

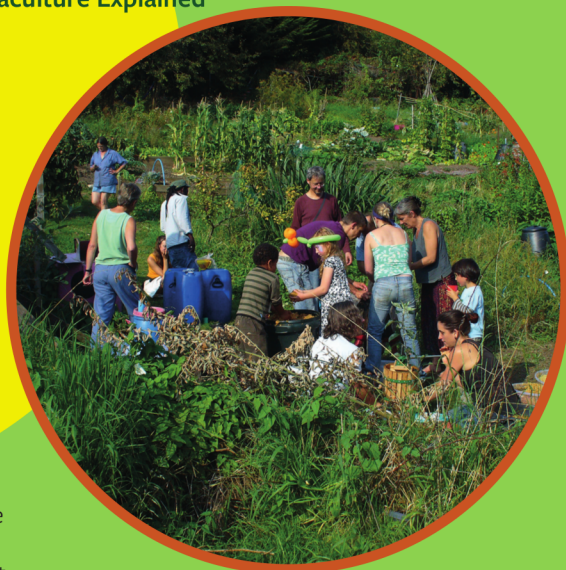
# Use and value diversity

Bristol Permaculture Group has been running since 1999 and has over 1400 members of an email group. We meet 'formally' twice a decade and have no core staff or funding. The BPG describes a loose collection of people who share permaculture values and help each other out. As such 'the group' makes no claim of ownership or credit for the work of its 'members'.

Bristol is developing a unique and diverse permaculture network. There are many different elements that provide different functions. By working together and making connections between the diverse elements they're creating a strong and vibrant network. This is a good reason why we should use and value diversity.

There are many fantastic land based projects in Bristol including community gardens and orchards like Easton Community Garden, allotments like Golden Hill providing supported gardening for people with complex needs. Community Shared Agriculture schemes like Simms Hill, The Community Farm and Edible Futures are making vegetable growing viable. Street Goat is collectively raising and milking urban goats. Avon Wildlife Trusts' Feed Bristol is hub for gardening, volunteer leader training, propagation and forest gardening. Small businesses producing herbs and mushrooms are starting out. The Bristol Fish Project is experimenting with urban aquaponics systems.

Other gardens work with asylum seekers, and other marginalised groups. Buzz Lockleaze provides fresh produce in a food desert. An annual sale of fruit trees with



Bristol Permaculture Group share ideas, work, tools, knowledge and resources

over 2,000 planted in back gardens since 2002. Buying groups are getting affordable organic food direct from farmers. The Bristol Pound is revaluing the local and making good food available to low income families. The Glastonbury Festival garden takes permaculture to the inebriated masses.

It's the invisible social network that makes Permaculture work in Bristol. The sharing of ideas, work, tools, knowledge and resources. Courses, workshops and skill shares constantly build the skills base of the community. Social events centre round apple pressing, seed and plant swaps, work parties, workshops and community discussions. And lots of dancing!

Shift Bristol runs a one year Practical Sustainability Course. For 2.5 days a week, 40 weeks of the year students explore a permaculture based curriculum. Design and practical work is on local sites and learning is in a community context. Students emerge with the skills, network, inspiration and confidence to bring Permaculture to life in a real setting.

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