

## Food for Free

Artists Kayle Brandon and Heath Bunting have been working on project Food for Free since 2004.

The work expresses itself in several forms – performative, textual, graphic, technological, horticultural, culinary – these forms are negotiated and set in motion by a map. The map locates the wild, feral and domestic, freely accessible edible plant organisms within the public arenas of Bristol city.

This map is an articulated work-in-progress created by walking and talking, by the need to satisfy both curiosity and hunger. The artists have been walking the streets of Bristol identifying, researching, collating and eating plant findings. The discoveries are fed into a piece of homemade mapping software whose output is a cartographic hybrid of route-guide, recipe-book, botanical encyclopaedia, and survey of urban land use.

This map of distributed resources is itself a distributed resource, accessible from anywhere with internet access. Parallel to the mapping of existing free food spaces, potential planting sites are also charted. These are often sites of contested ownership, sitting uneasily between private claim and public demand. This project seeks to seed both fruitful debate and fruit in these contested plots.

The map is unusual in its design, in that it does not have street names. The viewer or user must follow the form of the roads and use the land marks provided to navigate. The landmarks are: the parks; rivers; and abandoned lots. The named things are: plants. In this sense, it is more like a 'pilgrims map' than an 'A to Z', an existential and pragmatic route map, graphically and practically determined by a particular purpose and progress, by a living route, by the playing out of ordinary and extraordinary pedestrian desires.

The project mixes modern technologies with traditional country craft methods, lo-tech improvisations with high-tech equipment. For example, it elaborates a system for drying fruit through a computer's ventilation system; and jam labels have the details of grid references, terrain and conditions in which their fruity contents were found.

Food for Free acts on factual, functional and fantastical relations. It is a report on the state of Bristol's surplus, publicly accessible nutritional resources. It is also an artefact that braids pragmatic procedure and utopian aspiration in a re-imagining of the 'Garden City'.