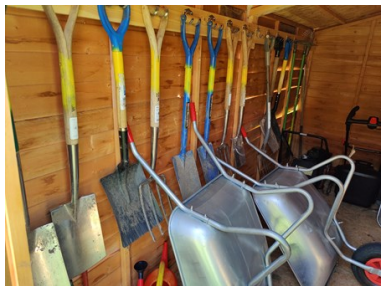


Project round up

Cashes Green – The Cashes Green community allotment site is a thriving example of the difference collaboration can make. A full team of volunteers come down each week to share the joy of growing and being outside as well as the benefits of exercise and the simple act of coming together. This year has seen the allotments go from strength to strength and the steady development of a small copse that will one day, save the day. Great to see so many trees going in. For more info head here: www.facebook.com/groups/2487386831297434



Cinderford – Cinderford, under the expert guidance of co-ordinator Jaqui, has made huge strides into the local community. Fairs like the one pictured are bringing the community together around food and growing and being outdoors, as well as developing the site and growing food for the project participants. **For more info head here:** www.facebook.com/CinderfordMedicalCentre



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Hello and welcome once again to the Down to Earth Autumn newsletter for 2021. And what a year it's been! A year of many challenges for us all. Especially our amazing volunteers at the various community garden sites across the area.

Despite the pandemic and lockdowns and difficulties for everyone in continuing their activities, some of us simply had to. The plants didn't know there was a pandemic on the loose and they just kept on growing. The rain kept raining and the sun kept shining. Without the constant efforts of our dedicated volunteers across the sites, they would have suffered. So this newsletter is dedicated to them and all of our wonderful supporters across Gloucestershire.

Churchdown – The team at the Churchdown Surgery site are no strangers to celebrity. Following a last minute cancellation to the filming schedule they, along with Amanda, hosted the BBC Countryfile team to showcase the great work being done by community growing schemes and went out on air in Late January. Thanks to the "Producers" they've had the final raised beds installed - including accessible ones - and produce has been flowing with even enough to help support the Churchdown Foodbank – that's Community!



FRIENDS! ROMANS..... We need your help.

We are delighted to announce our new 'Friends of' scheme. What is it I hear you ask? In simple terms, what we do costs money - tools, materials, travel costs, project staff and so on. If you can help us with these costs by becoming a friend and supporting us with a regular donation, it would be a huge help and mean that we can begin to develop the projects. By offering your help you can help make our mission a reality. Help us work with the local community to:

- Develop new skills and understanding about healthy food**
- Increase access to, and availability of fresh, nutritious and organic, healthy food**
- Reduce food miles and the associated fossil fuel impacts – doing Environmental good**
- Promote best practice in relation to biodiversity and natural balance**

Although the environmental issues are large, working on a local, community scale makes things achievable. It benefits local people and, when combined with other local community efforts, it will contribute to tackling the seemingly enormous environmental issues we all face. Your support can make a real difference to local community, wildlife and the environment in a way that benefits us all.

You can sign up here: <https://www.downtoearthstroud.co.uk/friends-of-down-to-earth/>

Members typically pay £3, £5 or £10 per month. The amount is up to you. **Benefits include** helping to restore the natural, environmental balance. Securing our future and developing our reach. Option to attend a project each year to see what we do and how it helps. If you would rather make a one-off donation then please follow this link to go to our secure donation page:

<https://www.downtoearthstroud.co.uk/>

Projects cont'

Selsley – Up at Selsley the hardworking team have improved the site with a new shelter and repaired compost bins whilst growing an impressive array of fruits and vegetables throughout the year.

There's a real community feel to the site and that comes from the wonderful work ethic of all involved. The garden doesn't stop growing and the volunteers don't stop gardening. Pictured is a small amount of the harvest.



The Vale – despite the lockdowns the allotments are at full capacity with a waiting list! The volunteers have recently installed a fab new pond to encourage wildlife and they're developing a Dementia Horticulture Therapy space. The team of dedicated volunteers, aided and abetted by Christine from Down to Earth have done great work this year as the site seeks to reach further into the community.



If you would like to donate to our projects and core work, follow this link: <https://www.downtoearthstroud.co.uk/>



Kingscourt – Running from 09.30-12.30pm on Tuesdays since April, they've achieved great things. We are rejuvenating an unused, overgrown piece of land into a place local people can work together to grow, learn and relax in nature. Carol, of the Kings Head, kindly said we could set up a garden and we've transformed the jungle into plots and a growing community space. It means a lot to those who help - "I'm in recovery and joined near the start of the project not long after leaving a treatment centre. This opportunity has allowed me to re-engage with the community and work alongside some lovely people and learn about gardening, growing and cultivating the earth."



Stroud Community Seed Bank

As well as running a host of seed saving workshops and Garden Gathers, Sally, Jane and Beth have distributed an amazing 1634 packets of seed and that was just the start of the year so we're sure with the seed collected this autumn that number will grow. This network is fast becoming one of the best community seed banks in the country and is taking a huge step towards Stroud's seed security going forward. They made radio appearances and even worked with the School Food Matters charity to give seed to the Young Marketeers project to see what they could grow. Results were at the Farmers Market in Stroud in Oct. www.facebook.com/stroudcommunityseedbank



Back to the future

In 2009, 12 years ago, a tiny seed was sown. That seed was Down to Earth. Now, Down to Earth has grown to become a well known, well respected not-for-profit local community organisation. It has helped many people come together and benefit from a love of the outdoors, food, nature and engagement with the land. This was all from the vision of one woman, Amanda Godber, the Down to Earth Director and founder. We thought we'd find out what drove Amanda to start Down to Earth and what drives her to keep going. Visit our blog for more at: <https://www.downtoearthstroud.co.uk/about-us/blog/>

