Bulletin

November 2026

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Recent Food Growing Workshop

Members of BAA were invited to attend a half-day workshop chaired by Councillor Oli Henman, Cabinet Project Lead for Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel, and Hannah Stott, Food Strategy Manager. Other attendees included representatives from privately owned and council-owned allotment sites, community growers, Curo, and council officers from the Parks and Climate and Environment teams. The BAA survey, local plan documentation and the Green Infrastructure Audit were available to inform discussions on the following themes:

- Securing existing sites, creating more growing spaces and improving access across Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES).
- Improving existing growing spaces and supporting people who are new to growing by reducing barriers to participation.

There was lively debate throughout the afternoon, and Hannah identified the next steps. Hannah will invite individuals and organisations to work alongside officers to undertake specific pieces of work that will underpin an overarching food-growing action plan.

The key areas we would see benefitting our current and future members are:

Updating the Allotment Selection Criteria used by the council to identify suitable sites for food growing by individuals or community groups.

Revising or rewriting the Allotment Design Guide for new housing developments.

Developing an overarching 5 year Allotment Management Plan including site-specific plans, a review of allotment rules, resource and site management arrangements.

If you would like to work with council officers to help shape these policies and plans, please contact me at chairman@allotments-org.uk.

BATH ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

Trading Hut

The Trading Hut will be open from 10.00 to 12.00 on Saturday 7th and 21st November 2026.

Date for your Diary

AGM 17th November 2026

Venue: Museum of Bath at Work BA1 2RH

Time: 6.30 for tea and cakes prior to a prompt 7.00 p.m. start. The guest speaker will be Neil Phillips, Senior Research Fellow, at UWE who specialises in water, sustainability and bio-inspired technologies. Details of his talk will be issued shortly.

Findings from our Recent Survey

A very big thank you to everyone who responded to our recent questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit the views of current plot-holders and those on the waiting list on the direction you think allotment strategy should take. The survey was sent to approximately 1000 tenants and 500 residents on the waiting list. There were 504 responses, 400 of which came from current tenants (79%) and 104 from people on the waiting list (21%). Some of the key conclusions are outlined below but you can access the Executive Summary here and a more detailed analysis of the data here.
The big picture: Bath's allotments are valuable community assets. The aim should be to make them accessible, affordable, well managed and sustainable so more people can enjoy growing their own food and being part of a thriving allotment community.

Top 10 takeaways:

🌱 Allotments make a real difference. They help people grow their own food, stay active, improve their wellbeing, enjoy nature and connect with their community

💧 Better facilities are needed. Reliable water supplies are the biggest priority, alongside improved paths, fencing, waste facilities and communal areas.

🐝 Make space for nature. Encourage organic growing, wildlife habitats, wildflowers and composting while keeping food production at the heart of allotment life

🌿 Make allotments accessible to more people. Protect existing sites, address waiting lists and explore smaller plots, raised beds and shared growing spaces to suit different needs.

💷 Keep costs fair and transparent. Most respondents felt rents were reasonable but some found them expensive. Any deposits or extra charges should be clearly explained and applied fairly.

🤝 Work together to manage sites. The most popular option was shared management between tenants and the Council. Clear responsibilities and stronger tenant involvement could improve how sites are run.

🧤 Give new tenants a better start. Ensure plots are in a reasonable condition, provide clear guidance and offer practical support. Apply tenancy rules fairly and consistently.

👩‍🌾 Build a stronger allotment community. Mentoring, training, shared activities and opportunities to exchange gardening tips could help people learn, settle in and feel part of their site.

🛠️ Make improvements in stages. Start with urgent water, safety and access issues, then develop a costed improvement plan over the next 12–24 months.

📊 Track progress and keep improving. Review waiting times, plot availability, tenant satisfaction, affordability, management and biodiversity each year to ensure the strategy delivers real benefits.

BATH ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

As the Crow Flies



Historically, allotments have been allocated based on being within 15 minutes walking distance of a prospective tenant's residential address. Our eagle-eyed Planning Officer has noticed that this has recently been changed in the new Local Plan to 20 minutes' walk **as the crow flies**!!!!

The badgers are driving me potty!

Advice from Charlie Love

This summer I lost all my allotment carrots to badgers. They were just ready to pull when a badger came along, trampled down my netting, which was protecting them from carrot fly, and ate the lot! I think I lost 50 or more carrots...

I have given up trying to grow them in beds and have moved on to pots. You can see from the photo's I germinate the carrot seeds using wet kitchen roll in a plastic tray on the windowsill. The seeds germinate very quickly. You can then place the seeds, I use a pencil tip to pick them up, in a large pot. A 10 inch or bigger pot is ideal, since it obviously needs enough depth for them to grow. The advantage of this method is that you don't waste seeds sprinkling them and then thinning out, you know that they have all germinated and you can space them evenly with enough room to grow.

Placing the pots on a bench is ideal since the carrot fly usually move by hoping and rarely fly above 50cm. This method means very little, in my case, no damage.

As you can see, I have three pots of heritage carrots doing very nicely and not a badger in sight!



BATH ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

Piloting a new allotment app

Solum Garden is a free allotment app built by one of our members, Sam Rualt on LCE. The app is designed to help plot holders keep on top of their plots throughout the year. It works on phone browsers so there is nothing to download, and it is not tied to Apple or Android. It covers a few allotment associations but can be used without joining one. Sam would love people to try it

https://solumgarden.app

Sam suggests looking around and then letting her know what's useful, what's confusing and what's missing. More features are coming, so early feedback will shape what she adds next. You can use the feedback icon in the app or send comments to samruaultdesign@gmail.com.

Recent Activities & Events

Compost Deliveries across sites



Many thanks to all those who helped organised the bulk purchase and delivery of compost to participating sites. The Trading Hut co-ordinated orders for more than 590 bags from Muck and Mulch.

New Instagram Account

We are delighted to announce that we have a revamped our Instagram account thanks to Jacquai on Ring Common- just follow bathallotmentsassociation if you are an Instagram user. Do please check it out.

Urban Garden Cake Sale



There were lots of lovely cakes on offer at the Urban Garden's fundraising cake sale. They are raising money for a new classroom to provide year-round, free horticultural training for adults who are unemployed or struggling with their mental health as well as providing space for other activities.

BATH ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

Comings and Goings

As we approach our AGM, we are sorry that Tim Baines (LCW), Dasha Charlton (Abbey View) and Andy Lenthall (Avon Park) are standing down as site reps. We thank them most sincerely for everything they have done for the Association and their sites.

We hope, however, to appoint their successors at the forthcoming AGM.

Your support needed for the Urban Garden's and BOG's CIL bids.

Both the Bath Organic Group and the Urban Garden are applying for grants in this year's round of bidding for Community Infrastructure Levy funds. Please support our partners by voting for their projects. Full details here. Voting closing very soon though – 3rd November.

What to do with those green tomatoes



Image of green tomatoes by Eugene Golovesov

It was a bumper year for tomatoes but if you still have some green ones on the vine, there are several good recipe ideas available. Take a look at the Positive Bloom website which gives 10 different recipes. Do send us a photo and let us know if you try any of them.

BATH ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

Allotment Wildlife Photo of the Month



Buzzard surveying the Lower Common East site. Photo taken by Julia Cleveland

Plus, we appreciate cats are not everyone's favourites on allotments but a great shot of this frequent visitor to the Claremont Site.



Thanks to Jacky Wilkinson for the photo