develop a sustainable income strategy, within the Management Plan, to ensure we manage the site well, balancing conservation, nature, service users, neighbours and income generation.

6. Analysing the need

A detailed socio economic analysis was undertaken to provide an overview of current needs and challenges within the city, and to focus our service delivery and development to best address disadvantaged and inequality during the strategy period. The full analysis can be read within the Community Consultation 2016; the following is a summary:

- **Population** - The population of Bristol has grown by 11.8% since 2004, 1.5 times higher than the national average, with the growth concentrated in the Inner City where the Farm is located. Around 16% of the overall population are from BME backgrounds but amongst children it is 28% on average, but 50% in Inner City/East Bristol. Bristol residents born outside the UK increased from 8% to 15% in the last decade. These increases in population numbers will have implications for health, education, social care, and family and community services.
- **Deprivation** - Over 24% (19,700) of children in Bristol live in income-deprived households. In 3 areas within walking distance to the Farm, more than half of the children live in income-deprived households. There are 9 LSOAs where more than half of the older people living there are income deprived - 4 of these areas are in Lawrence Hill, 3 are in Ashley, and 1 is in Cabot.
- **Education** - In 2014, 58% of children under 5 were assessed as having a good level of development at Foundation Stage (Early Years) with the lowest at 44% in Eastville and Hillfields. Of Key Stage 2 pupils in Bristol, 76% achieved level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths combined (2014), however the figure was only 59% in Lawrence Hill compared to 96% in Westbury and Bishopston. In 2014, 55.2% of Bristol pupils attained 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above, of which the average was 35% in Lawrence Hill ward.
- **Learning difficulties** - There are around 8,480 adults in Bristol with some level of learning difficulty; many of whom have increased number of health conditions and a significantly worse health profile compared to the overall % of Bristol patients. There are inequalities in life expectancy, as men with learning disabilities die an average of 13 years sooner than the wider population, and women with learning disabilities die 20 years sooner.
- **Mental Health** - The NHS Bristol Mental Health Needs Assessment July 2011 identified Lawrence Hill and Lockleaze as high mental health risk wards. Up to half of all mental illnesses start before the age of 14 and around half of these are potentially preventable. Black Caribbean, Black African and Other Black groups have lower than average rates of mental health referrals from primary care and are over 40% more likely than the general population to be referred to mental health services through the criminal justice system. Asylum seekers are particularly susceptible to depression and suffer higher than average rates of associated substance misuse.

Based on the evidence of need, the Farm will continue to develop and deliver services that target:

- Children, young people and families (targeting services at those facing disadvantage)
- Disabled people including those with learning difficulties
- Unemployed adults / young people not in education, training or employment
- People experiencing mental ill health
- People who are socially isolated

We will also encourage greater engagement of other disadvantaged groups including: BME groups including refugees and asylum seekers; older isolated people and people with dementia; those suffering from alcohol and substance misuse; and LGBT people.

In line with socio economic and in view of where we are situated, we will focus our services for target groups living in the following neighbourhoods:

- Ashley ward and in particular St Pauls
- Lockleaze and parts of Eastville ward
- Lawrence Hill and Easton wards with a focus on St Judes and Barton Hill

7. Considering the future

The following external and internal drivers that are likely to influence and inform the strategy period:

➤ **Financial**

- Austerity measures will see further public spending cuts and history has shown that the voluntary sector is often the first to be affected. Despite a potential loss of income, the nature of delivering services means we are likely to see an increase in the growing need for our services
- BCC is launching a prospectus to grant community investments from 1st April 2017 onwards. The Director is participating in the co-design process and will apply to the prospectus in Summer 2016 however it is unlikely that we will receive funding towards core costs beyond April 2017
- BCC is terminating block contracts (£28,200 pa) for health and social care placements in a move to more financially favourable spot purchases. We are communicating with BCC about this transition and will participate within the CCS commissioning process in summer 2016
- The lack of long-term funding for some of our core services (Youth Development, Childhood Learning and Estates and Livestock) will require a shift change in the way these services operate, seeking to diversify income streams as we move towards resilience

➤ **Local / political agenda**

- The Clinical Commissioning Group is re-commissioning mental health services for Bristol. Current delivery has been extended to 2019 whilst this process is undertaken. The Farm needs to stay abreast of developments to compete in commissioning if relevant
- There is growing awareness of the benefits of social prescribing. We should ascertain the potential of collaborating with partners to use the Farm and our green spaces as venues
- The Government's intention to establish every school as an academy may affect the Pupil Premium and other funding which currently enable off-site visits and placements. This could present challenges to the viability of our Childhood Learning and Youth Development services

➤ **Our staff**

- Pay scales within the Voluntary Sector are significantly less than other sectors. The Board of Trustees wish to develop schemes, facilities and procedures that ensure staff view the Farm as a great place to work and support the growth and development of a happy and healthy team
- Management positions within a city farm are considered a niche role. To ensure effective succession planning, we will encourage staff to develop their skill level and give preference to grow staff within the organisation, unless there is clear advantage to recruit externally
- In response to national pressure to eradicate 0-hour contracts we must review how we use and wherever possible, move sessional workers onto permanent contracts and ensure that all staff, irrelevant of their contract type, receive adequate inductions, support and supervision

➤ **Our facilities**

- Our office is dilapidated, un-insulated and not fit-for-purpose, especially during colder months
- Investment in accessibility, interpretation and site facilities to better cater to target audiences is required at Boiling Wells, the Community Garden and the Farm site, including the playground
- The Office and Community Building is at risk of becoming 'underutilised' once the Connection Centre opens. At the same time, the cafe business model is limited due to the size of kitchen, there is no dedicated space for a Farm shop and there is strong support for nursery facilities in the area

➤ **Our services**

- In a climate where accountability is essential, we must ensure that it can clearly demonstrate its impact to meet funding requirements and ascertain output vs. input of each service
- Following the community consultation, the Farm must navigate between running services that meet our objects/vision and those which engage non-target audiences, but generate income
- In June 2016 AVAA members will vote to or for the Farm maintaining management responsibilities. We must decide if the benefit vs. cost is sufficiently addressed before proceeding

8. Strategic Aims and Objectives

The following aims and objectives are seen as the priorities for the organisation over the next three years. Each aim has been split into 'Organisational', 'Service' and 'Site', however several objectives overlap and many milestones are dependent on each other for success. Annual aims and objectives will derive from this list, which will be detailed within each Operational Plan and further developed in service/project plans and staff objectives.

Strategic Aims	Strategic Objectives		
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Organisational Aims: Supports the vision by improving strategic planning, management and communications to ensure we are resilient, well run and effective			
Work towards financial stability through income diversification, income generation and securing 2 year + funding towards core costs	Maintain unrestricted funds to adhere to Reserves Policy and review annually	Undertake review of core costs (repeat every 3 years)	
	Annual: Undertake review of income generation activities, setting annual targets for diversification and growth in order to increase unrestricted funds to support core costs (secure trust and foundation funding where applicable)		
	Develop and introduce new management accounting systems and presentation	Review membership/Friends of the Farm scheme to increase revenue / engagement	Implement recommendations
Improve how we communicate our vision, services, events and successes	Strengthen the representation and communication of our vision throughout service delivery, site development, promotion and partnership opportunities	Launch Operational Plan 2017-18 with annual objectives (organisational and staff) that link to the 3 year strategy, and the vision and mission	Launch Operational Plan 2018-19 with annual objectives (organisational and staff) that link to the 3 year strategy, and the vision and mission
	Develop a Marketing Strategy to better tell the story of who we are, what we do etc	Implement recommendations, review and develop	Implement recommendations, review and develop
	Develop and launch 'user-friendly' website		
Strengthen work with partners and stakeholders (including local residents)	Develop strategic collaborations to win commissions and contracts	Review and develop as appropriate	Secure funds to undertake community consultation
	Improve partnerships where this will support the delivery of services for target audiences	Identify gaps in project-led delivery and identify if this can be filled by a partner or external organisation	Identify gaps in project-led delivery and identify if this can be filled by a partner or external organisation
Encourage a happy, healthy, well-equipped and communicative workforce	Ascertain staff satisfaction and identify areas for improvement	Undertake staff satisfaction survey and compare to Yr 1	Undertake staff satisfaction survey and compare to Yr 1 & Y2
	Develop a Communications Strategy (internal facing) seeking to improve across-team communication, define decision making procedures, embed values etc	Implement recommendations, review and develop	Implement recommendations, review and develop
	Improve performance management procedures and inductions, through training, time allocation and support	Update Staff handbook and trustee handbook	

Service Aims: meeting our mission of offering "targeted community services that equip people with knowledge, skills and confidence"

General			
Review, consolidate and strengthen our services identifying areas for growth/development whilst ensuring quality, impact and consistency	Annual: Continue to run core services for our target audiences and community events as outlined within the annual Operational Plan		
	Undertake a review of each service/project, identifying measurable outcomes, making recommendations for growth/change and developing an a sustainable funding model to ensure stability beyond April 2017	Review and amend plans to feed into Annual Operational Plan	Review and amend plans to feed into Annual Operational Plan
Improve how we best demonstrate impact, strengthening our evidence base	Launch and embed the Step Change Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy	Monitor and review impact, feed into future development and continue	Monitor and review impact, feed into future development and continue
	Develop and grow focus user group sessions	Invest in a client database to record activities, feedback, outputs and outcomes	Explore Social Enterprise Works and Alternative Happy Cities Happiness Pulse
Food: seeking to increase people's confidence and knowledge in growing, cooking and eating fresh food and increase people's access to locally produced food			
Increase access to local food and develop new growing and cooking initiatives	Secure funds to fit out ensure Connection Centre kitchen to enable projects to integrate growing and cooking initiatives	Monitor and evaluate impact of cooking and growing activities to inform future development, securing funds where required	Monitor and evaluate impact of cooking and growing activities to inform future development, securing funds where required
	Launch Propagation Place project in conjunction with AVAA	Secure funds to undertake a feasibility study to develop a Farm Shop/Farmers Market	Secure funds /partnership to launch 'pilot' shop /farmers market in old tea room
Green Spaces: seeking to enhance people's access to and enjoyment of green spaces and improve their health and well-being			
Develop activities that give people access to and encourage enjoyment of green spaces	Launch Propagation Place and Enclude activities including Community Action Days	Propagation Place and Enclude activities continue	Enclude activities continue
	Continue to offer activities / events at Boiling Wells. Consider demand for wider use within management plan development	Develop self-financing activities that enable people greater access to green space (in line with BW Management Plan)	Evaluate Year 2 to inform on-going activities
Community: seeking to create a supportive, friendly and understanding community; improve people's skills and qualifications; and improve people's engagement			
Continue to target services at those facing disadvantage	Prioritise the delivery of services for disadvantaged people living in priority areas	Annual: Review impact and engagement seeking to ascertain success of marketing, outreach, partnership and targeted delivery. Amend, invest and improve as appropriate	
Encourage engagement of underrepresented groups	Ensure marketing and promotional tools represent and reach diverse audiences	Annual: Coordinate and deliver outreach/on-site activity in collaboration with specialist partner organisations to target underrepresented groups	
	Hold a diversity training day in order to build skills, knowledge and confidence	Develop a strategy that supports greater diversification of Farm decision makers	Implement Strategy
Deliver more training, education, and heritage/arts activities including 'hands-on' animal based activities	Complete Connection Centre Management Plan seeking to maximise use of facilities	Identify need for a 'Community Engagement Officer' or 'Venue Coordinator Officer' to maximise activities, engagement and income	Monitor and evaluation to inform on-going activities (ensure effective promotion and marketing)
	Develop and pilot self-financing animal-based activities that engage general visitors	Identify and develop a heritage project that celebrates city farming and the SWCF impact	Submit application in view of securing funds by our 40th anniversary (2.5.2020)

Site Aims: meeting our mission of providing "green sites accessible to all", seeking to enhance our sites by developing them to be welcoming, accessible, playful and informative whilst supporting wildlife and biodiversity and increasing people's knowledge of where their food comes from

Invest in our buildings to ensure they enable us to deliver quality and consistent services and support greater income generation	Secure funds and undertake works to improve office facilities/community building	Secure funds and undertake feasibility of Farm spaces in view of maximising productivity and better using space	Complete Business Plan for future use and start fundraising as relevant for priority development
	Launch Connection Centre with clear management plan to maximise use, outline booking /maintenance procedures	Review use of facilities, identifying opportunities to maximise use	Review use of facilities, identifying opportunities to maximise use
Invest in the Farm site making it more inspiring, fun and informative	Launch 'Farm and Livestock Strategy' inc. budgeted proposals for : Farm Masterplan; maintenance volunteer opps; training/ animal based activities for visitors etc	Use Farm and Livestock Strategy / Better Connecting People to Food Strategy as a fundraising case to secure funds	Launch programme of capital investment
	Secure and invest £5k in educational site interpretation, unifying all Farm sites and better telling the story of where our food comes from	Seek £7.5k funding towards playground development	Capital works carried out
Invest in infrastructure at Boiling Wells and better manage the site as a conservation site & outdoor learning facility	Develop and launch a Boiling Wells Management plan ensuring effective and coordinated management	Monitor and evaluate and inform future development.	Complete 3 year nature survey
	Secure and invest funds in site infrastructure	Annual: Schedule and undertake required maintenance/infrastructure works	
Invest in the Community Garden and growing spaces improving accessibility for all	Secure funds to undertake accessibility improvements within the garden	Undertake capital works	Monitor and evaluate impact and share success
		Secure funds and undertake works to replace the greenhouse/polytunnel sheeting	Undertake capital works
Manage Ashley Vale Allotment Association Site as a self-financing project, whilst improving site facilities and growing capacity	Continue to undertake management functions allowing plot holders to vote in June for the Farm to continue with management role. If positive, negotiate appropriate 15 year lease from BCC	Deliver management responsibilities (in response to Year 1 outcome)	Deliver management responsibilities (in response to Year 1 outcome)
	Launch Propagation Place project in conjunction with AVAA whilst identify funds to develop further shared facilities that support greater capacity of plot holders and site productivity	Complete infrastructure development, review income against forecasted targets, develop exit strategy working towards sustainable business model	Monitor impact/income and report quarterly

9. Measuring Success

Each Aim and Objective will have milestones, targets and timescales detailed within the relevant Operational Plan. These will be tracked through a RAG rating system, monitored to an assigned sub-committee and reported to the Board of Trustees. The following list offers an outline of these indicators:

Organisational Aims and Objectives

- Financial Stability
 - Level of unrestricted funds and diversification of income streams
 - Reserves consistently between 3 - 6 months operational costs
 - Level of 2 year + funding secured
- Communication and visitor/service user journey
 - Greater visitor /stakeholder awareness of what we do, the sites we manage and our impact
 - Increased donations/individual donors
 - Implementation and review of Marketing Strategy
- Stronger partnerships and stakeholder consultation
 - Level of partners engaged in delivery/development of services or using our sites to deliver
 - Contracts/funding secured through collaborative bids
 - Completion of Community Consultation 2019
- Happy and healthy workforce
 - Staff retention, professional development levels and growth within the organisation
 - Improvement on baseline data collected through Staff Satisfaction survey
 - Implementation and review of Communications Strategy

Service Aims and Objectives

- General
 - Number of service users/visitors and the quality of their experience
 - Number services/activities/events delivered and their quality
 - Implementation and review of M&E strategy including number/influence of focus group
- Food
 - Quality and quantity of growing and cooking facilities/activities/initiatives
 - Improved access/connection to local food stated within community consultation
 - Completion of feasibility study/launch of business plan to secure funds towards Farm Shop
- Green Spaces
 - Quality and quantity of activities that give people access to green spaces
 - Improved access/enjoyment of green spaces stated within community consultation
- Community
 - Measures of social impact
 - Number and diversity of service users engaged
 - Quantity and quality of activities

Site Aims and Objectives

- Buildings/Farm Site / Boiling Wells / Community Garden
 - Level of funds secured and capital work undertaken
 - Feedback of site users (greener, more inspiring, informative and accessible)
 - Quality and income generated through Farm and Livestock Strategy proposals
 - Completion of feasibility study/business plan
- Ashley Vale Allotment Association
 - Successful vote of plot holders to retain management
 - Increased retention levels, capacity of plot holders and productivity of site
 - Increased number of gardeners who identify as disabled, disadvantaged or currently underrepresented