

Bisley Community Composting Scheme CIC Annual Report 09114883: July 2019 – June 2020

BCCS continues to be a successful and well-respected community scheme and recognised as a good local example of the circular economy. The pandemic affected our operations from March - July 2020 and we closed the site for several weeks, reopening just on Saturday mornings on May 30 with an appointments system.

Despite COVID19, annual membership renewals only declined slightly from 150 to c120, following the Directors' decision to limit membership just to Bisley with Lypiatt Parish. We hoped our decision would encourage adjoining Parishes to set up their own composting schemes, but the virus has dented a positive local initiative in Brimscombe & Thrupp Parish (on hold) and strong interest from Chalford Parish through their climate change action group.

Demand for our sieved and bagged peat free soil conditioner has increased. BCCS continues to supply sieved and bagged compost to the Vale Community Hospital Allotment "Gardening on Prescription" project; we have been unable to supply this in the last quarter due to the virus. We believe that if it had not been for COVID19 our income from our bagged compost would have risen more. The quality of our sieved compost is now well known and many more local groups came to collect our unsieved compost before the virus. It is free but most give a small donation, in appreciation of its 'localness', and its good, live, peat free qualities.

During the closure of our site between March and July, our allotment holders have become key beneficiaries of the unsieved compost, thus fulfilling one of our original key aims for the scheme. Piles of compost were dropped off throughout the allotments for safe social distancing accessibility. This has been highly valued because deliveries of manure were not possible during restrictions, and commercial compost was either not available or badly delayed by a huge demand nationally for compost at a key time for growing.

Closure gave us the opportunity to tidy the site and time to process the existing green deposits well. Our shredding team cleared all larger woody branches. Our aspiration is that we will continue to keep up with members' deposits so that the site remains both tidy and safe. To ensure this happens we have agreed to increase the time of our young paid worker and welcome more volunteering from younger members of the community.

The first stage results of our research on “What effect does BCCS have on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?” became available in summer 2019 (<https://bisleycommunitycompostscheme.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BCCS-UNiGlos-Report.pdf>,). A second stage is required, inevitably delayed because of COVID19.

Our Compost Loo was opened in the autumn. It has been much appreciated, especially the paintings by an allotment holder’s young daughter!

In 2019 we hosted visits from the local secondary school and Stroud Permaculture Group. We ran workshops at two local schools (as well giving talks to other groups). The Home Composting Demonstration area creates great interest and discussion.

Our Demonstration Beds grew insect attractant plants plus a deep mulch potato growing experiment. BCCS’ native species hedge is healthy and attracts farmland birds. Slow worms, grass snakes, hedgehogs live in and around the site.

Thanks go to our worker James Whitestone whose enthusiasm is a great credit and much appreciated, and to our shredding team Nigel Rogers and Chris Load, and to turning and emptying (machine support) by Alan Evans.

The Directors of the company remained the same as in 2018-19.