

13 October 2025

Elli Bate

Freshford & Limpley Stoke Community Farm Project

As part of a group of villagers who are working to start a vegetable farm/market garden for the community, I would like to ask for a statement of support from Freshford Parish Council.

I think most councillors will be aware of the background already, but I'll share a couple of updates as things have progressed since we last spoke to the PC:

- A Community Benefit Society has been set up with the working title of Freshford Community Farm Ltd. Next step is to apply for tax exempt charitable status from HMRC so that we can claim gift aid.
- We have had an offer accepted on a wonderful site right in the heart of our two villages; 3.5 acres of a field south of Church Lane and adjoining St Mary's church. The land will cost £180,000, and with set-up costs and working capital requirements we estimate we will need to raise c.£400k in total. Once purchased, the land will be under a statutory asset lock for the benefit of the community in perpetuity.

We will be issuing a community share offer and doing a big fundraising drive for donations over the next 6 months, but initially we need to apply for grants to help cover the costs of applying for planning permission etc.

We have received statements of support from our MPs (Anna Sabine and Brian Matthew) and from Limpley Stoke PC – it would be wonderful to have a similar statement from Freshford PC to help with these applications.

We have only recently become aware of a particular grant with an application deadline this week, hence asking for support at such short notice.

The project will have many benefits for our community (I've included our charitable objects below to illustrate) and supporting the farm would be a wonderful way for the PC to take action in the face of the Climate & Nature Emergency that we have declared.

You can read more on our website www.freshfordfarm.org and please do let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks very much

Elli

Freshford Community Farm Ltd

The objects of the Society shall be for the public benefit to:

(a) Promote health by growing nutritious, agroecological and organic vegetables, fruit and other produce within Freshford and surrounding areas.

(b) Improve the environment by preserving and increasing local biodiversity, building soil health and sequestering carbon through agroecological farming practices.

(c) Provide education by offering joyful opportunities to bring the community and visitors together to advance knowledge and skills around healthy food, farming, biodiversity and climate resilience.

(d) Contribute to a thriving, sustainable and resilient local economy by producing healthy food for consumption by the local community.

(e) Advance social cohesion by creating a safe, inclusive and welcoming place for the community, members, volunteers, workers and visitors.