Grow local crops| Grow local soil | Grow local people

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| **Community-supported agriculture - Wikipedia**  **Tumbledown**  **Business Plan 2021-2026** | SUMMARY  A partnership between Weymouth Town Council and Weymouth Area Development Trust to deliver a community farm and create responsible stewardship over the natural environment that supports community life, learning and well-being in a sustainable and economic way. |

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**Executive Summary**

A group of people in a field

Description automatically generatedTumbledown is a beautiful greenspace covering 10.85 hectares, of which 4.4 hectares are a designated site of special scientific interest (SSSI) with a rich biodiversity. The remaining land is divided into two woodlands (2.34 in total) two grassland fields (2.74 hectares) and three fields with potential for growing fruit and vegetables reflecting the agricultural heritage of the land. Nestled in amongst the food fields and orchard lies several existing outbuildings, dilapidated and in need of updating as funds allow.

Weymouth Town Council (WTC) owns Tumbledown, previously leased for farming, grazing, and stabling. In 2019 WTC passed a motion agreeing that the land asset should be developed for the benefit of the Weymouth Community. This was fully supported by Council Members and forms an integral part of the Weymouth Town Council Strategy.1 WTC has recognised the Climate and Ecological Emergency and the Tumbledown Project is progressing under the Green and Clean working group.

Recognising that to shape this development would require several authorities to work together the Tumbledown Partnership Group was formed between WTC, Dorset Council, Weymouth Area Development Trust, Public Health Dorset and Natural England Dorset. The group met monthly and held public consultations in 2019 and 2020 to help shape the intent for the site. The COVID-19 crisis delayed some of the initial plans.

Weymouth Area Development Trust Ltd CIC (WADT), a community-led not for profit organisation were brought in as partners to assist in developing the Tumbledown Project.  In October 2020 a Tumbledown Project Board was formed, and a partnership between WTC and WADT was established with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be agreed during the early part of 2021.

The Tumbledown Project will bring the land back into use for community benefit, in a sustainable way, by growing food on those parts of the site, outside the protected rich natural environment (SSSI), and provide local community access areas in ways that:

* Provide skills and social interaction for local vulnerable people.
* Promote human health and well-being.
* Protect and reduce the impact on the environment.
* Develop individuals’ and the community’s food growing and processing skills.
* Generate income to achieve a sustainable operation.
* Reinvest surpluses to strengthen Tumbledown’s future.

The pastureland within the SSSI will continue to be managed in accordance with the Land Management Plan, including seasonal cattle grazing. Access to the woodland will be improved by creating nature trails and glades which will increase biodiversity. Access to the land around the food production areas will be improved through maintaining the public right of way, extending the permissive paths, and improving access for wheelchairs and off-road mobility scooter users.

This project aims to strengthen community cohesion at a time when Covid-lockdown has isolated and marginalised vulnerable people and threatens the security of the local food supply chain. Public Health, Wildlife Trust, Dorset Council, Veterans Hub and local Clinical Commissioning Group have expressed an interest in how Tumbledown can meet the needs of a range of fee-paying service-users.



**Vision**

*“An inclusive greenspace which nurtures the life-giving environment to support community led growing, learning and well-being, now and for future generations.”*

**Values**

* A space that promotes physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.
* An inclusive venue that offers equality of access and opportunity.
* A sustainable environment modelled on social enterprise principles.
* An environment that protects and nurtures biodiversity.
* A centre that show-cases the natural, historical and archaeological significance.
* A place that respects and protects the environment for future generations.

**Pillars of success**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **Leadership** | * A leading example of peri-urban community farming and a voice that encourages mutual networks to improve local food security. * A leading voice for local, sustainable food production and consumption in Weymouth. * A leading voice in advocating the health benefits of communing in the natural environment. |
| 2 | **Local Food supply** | A productive growing rotation, with minimal environmental impact, that increases VegBox demand and the production of food-based products, concentrating on high-value crops. |
| 3 | **Space & Community** | A warm, welcoming and inclusive environment for the community to have fun, develop their knowledge, skills and well-being. |
| 4 | **Social Enterprise** | Trading revenues to create reinvestable surplus to reduce grant-dependency by 15% year on year. |
| 5 | **Membership** | An active membership from the local community as volunteers and source of income. |

**Context**

Dorset is one of the healthiest places to live in England, with long life expectancy. It is an attractive location for retirement and has a world heritage coast and many charming villages in its rolling chalk hills. The picture is not uniform, however. Behind the iconic cliffs and thatched cottage images there are areas of real [deprivation](https://www.publichealthdorset.org.uk/intelligence/localities/2020-locality-profiles/2020-01-15-draft-weymouth-portland-narratives-template-v8.pdf). Five wards are notable as suffering with deprivation being in the bottom fifth nationally, and four of these are in the Weymouth and Portland area. This might seem surprising given the image of an Olympic sailing venue with its fine Georgian seafront.

Beneath the façade lies an area of back-to-back terraced Victorian housing with 1050 houses of multiple occupancy. Some are of a high standard, but others are not, and cheap bedsits concentrate the poor, dispossessed, marginalised and destitute. Prosperity came to the town from being “at the end of the line” from London and for many the Park district this holds a darker meaning. Clustered around the town are the post-War council estates of Westham and Littlemoor. Whilst some claim deprivation exists in rural Dorset villages, and this is undoubtedly true, it does not show up on large area statistics. Families of low income are more isolated in rural areas but are also fewer in number. The shocking images conjured by Cobett’s Rural Rides with impoverished masses scattered across the land has passed. Modern farming has not only cleared out the hedgerows, songbirds and bees but also the large-scale workforce. The same process of social cleansing that currently sees central London cleared of low-income families has applied for the last 100 years and particularly since WWII and the rise of the machines on the land.

So, when one moves to study the maps of deprivation it is obvious that people of low incomes have moved to cheap housing in the post war estates that were deliberately built in the hinterland of Weymouth. This made sense as it gave those dispossessed from livelihoods on the land by combine harvesters and tractors, the prospect of a job in the naval dockyard, engineering with Whitehead torpedo works and late AUWE or the nearby nuclear power research site at Winfrith. The later demise of these major employers has cut the high wages for locals who now look to the lower paid tourism or service sector. The result of this semi planned mass movement of population is that we have the poorer population of West Dorset relatively concentrated in towns with the four most deprived wards forming a core in Weymouth.

Weymouth and it surrounds, has the highest concentrations of vulnerable adults and children in the Dorset Council area, and yet has very limited local services for these people resulting in them having to travel considerable distances, including out of the county, for suitable skills training and social interaction, particularly for outdoor activities.

It is now widely recognised that walking has great health benefits both physically and mentally. Increasingly the open greenspaces in Weymouth are being built upon and the paths are being fenced in.

Working outdoors, particularly growing plants has direct health benefits through increased exposure to sunlight (enhancing Vitamin D-levels), reduced stress levels, offsetting dementia, aerobic exercise and combating social loneliness. Protecting accessible greenspaces is vital to promote the health of local people and preserve the natural environments that supports biodiversity.

The lower lying parts of Tumbledown lie within the Radipole Lane SSSI. The citation reads as follows ‘*The former estuary of the River Wey, this site comprises a variety of wetland habitats of great importance for birds as a breeding, wintering and passage site. The lake and reed beds have formed since the exclusion of tidal water in the 1920’s, though areas of relict saltmarsh remain. Scrub is an important additional habitat and wet grassland on alluvium over Oxford Clay is also present. The river edge and flood meadows support various wetland–marsh plants*.’

The bulk of the site falls within the Radipole Village Conservation Area, however there are no listed buildings or specifically identified features adding to the character of the area. Any renovations of existing buildings at Tumbledown requires notification and will need to meet the design principles set out in the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Conservation Areas.

Weymouth Town Council, and the Tumbledown Project are committed to reducing their Carbon Signature to zero by 2030, it is intended that Tumbledown will play its part with any new buildings and facilities utilising, where possible, renewable energy, high insulation and lower energy needs.

Weymouth Town Council currently operates a Plant Nursery on privately rented land with extensive facilities for annual bedding plant production. A business case to move this operation to Tumbledown is under preparation for decision in 2021. The economy of scale to use shared plant and food growing space at Tumbledown will increase income, reduce costs and improve opportunities to grow high-value crops.

Sustainability based on diverse income streams generated by trading and fees will underpin a social enterprise approach. Councils and community businesses share a common interest; the creation of resilient communities which are rich in social capital that contribute to reducing social problems. The ‘asset lock’ feature of a social enterprise model protects the council owned assets whilst offers opportunities for greater community involvement.

The Tumbledown Project will be financially sustainable with no long-term reliance on grants, where income exceeds or at least meets full costs. Initial capital funding is required to make the site fit for purpose. There is currently funding from Weymouth Town Council with funding support from Transition Towns Weymouth & Portland, and resource support from WADT. To achieve its ambitions the Tumbledown Project needs grant funding to cover the capital investment programme. Grants can only be secured against measurable social outcomes, and where possible evidence to show the reduction in net costs to government (through Dorset Council) for delivering social services more locally.

**Community Benefits**

Tumbledown encourages community participation to create a connection between people and a place where their needs can be met, and their contributions are valued. To provide a sense of belonging and ownership where local residents feel they can have an equal say on the future of the project. Tumbledown will be an inclusive space, open to all where some activities will be planned to offer the safety and security of working with vulnerable groups. Planned events and time-tabled activities with appropriate staffing and risk assessments ensures health, safety and safeguarding protocols will be observed, without the requirement of segregating vulnerable people from unplanned visits by community members.

The existing public footpaths will be maintained and open for public use, and additional permissive footpaths will be introduced. Nature walks to promote interest in the natural capital will include image-references to the flora and fauna that will appeal to all ages. Well-being support groups will be encouraged to offer meditation, outdoor gyms and animal therapy to work with trauma survivors coupled with supported outdoor work experience and volunteer activities.

**Social Impact Measures**

The following measurable social outcomes will articulate Tumbledown’s impact and form a central element of Tumbledown’s Annual Report.

* Increased awareness of food security and how to mitigate & adapt to climate change.
* Improved understanding of food, its health benefits and how to prepare nutritious meals.
* Improved physical and emotional health, personal and social well-being.
* Increase in the quantity and diversity of learning opportunities.
* Increase in quantity of vocational training and potential employment opportunities.
* Improved land management and increase in species of flora and fauna.
* Increased awareness of Tumbledown’s historical value and archaeological significance.

**Education**

We will work with schools and colleges, run fee-paying courses and events. Sessions like bread making, willow weaving and introductions to permaculture are examples, and are easy to plan and deliver. Pop-up dinners, cooking demonstrations and Harvest Festivals can include people of all ages and abilities. Over the coming years we will:

* Strengthen our existing relationships with local schools, colleges and community groups.
* Host at least 12 school/young people’s group visits per year.
* Host at least 12 free taster days for adults with learning disability and autism
* Be working with 10 schools by 2022.
* Seek funding to continue our after­school cook clubs linked to our current Forest School, cooking for parents and children in areas of greatest need.
* Host at least two celebration events per year for our community.

The Early Years Partnership are keen to explore ways of accessing the site as part of their offer to local providers, childminders, nurseries and play groups, and meetings are scheduled for later in the year to meet with Primary Heads and Secondary Heads, where the focus will be to explore how Tumbledown can be accessed as ‘alternative provision’ to support children to remain on school roll, reducing exclusions and offering alternative elements in their timetables that meet their physical, social, learning and sensory needs, beyond the classroom. Developing the woodlands to offer a broader Forest School curriculum, with local Church and EY Groups is under discussion, that will complement the existing Trees and Seas Forest School already in situ and generating revenue. The Community Grow Spaces will be available to Early Years providers and schools.

We will use organic permaculture methods with production based on a six-year rotation over approximately 2 hectares of land, designed around the needs of a VegBox scheme and local food networks. There is an emphasis on higher value crops to support our financial viability. The growing plan will be reviewed annually and shared publicly. Given the vagaries of growing crops, a small-scale food-based enterprise is only sustainable with a diversity of other incomes streams.

**Plant to Plate (P2P) approach**

Tumbledown will be a more secure and sustainable project if we capitalise on the opportunities offered by a Plant to Plate (P2P) model incorporating growing, processing and retail. A P2P approach mitigates the following potential risk factors.

1. Food growing is a dicey business, pests can devastate a crop and we will increasingly experience extremes of heat and excesses or dearth of water during the growing season. The growing season in the UK is short, although becoming longer with climate change.
2. The seasonality of growing food is a problem with not only the depths of winter being a problem but also the “hungry gap” when the winter crops have just finished but the summer crops are only just starting to grow.
3. Relying on sporadic volunteers alone in a growing project which aims to be income generating is therefore very risky. Permanent key personnel are necessary to co-ordinate and manage the land, crop-production and social services in a coherent and efficient way.
4. The price of fruit and veg in the UK does not really reflect the costs of production – currently prices rely upon a low-waged and job-insecure workforce and (at scale) is largely under the cosh of the big supermarkets.
5. The combined effect of the Covid Emergency and the Climate and Ecological Emergency has heightened public awareness of a variety of food issues and there are community initiatives appearing around food resilience, social supermarkets, food banks, community fridges, Farmers’ Markets, all contributing to a richer Weymouth food culture going forward.
6. Adding value by processing food (cooked meals, preserves, chutneys and juices) prior to sale has the potential to take food growing out of the marginal into the financially stable. Processing food can increase the effective yield of grown crops by using up ‘wonky’ fruit or veg.
7. Providing opportunities for people in vulnerable categories to engage at all stages of a P2P approach is a key outcome, not only because it is the right thing to do but also as a source of alternative and reliable income.

In order to develop a stable financial model, we need to offer the widest possible range of opportunities for our vulnerable community members to experience the greenspace and develop confidence, life skills and new friendships that promote social mobility and wellbeing. There is a large body of evidence that recognises the value of people being able to commune with nature as a positive driver towards good health and wellbeing. Tumbledown’s natural capital and rich biodiversity accrue opportunities for outdoor learning even if the main event is indoors, in contrast to most educational campuses.

Covid and a waning conventional economy offer limited job opportunities in the area. The Covid pandemic has highlighted that some people (not deemed “vulnerable”) do not have the basic skills of cooking in order to utilise food bank items effectively. Weymouth has a large “precariat” who fall just outside society’s support systems and are really struggling just to survive.

Tumbledown is close to a large population (60,000+) so there are plenty of local people to buy its products. Tumbledown occupies a strategic site at the fulcrum of the Weymouth Country Park which will bring tourists and their spending power to enjoy this rural setting so close to the town facilities. Weymouth Country Park is a reference to several inter-connected peri-urban greenspaces being considered for funding to protect the landscapes and make them accessible for tourism. Tumbledown will benefit from any future aspirations to make Weymouth an all-year-round tourism centre.

The response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency has multiple dividends from the P2P model and offers significant potential for multiple skills-training opportunities throughout the food system for different sectors of the wider Weymouth community. The potential for job creation, whilst offering more reliable financial security throughout the production of high-quality value-added products coupled with providing training opportunities mitigates risks, diversifies income and offers the foundations of sustainability.

P2P sees a range of different food related activities contributing towards a viable project:

* A thriving fruit and vegetable growing enterprise offering horticultural skills (and outdoor experience), producing organic standard produce either for direct sale or for further processing (**Activity A**)
* A large kitchen featuring as many cookers/hobs as possible to enable the teaching of cooking skills to both vulnerable and precariat sectors, developing food hygiene skills though the production of cooked meals and preserves, to include an eating area for volunteers (**Activity B**).
* A workshop area for developing packaging and marketing materials in a multi-purpose area which will offer craft skills, resilience skills such as sewing or carpentry (using materials such as timber or willow grown on site) as well as for the construction of equipment required by the growing enterprise (**Activity C**).
* A café, marketing Tumbledown branded products and offering food and drink to visitors arriving by bus or on foot (and promoted by the Country Park) along with a multi-purpose area available for educational / meeting purposes housing a nature library and historical exhibition (**Activity D**).
* As a longer-term goal, there will be a Farm Shop marketing Tumbledown branded products adding value to the Weymouth food economy, which has been big supermarket dependant for too long, that offers a route for Tumbledown products (**Activity E**).

In the immediate short term, as much of the activity will involve community groups there is a need for a social community space providing shelter, toilet and tea/coffee making facilities. This has already been provided by converting one of the barns (Swallow Barn).

All decisions regarding the renovation of existing (and dilapidated) farm buildings will be taken with an eye to not closing any avenues which might impede implementation of P2P. In the short to medium term this will require use of buildings as follows:

Activities A will require growing equipment storage space to be housed (along with admin, first aid, toilets etc) in the footprint of the long line of sheds adjacent to the entrance track. (**Building A**)

Activities B will be housed in the footprint of the building with the stone gable. (**Building B**)

Activities C will be housed in the footprint of the newly refurbished Swallow Barn, with heavier activities like woodwork benefiting from the covered area at the rear. (**Building C**)

Activities D will be housed in a new building using the footprint of the large, corrugated-iron building; this site is suitable for a 2-storey building with ground floor partly below ground level. (**Building D**). Outdoor / wet weather activities will additionally be catered for by an overarching roof (offering additional solar power opportunities) spanning the 2 main buildings offering activities B and D.

**In the longer-term,** Activities E to be housed in a new development in a bespoke passive-built unit adjacent to proposed public car parking (subject to separate planning permission). **(Building E**)

*Please note refurbishment costs for the above dilapidated buildings are shown below under Capital Costs).*

**VegBox Scheme**

A Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) VegBox scheme will be designed to distribute seasonal produce to the community. A partnership between the farmer and consumers where the risks, responsibilities and rewards are shared. Weymouth households will be able to subscribe to weekly VegBox collections. Monthly ‘farm days’ and events will enable subscribers to meet the farmer/grower and have a say on what’s grown and ordered. We plan to sell Fruit Boxes and mixed Fruit and VegBoxes once the orchards can be productive. Tumbledown will develop links to a network of local food suppliers to share surpluses where possible. The potential to expand crop-production and work collaboratively with other growers strengthens food supply and enables the production of food and drink-based products, for example mince pies, jams, pickles, cordials, juices and smoothies. We believe the Covid lockdown will increase demand for locally sourced food, and our VegBox scheme will be filled with Tumbledown and locally sourced produce.

Pricing:

* VegBoxes (\*No potatoes option)

Small: £11.95 ­ £12.95\*

Medium: £14.95 ­ £15.95\*

Large: £17.95  
 Family: £20.45

* Fruit Boxes

Small: £7.25 Medium: £10.75 Large: £15.25 Bumper: £23.95

* Fruit & VegBoxes

Small: £14.25 Medium: £18.25 Juicing: £13.00 Salad: £13.00

(Home delivery charges of £1.50 per household.)

We aim to increase revenue from the VegBox scheme in the following ways:

* Increase customer numbers year on year via our sales and marketing strategy, see below.
* Focus on customer service to improve on a 45% retention rate (we understand this to be significantly above average for the sector).
* Implement a yearly membership price review (March/April).
* Explore new products, to increase average customer spend
* Increase the amount of farm grown produce in the VegBoxes.
* Co-produce crops with other growers.
* Crowdfunding and other grant/fundraising.

**Friends of Tumbledown:** We currently have over 50 Friends of Tumbledown many of whom are willing to offer their time to support our work. Volunteers are at the heart of our community farm and they can bring their skills, knowledge, and energy to help the project grow. We will host regular volunteering sessions on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Volunteers assist us in facilitating school visits, group volunteering sessions, informal farm tours and settling people into activities. This contributes to making Tumbledown a welcoming and safe space.

**Health & Well-being:** Key to a post Covid landscape Tumbledown will offer positive health and well-being benefits. The current links in place include, (1) Veteran’s Hub- and dog therapies (2) Weymouth Men’s Shed (3) Lantern Trust (4) Arts Development Company (4) Live Well Dorset. Fees will be charged to use the site, opportunities for voluntary hours, or joint grant applications.

**Team Challenge Days:** We want to encourage corporate away days that offer a unique day out for teams looking to escape the office, get mucky and reconnect with nature. We can accommodate groups of up to 30 volunteers with teams participating in activities that provide a meaningful mutual benefit to Tumbledown and local community. Over the coming years we will:

* Double the number of Team Challenge Days hosted year on year.

Our capacity to deliver these services is dependent on our income, leadership, team resourcing and volunteer capacity. Some of the community benefit services we provide, such as P2P, VegBox schemes, Team Challenge Days, fee-paying sessions/courses, assist us with income and others require an investment of time and money. Our challenge is to create a healthy balance that achieves our mission and enables us to operate sustainably, reinvesting surplus to further our strategic vison.

**Financial Overview**

**(Please refer to Appendix 5)**

**Income profile**

Influencing Risk Factors have been highlighted previously in the P2P approach.

1. Food

Growing Areas: FOOD FIELD 1 is 0.10 hectares

FOOD FIELD 2 is 0.36 hectares

FOOD FIELD 3 is 0.41 hectares

ORCHARD is 0.77 hectares

TOTAL VEG GROWING AREA is **0.87** hectares (8,700 m2)

Two thirds of the total hectarage can be effective growing area: 5,8000m2

Method 1:

30 tonnes of produce per hectare typical yield market gardener

20 tonnes of produce per hectare typical yield commercial scale

Considered output 2kg/ m2 therefore 5,800 m2 generates 11,600 kgs

Best organic wholesale price £2/kg

**TOTAL PROJECTED ANNUAL INCOME £20,00-30,000**

Method 2:

Community Grow Spaces will be plots allocated to community members and groups with shared yields that are separate from the commercial growing areas. CGS plots produce £550 worth of produce from 250 m2 which equates to £2.20 m2/ per annum. Therefore, 5,800 m2 should give £12,760, 50% would be income to Tumbledown **£6,380 or crop equivalent**.

With demand increasing during Covid for more community led grow spaces, both methods could be operated, with there being a Tumbledown Community Grow Scheme based in Food Field 3. Although crop yields might not be guaranteed, and some groups may be more productive than others, a fee system and yield system could work in tandem as an income stream. The more yield the less fee and vice versa. VegBoxes can be supplemented with conventional groceries like tinned and dry food.

1. Land Management

Summary of annual payments, available from December 2022 until December 2027, via the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (Higher Tier) and paid by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) on the basis the land at Tumbledown is [registered](https://www.gov.uk/register-land-rural-land-register/how-to-register-land-or-change-a-registration) with the RPA by December 2020.

(£)

1. Wet grassland/SSI (GS6) on 4.21 hectares 766.22
2. Hay meadows (GS7 & GS17) on 2.74 hectares 630.20
3. Woodland Improvement (WD2) on 2.34 hectares 234.20
4. [Educational visits](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/educational-access-ed1)\* (minimum up to 25 per annum) 7,250.00
5. Annual payment 1,630.00

**TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME** **10,510.42**

**\*** Educational visits invoiced monthly at £290 each and will be used to offer free taster days for local schools and colleges, other sums a), b), c), d) are claimed annually as a single payment upon expenditure of capital from December 2022 onwards.

1. Fees

Tumbledown will accommodate the needs of vulnerable people, with access to personal budgets that enable them to meet their own social, health and economic needs through a connection with the land management and farming requirements of the site. Staff with skills in learning disabilities, autism and mental health support will be required. Based on group sizes of no more than 8 and based on a daily rate of £50 per day per person. Initially, projected on two groups of six, twice per week, to be Covid-compliant (from January 2021 onwards), increasing to two groups of five, three times per week. Following consultations with Dorset Council’s Strategic Commissioning team this was considered a conservative estimate.

The commissioning landscape is changing as new demands of Dorset Council’s limited resources increases innovation in this area, coupled with the growing body of [evidence](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/nature-and-mental-health/how-nature-benefits-mental-health/) to support Tumbledown’s ambitions. The longer-term plans would be to pilot an Individual Service Fund model (ISF) that enables individuals to transfer their personal budgets to Tumbledown, as a service-provider, where they receive help and support to spend their annual budgets. This offers greater choice and control to the individual with minimal state intervention. There is a requirement for transparent accounting systems for every individual, including delivery of impartial advice, guidance and brokerage to other services to meet people’s needs. There is growing [evidence](https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/_assets/Resources/SDS/TLAPISFsContractingFINAL.pdf) the ISF model saves Council funds and resources, offers greater autonomy to the individual. Fees can be introduced by Tumbledown for on-costs including training, supervision of staff and the management of the back-office functions required to deliver ISFs.

A longer-term plan will be to introduce fee structures for schools/colleges to support vulnerable pupils. Education budgets for children close to exclusion may be the only fee-paying opportunities available, which has staffing implications and costs.

1. Membership Schemes

The governance structure of the long-term organisation of Tumbledown beyond the Memorandum of Understanding that underpins the legal partnership that currently exists between WADT and WTC will determine the scale of income achievable through memberships.

1. Grants/Fundraising

As a social enterprise income through social investment, grants and fundraising will be possible, for different strands of the project.

**Expenditure profile**

Staff costs are the most significant cost to the business. Our aim will be for staff costs and the cost of goods sold to not exceed 65% of gross revenue, by Year 2 when trading revenues have reached some scale. All staff on-costs will be based on a 30% uplift, initially using some self-employed staff paid by invoice, at an agreed hourly rate.

Resource required

Staff could be employed by WADT, a new entity yet to be formed or self-employed, the latter would reduce the on-costs which have been set at 30%.

1. For January 2021, a **Learning Mentor** is required to support adults with learning disabilities. Initially for two days per week increasing with demand to full time by the end of the year if Covid rules allow. Suitably vetted volunteers will complement paid staff as groups grow in number and frequency. There will be plans to widen the Tumbledown offer to a broad range of fee-paying service users across health, social care and education, which will influence the skills and specialisms required for each type of group, for example dementia, mental health, complementary and alternative education provision, unemployed, homeless, drugs and alcohol related groups. The annual costs to recruit plus on-cost would be £36,400.
2. For January 2021, an **Experienced Grower** is required with the skills, knowledge and experience to develop the Food Fields 1,2,3 and the Orchard into effective food producing areas able to support a VegBox Scheme that is based on the key principles of permaculture. The annual costs to recruit plus on-cost would be £34,450.
3. For June 2021, a **Project Development Manager** is required to develop the business model over the next five years, manage staff and develop the marketing plan in line with the Business Plan. An experienced fund raiser grounded in the principles of social enterprise and community engagement will be required to drive Tumbledown forward. Achieving a national profile for Tumbledown. The annual cost to recruit would be £55,000.
4. **Capital costs**

Startup funding of £25,000 from WTC enabled the renovation of the Swallow Barn (Building C) for public use, electricity/water supply, asbestos survey/removal and building works, and repairs to the lower entrance way and a polytunnel. The return on investment can be measured against the income generated for fee-paying service users who will use the space to work, and assist the growing activities. (Please refer to Appendix 5). Further WTC funds were used to replace 3no. 12” gates, posts and installation. A donation of £2,000 from Transition Towns Weymouth & Portland enabled the purchase of tools/equipment. The pre-planning advice included making a packaged application to repair and replace the remaining farm outbuildings. Longer term there is an intention to create spaces with the following functions and indicative build costs, furniture and equipment would be additional. There will be an on-going requirement for grant funding to cover the capital costs, and the link between the functions and outputs of each building and their relationship with the primary outcomes of Tumbledown.

p/c sums (£)

Building A- including asbestos removal and demolition costs. 25,000

Building B- including stabilizing of roof structures to Stone Barn. 30,000

Building C- complete apart from further retainer walls + woodstove. 10,000

Building D- 2 story will require demolition and groundworks. 85,000

Road improvement, access and water H&S. 10,000

**TOTAL** **160,000**

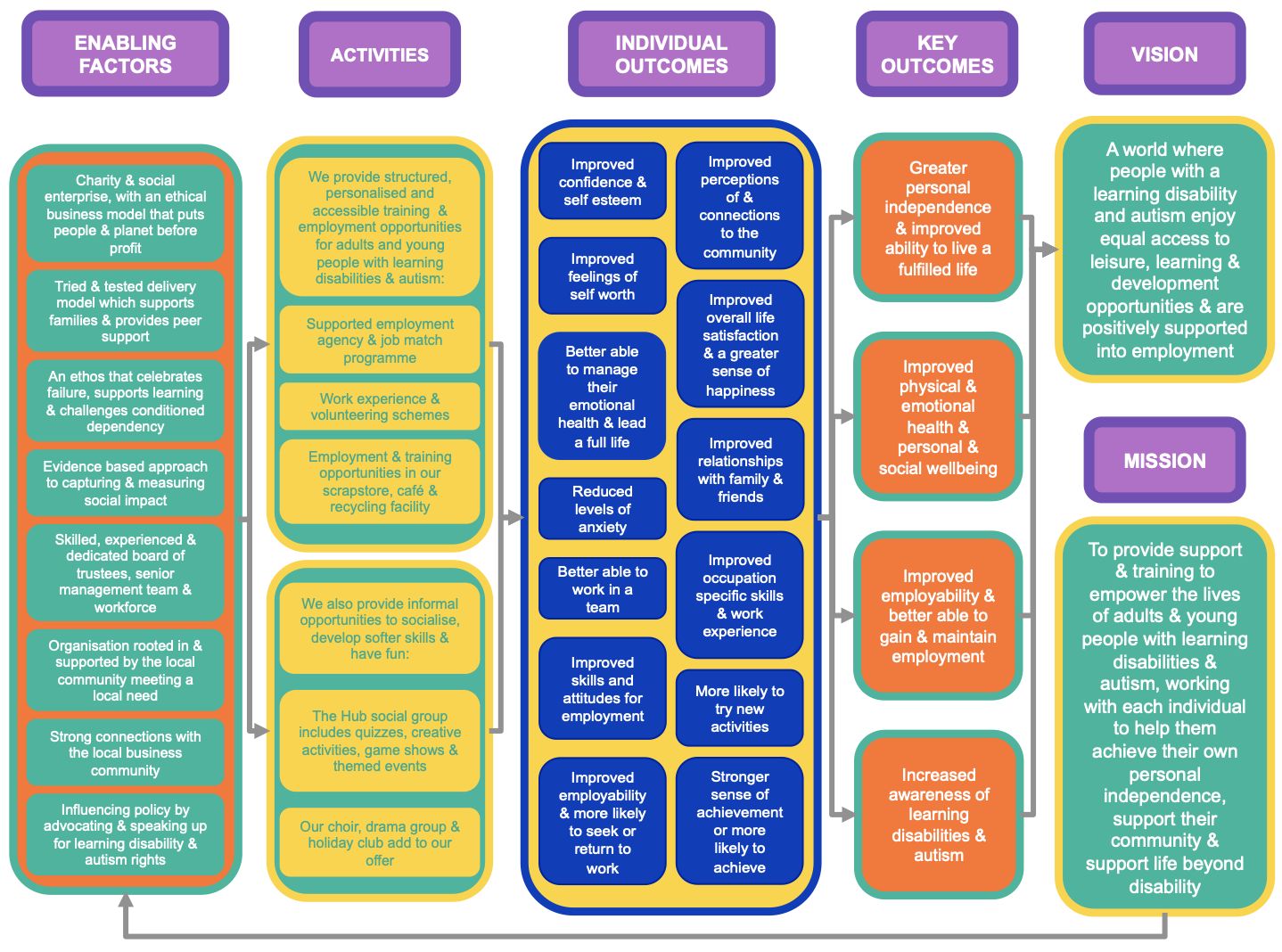
And longer term,

Building E- concept eco-design and build (Passivhaus style) 1.5m

Each building is a project in itself both in terms of design and fundraising. All new buildings will be built to the highest environmental standards, reducing both energy use and costs with renewable energy sources integral to the design, rainwater harvesting-lagoons and catchment tanks, PV solar panels and wind turbines are expensive but integral to the Capital Investment Plan and Permaculture approach (see below).

**Theory of Change**

We have developed a theory of change, that relates to adults with learning disabilities and autism that translates to other groups who we want to encourage to use Tumbledown with support. This outlines our impact change and clearly articulates the desired outcomes, how they link back to our activities and drive us forward toward our vision.



**SWOT Analysis2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
| * Dorset Council keen to be our first customer, with other key agencies to follow. * A productive growing rotation, with minimal environmental impact, centred on increasing VegBox demand and the production of food-based products, concentrating on high-value crops. * Strong governance and support from WTC and local community. * Rich natural capital- fertile soil, micro-climate, sunshine hours etc. * Social enterprise approach to business. * Unique spaces for social services with good growth potential. * High potential demand for fruit/veg linked to high tourism and hospitality services in the town. * High potential for volunteers. | * Lack of capital assets to support financial sustainability * Low level reserves to mitigate unforeseen expenditure. * Grant dependent for minimum of two years. * Limited public awareness/profile * Identifiable skills gaps. * Staffing gaps- market gardener, PDM one-year fixed term contract. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| * Significant growth potential, expanding/diverse core offer. * Increasing population of prospective customers/fee-paying service users. * Potential to develop additional income streams based on customers’ needs * Increased public awareness and support. * Growing volunteer programme. * Push for funding opportunities to address mental health, food insecurity and communing with nature, compounded by the Coronavirus restrictions/impact. * New potential funding programmes linked to supporting vulnerable people -individual service funds (ISFs), ‘green’ social prescribing, personal health budgets. * Future CCG referrals * Structural changes in local authority funding will offer more opportunities for self-funding referrals. * Increased demand for mental health services, greater food security and safe community spaces as a result of Coronavirus lockdown. | * Competition from other service providers - an open marketplace. * Potential changes inGovernment policy could impact funding arrangements. * Larger funding opportunities steered towards larger charities. * Climate changes affecting crop yields. * Coronavirus pandemic and lockdown has/ and will delay progress in the round. |

**PESTLE Analysis**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Political** | **Economic** |
| * Funding being made available centrally to support a community response to the pandemic and lockdown. * Social enterprise becoming a more popular delivery model for council services * Local authorities limited resources to cope with demand offers a case for partnership working. * Apprenticeship opportunities emerging to engage young people into training and employment routes. | * Government funding being reduced in real terms * Services for adults with learning disabilities and autism being cut. * Social enterprises are under-resourced; limited funding in social enterprise sector. * A commercial edge is a key imperative and a central pillar of success. Growing crops alone will be insufficient to break-even. * Grants/ Fundraising key requirement and person-role for medium term. |
| **Social** | **Technology** |
| * Different perceptions and expectations of priority vulnerable groups. * Managing expectations of community groups that want to access Tumbledown * Managing a site for groups with different and competing needs can be complex. * Measuring social impact to sustain funding will be key. | * Tumbledown website required with functionality to provide appropriate level of media updates, e-commerce, customer relationship management and online booking system * Keeping pace with developments in digital technology to support our work   WIFI access, access to PCs to hold and develop key data on service-users, ecology, land management and business planning. |
| **Legal** | **Environment** |
| * National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) provides legal duties to protect the SSSI. * Town & Country Planning Act (1990) for new and existing buildings development onsite. * Governance of the Tumbledown organisation places duties on the owners/ directors in terms of company, employment, health & safety, disability discrimination and equality issues. | * Observe and interact- responding to what we see and moving towards a more ethical, economical and sustainable way of life. * Catch and store energy- harnessing energy through plants, trees and natural sources like wind, sun, hydro power. * Obtaining a yield- working with nature three core ethics includes organic growing methods, producing food for the community and non-tangible yield s like happiness, health and mental well-being. * Produce no waste- reduce resources, purchase wisely, reuse and recycle, using compost and working with ethical companies in our own supply chain. * Integrate not segregate- growing responds better in diverse systems- planting polycultures of plants that work well together. * Small slow solutions and working with nature is best. Making small incremental changes are the best way to move towards sustainable change. * Make best use of all marginal spaces to creatively use and respond to changes in seasons, climate and need. |

**Risk/ Benefit summary**

**The SWOT and PESTLE analyses provide an outline of the potential risks to the project, although the benefits far outweigh them. The key driver lies in the continued momentum, increasing community engagement and raising funds necessary to deliver progress during the early years to mitigate the risks of failing to meet the financial forecasts and overcoming 2-3 years of grant dependency.**

**Marketing strategy**

The key marketing messages include:

* Inclusion and community involvement.
* Quality and freshness.
* Supporting local food producers.
* Passion for healthy living.
* Ethical and green.
* Education and knowledge.
* Reliable and professional.

Each message appeals to the products and services being promoted. A VegBox scheme customer is more likely to value price, quality and something locally sourced, whereas Dorset Council’s commissioning partners will need to be reassured we are a reliable and professional service.

There has been a strong commitment by the newly formed Weymouth Town Council. Their influence and use of existing council led communication channels are significant and will be fully deployed throughout the life of the project.

Friends of Tumbledown is a growing list of local people who have agreed to work as volunteers. A skills audit will offer insight into the range of skills and whether any marketing-linked skills exist within the group to help promote our story more widely.

How we communicate is key to reaching the widest possible audience. As well as the channels of WTC and WADT leaflets, e-newsletters and social media of WTC and WADT. Tumbledown has its own Facebook page, with over 150 followers and blogs can be used to provide interesting articles and insights. The website for Tumbledown sits within the WADT website as a project. In time this will develop its own branding identity and have its own stand-alone webpage. The search engine optimisation (SEO) has tended to move way from Google AdWords with a move towards websites with the most traffic. Blogs, e-newsletters and links to other social media posts driven from the website will help keep Tumbledown visible online across all channels.

Marketing Plan

Our objectives are to increase key incomes.

1. **Trading Income**- growing VegBox Scheme and food production, increasing fee-paying numbers.
2. **Grants/Philanthropy**- increasing the unrestricted reserves to mitigate cashflow shortfalls, particularly the initial two years.
3. **Fundraising**- specific to plans for capital and revenue costs.
4. **Community Shares**- an option with Community Benefit Societies.

Aims:

1. Build a loyal customer base for both trading incomes, linked to community-focussed marketing for our VegBox Scheme and commissioner focussed marketing for fee-payers across, Health, Social Care and Education.
   * Achieve customer response times to within 48 hours.
   * Create recipe books and menu cards for VegBoxes.
   * Send out informative blogs twice a month (email, social media).
   * Maintain a CRM database and regularly contact time for feedback.
   * Measure complaint rate and maintain to >5% of customers per week.
   * Implement a social media strategy, across all platforms, involving all Project Board members.
2. Increase customer numbers by 100% year on year, in the first three years across all income streams.
   * Attend/host three VegBox promotional events per month (markets, fairs, collection points and Tumbledown) – strategically chosen for highest target numbers of prospective customers.
   * One day per month, survey customers, providers, and lapsed customers. Build an intelligence database to inform and review the delivery model. Share results on social media.
   * Work with Public Health to determine referrals for social prescribing and Live Well Dorset ‘customers’
   * Work with Social Care and Education stakeholders to develop links, curricula, and support programmes to increase fee income.
3. Reduce reliance of grant funding by >15% of annual turnover each year.
   * Conduct annual price reviews and agree appropriate increases
   * Target high net worth individuals for regular donations
   * Review average spend per customer to achieve 10% increase pa.
   * Increase product range and network with local food producers to co-produce the local food offer.
   * Reduce bought-in goods to increase margins on sales turnover.
   * Conduct reviews of business cost base annually to support pricing strategy.
4. Retain a stable volunteer base of 50 people
   * Regular e-newsletters with references to opportunities and activities for volunteers.
   * Webinars and blogs led by volunteers to highlight their work.
   * Incentivise Volunteer of the Month benefits.
   * Friends of Tumbledown to be a forum for regular information sharing, collaboration and amplifying the Tumbledown vision.

**Operations**

Land and key assets

A site infrastructure that promotes all activities in a safe, well organised, and effective way is a key consideration for the Project development Manager. Introducing work areas, irrigation systems, storage areas, garaging of equipment and vehicles, composting, site deliveries and accessible use of buildings for people to work and rest requires an ergonomic design that fits the requirements of a permaculture design for the land.

[Permaculture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Permaculture#:~:text=Permaculture%20is%20a%20set%20of,%2C%20rewilding%2C%20and%20community%20resilience.) is based on sustainable approaches. Sustainability is built into all stages of the design and implementation process from the orientation to the sun, the selection of materials and plants to the projected maintenance requirements. Permaculture design is a cross-disciplinary field that addresses the issues of future resource availability and environmental degradation and implements solutions on a local scale, which promote resilience and simplicity.

Capital Investment Plan

Skilled staff are required to be on site regularly to achieve the Business Plan and respond to the changing demands of managing the land throughout the seasons. Raising money is key and requires someone with experience and skill to ensure capital investment occurs in a timely way to scale the site as the business grows, scaffold the infrastructure and to plan ahead, such that unrestricted reserves provide vital cashflow to mitigate unforeseeable expenditure and strengthens the financial viability of the project.

**Legal structure & Governance**

Tumbledown is a formal partnership between Weymouth Town Council and Weymouth Area Development Trust. A Memorandum of Understanding outlines the extent of the governance roles and responsibilities, with Terms of Reference underpinning the Project Board comprised of four elected Members, Deputy Town Clerk, WADT-CEO and the Project Development Manager. The Organogram (Appendix 3) shows the links to the Partnership Working Group and Friends of Tumbledown. The structure is reviewed annually. The project schedule (Gannt Chart- Appendix 4) reflects the range of key activities to achieve a strong foundation to develop Tumbledown over the next 5 years, which evolves with each review by the Project Board.



**Appendix 1**

Logo, company name

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**Weymouth Town Council Strategy 2020 - 2025**

*Creating thriving communities in Weymouth where everyone is proud to live, work, play and visit.*

Weymouth is a jewel on the Jurassic Coast within the County of Dorset. Weymouth has a range of distinct communities from picturesque villages to modern housing areas, spanning a range of environments including waterside, important natural environments and a bustling town centre. Weymouth teams a desire to modernise and innovate with an appreciation of the traditional and historic – a heritage dating back to pre-roman times, buildings dating back to medieval times, and enviable Georgian architecture.

Weymouth offers award winning beaches, parks and gardens and a busy town centre, along with the infrastructure a modern town needs including health care, recreation, libraries, shopping and transport. We recognise the significant opportunities for improvement, to support all our 52,000 residents to live a better life, and to contribute to an exciting and dynamic place to work, play and visit. We want to work with partners to bring about change to the area: to improve educational attainment, to improve economic opportunities, to provide housing and well-run services, to make the area a greener, cleaner place to be, and to make Weymouth somewhere people are proud of and inspired by.

Weymouth Town Council will:

* Improve the wellbeing of the people of Weymouth.
* Manage the Council’s assets and resources responsibly and transparently.
* Manage the Council’s services effectively to meet the needs to the communities we serve.
* Work to become greener and cleaner in our activities as well as supporting our communities and partners to be as green as possible
* Promote opportunities for economic success of the area.
* Strive for continuous improvement and service development.
* Work with partners to deliver our core values and strategy

We want to work with Dorset Council to bring a local focus to their work, support delivery and enhance local accountability.

Dorset Council’s priorities are:

* Climate and ecological emergency – work to reduce the Council’s impact on the environment and encourage others to do the same
* Economic growth - deliver sustainable economic growth, increasing productivity and the number of jobs in Dorset, creating great places to live, work and visit
* Unique environment - help to deliver sustainable development whilst protecting and enhancing Dorset’s environment
* Suitable housing - facilitate the availability of more affordable, suitable and decent housing
* Strong, healthy communities - work with residents and partners to build and maintain strong communities where people get the best start and live fulfilling lives
* Staying safe and well - work with all our residents to have a good quality of life
* Deliver a Local Plan that supports Weymouth’s aspirations whilst delivering the strategic needs of Dorset

**Understanding Weymouth**

Weymouth Town Council looks after a diverse portfolio of assets. These include:

* Greenspaces - 18 play areas, 1 country park, 7 gardens, 5 sports fields and 20 open spaces
* 4 open cemeteries and 5 closed cemeteries
* 10 allotment sites
* 10 public conveniences
* 3.5 miles of beach
* 30 properties and buildings
* Monuments, statues, clocks, and historical and civic regalia
* Over 2,000 town and Christmas lights

Weymouth Town Council has a staff team of 43 permanent staff plus seasonal staff at Weymouth Beach. We have teams aligned to all our services and assets, plus staff dedicated to events, community development, Weymouth town centre and project work. We also have a core team who ensure the Council is efficiently and legally run – this includes finance, democratic and communications staff.

The Band D equivalent precept for 2020/21 is £185.69 giving a precept income of £3,355,030. Income from services in normal years is approximately £635,000. The Council also has earmarked and general reserves it can use. This gives the Town Council a budget of around £4.07m, making it one of the largest Parish Councils in England and Wales in terms of budget managed.

Weymouth Town Council operates within a two-tier local government structure of Parish and Unitary Authority (Dorset Council). The new Unitary arrangements came into being in April 2019 and so are still very much settling down. Prior to this the Town Council didn’t exist, with local affairs being undertaken by the Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, with Dorset County Council above that.

Weymouth Town Council has already started to make positive changes and decisions to protect the environment and for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. Achievements so far are:

* Operating a safe, effective and efficient Council since 01 April 2019.
* Declaring a climate change and ecological emergency and commitment to achieve net-zero carbon activities by 2030
* Working with partners to open up the natural environment of the town to residents and visitors alike
* Building a new beach office and public toilets on the seafront in partnership with Dorset Council
* Planning the revamp of Radipole park to make it an innovative recreation area for all ages.
* Formulating proposals to improve how the council works to make it more open, participative and keeping it non political
* Working with partners to develop new green spaces for the town, including Tumbledown Farm
* Supporting over 150 events and festivals in our first year

The Weymouth Town Council strategy will be delivered via the Weymouth Town Council action plan. The action plan to support our strategy will be split into our priorities backed up by committee and project groups.



**Appendix 2**

**Table

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**Appendix 3**

**TUMBLEDOWN ORGANOGRAM.**

**Appendix 4**

Chart

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**Appendix 5**

**Graphical user interface, application, table

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**Appendix 6**

Land Management Plan