

## Report on the Edible Garden 2020

The Edible Garden began 7 years ago, led by Robert Golden who founded the local Bridport Charity Home in Bridport. Voluntary support is given in a generous partnership with Transition Town Bridport, Opera Circus and HOME with help from Bridport Town Council on occasion. It is based at St. Mary's Primary School. The garden has become a centre for the school and delivers a variety of benefits including being part of National Curriculum STEAM classes, a place for children in need of different activities, in particular peace and in nature, due to challenges, events for the school and wider community involved barbecues, celebrations of harvest, learning about local food, cookery workshops for families, pizza evenings etc., We have also been central to developing healthier lunches at the school although this comes and goes depending on the challenges the school and kitchens face.

This is run by me (TTB and HOME), as a volunteer, with gardeners Tia Perrella and Mitch Burt, paid and with other volunteers. Tina Golden and I are the main fund raisers for the Edible Garden on a continuous basis.

In the school holidays we provide produce to Cupboard Love our local main food bank. This summer holiday we started a project to collect allotment gluts of fruit and vegetables and had a stall near St. Mary's Primary School to share with Skilling and Court Orchard residents for families who may be struggling. Most of the produce was given away but with a small donation box for those who are able to leave something to support the garden.

We try to also use storytelling, music and other arts to support the learning around growing, cooking and eating with local food as well as those aims for the planet and the environment. Learning about the ecology of our land.

We have planted a small orchard at St. Mary's and have started to create an edible hedge where children and families can pick and harvest as they walk. We would like to work more closely with the Bridport Day Care Centre but this will take more time.

We have started discussions with Bridport Primary School to help them begin to deliver their own Edible Garden 2 project.

The team, of course, will advise and help but it has to become a whole new group of people who take this on. The St. Mary's gardeners may be happy to help but they do need paying. For this 2<sup>nd</sup> EG, TTB have received money from BTC and Home have received a substantial amount from the Ernest Cook Foundation. TTB and Home are extremely grateful for this. We are waiting for a suitable time when Bridport Primary is ready to respond.

We also have an allotment which is paid for by Home. It has had a variety of community growing projects and which, for the moment, is lying fallow. This is due to lack of funding and time to organise. There have been discussions about its use and food security. The allotment is a decent size.

The pupils at St. Mary's have been able to have only limited access to the Edible garden team (although they go there when we are not there). But the team are so pleased that next week Year 4 will prepare and cook a Bronze Age meal of baked bread and soup.

We are also honoured to have become Ambassadors for the Seeding our Future project.

Sarah Wilberforce - Volunteer Co-ordinator of the Edible Garden