

Discussions from Planning Food Cities webinar

The following subjects were discussed online following the webinar presentations. Thank you to participants for sharing their knowledge & resources.

Webpages dedicated to harnessing the planning system to support community food growing <https://www.sustainweb.org/planning>

Evaluation

Impacts on dietary diversity or on food costs for the people participating in these urban gardens

A UK perspective on urban food growing and the benefits to well-being:

<http://jspp.psychopen.eu/article/view/526>

A French perspective: <http://www.cityfarmer.info/2016/12/04/aupa-project-urban-agriculture-and-food-vulnerability/>

Cost benefit analyses for community gardens

The Harvest-ometer: An online tool stores data on food harvested and then converts it into a monetary value and meal value based on weight. It also produces graphs that are perfect for motivating volunteers and pupils, engaging local stakeholders or showcasing work to funders. http://www.capitalgrowth.org/the_harvestometer

WHO report confirm that increasing or improving urban green space can deliver positive health, social and environmental outcomes for all population groups, particularly among lower socioeconomic status groups.

<http://sustainablefoodcities.org/newsevents/news/articleid/771/who-finds-multiple-benefits-of-urban-green-space-interventions>

Kindling Trust https://kindling.org.uk/Social_Prescribing

The benefits of gardening and food growing for health and wellbeing This study reviews the extensive scientific literature showing the benefits of gardening and community food growing for both physical and mental health. It presents a compelling case for action by health professionals and the NHS; local authority planners and Government planning policy specialists to create, protect and promote gardening and community food growing.

https://www.sustainweb.org/publications/the_benefits_of_gardening_and_food_growing

Growing Communities: manual of monitoring and evaluation This report details the way in which the pioneering social enterprise, Growing Communities, monitors and evaluates its work. As well as explaining the criteria they use, it also explores why they think this is an important way of helping the community food sector improve their enterprises, whilst also providing evidence of their social and environmental benefits

https://www.sustainweb.org/publications/growing_communities_manual

Birmingham is developing a Natural Capital Planning Tool to assess the impact of developments on provision of ecosystem services something into which food growing could potentially have a place <http://ceep-online.co.uk/index.php/projects-a-publications/83-ncpt>

Contamination of soils in community gardens

The Orchard Project published a factsheet . <http://www.theorchardproject.org.uk/guides-and-advice/contamination-issues>

Leeds will be publishing a study later in 2017 (<http://www.feedleeds.org/>)

Justification for Councils

what are the main levers that you've used to get Councils on board with prioritising food growing spaces?

Public health and healthy planning eg

National Planning Policy Guidance on healthy communities (England)

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Pages/Category/health>

Healthy Cities <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/urban-health/activities/healthy-cities/who-european-healthy-cities-network>

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/planning-horizons/promoting-healthy-cities/>

Council Planning and public health services working together

Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) mentions a statutory Food Growing Strategy needed for local authorities. This has been a hugely useful driving force in Aberdeen to get our high level council officers on board with embedding food growing into policy, and same as Wales in that political support has been beneficial too.

Justification for developers

How to persuade developers that food growing will improve the sites

Need to have strong community support for policies on design and provision of amenity space...developers always cite 'viability' as a reason not to create liveable places.

Plan making

Data on how much time is needed/ spend to implement Urban agriculture processes / plans in some of the cities presented?

Getting involved in the UK town and country planning system is time consuming and responses to consultation must be made within strict timescales. If a local authority is responsive and drafts policy and if organisations can present locally based evidence, the process is not such hard work. We have prepared our online toolkit to take community organisations through the steps. <https://www.sustainweb.org/planning> The Sustainable Food Cities go through their own consultation processes to produce their city-wide food strategies (see their websites).

Commercial urban agriculture

How to convince Councils to prioritise space for commercial food growing (ie 'scaling up' the model of community growing to produce surplus food to sell locally).

FarmStart offers the perfect opportunity to build up your skills and experiment with organic growing on a larger scale. It's the UK's very first farm incubator initiative! looking to make a gradual transition from community or allotment growing to commercial production

<https://kindling.org.uk/farmstart>

Report on food from the urban fringe here <http://www.localfood.org.uk/Food-from-the-Urban-Fringe.pdf>

Growing enterprise guide The Growing Enterprise Guide offers urban growers detailed advice and practical information about how to sell what you grow in the city, whether at a small scale, like farmgate sales and one-off events, or as a full-fledged business.

https://www.sustainweb.org/publications/growing_enterprise_guide/

The Ecological Land Co-operative is a social enterprise established to address the lack of affordable sites for ecological land-based livelihoods in England. They do this by purchasing agricultural land and applying for planning permission for low-impact smallholdings with temporary residences. <https://www.facebook.com/ecolandcoop>

Shared Assets support the development of new models of managing land that are sustainable and productive, create livelihoods, enhance the environment, and involve local people in making decisions about the places they care about. Currently working with three leading food growing social enterprises as they seek to secure new land and planning permissions to understand the barriers they face and the role they play in delivering local economic resilience and the development of sustainable livelihoods.

<http://www.sharedassets.org.uk/land-use/food-and-farming>

<http://www.sharedassets.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Land-based-social-enterprise-FINAL.pdf>

Organiclea: A workers' cooperative growing food on edge of London. Initiatives support people to develop their food growing skills and build confidence in community food growing also 'Farm Start' project. Enterprises include formal and informal training & practical support to local community groups. Vegetable box scheme, garden maintenance services.

<https://www.organiclea.org.uk>

Growing Communities is a community-led organisation based in London, which aims to provide a practical alternative to the current damaging food system. Urban farms, training, veg box, farmers market. <https://www.growingcommunities.org/>

Locavore is a social enterprise helps build a more sustainable local food; grow on three sites, within 10 miles of Glasgow city centre. Two of them are in urban sites.

<http://glasgowlocavore.org/>

The Kindling Trust, Greater Manchester Work is based around food (production, consumption and activism) as a vehicle for tackling social, economic and environmental problems. <https://kindling.org.uk>

Regather Trading Co-operative, Sheffield <https://www.regather.net/>

More examples of Council Food Growing policies

Torbay Local Plan (adopted Dec 2015) Policy SC4 Sustainable Food Production which encourages and requires local food growing and resists the loss of existing space.

Brecon Beacon National Park Local Planning Authority in Wales has a really good policy that allows for local food production in countryside locations that are close to settlements. Brecon Local Development Plan See Page 86 - <http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Brecon-Written-Statement.pdf>

Facilitation/skills development

Edible estates: This guide has been developed by Neighbourhoods Green, Capital Growth and Planning Aid for London to share learning and good practice from communities and social landlords who have been involved in food growing initiatives on social housing owned land. https://www.sustainweb.org/publications/edible_estates

Women's Environmental Network (WEN) was commissioned by the Public Health department at London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) to help set up 15 community gardens across the borough. The project was designed to help improve residents' wellbeing by providing increased access to healthy food and creating community cohesion by working together, with support from WEN's community garden coordinators, to develop the growing spaces.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/559d276fe4b0a65ec3938057/t/5614ebc7e4b0efde5964edec/1444211655218/gardens+for+life+report+F.pdf>

PhD thesis focused on the integration of sustainable food systems goals and initiatives in spatial planning and urban policy in the Global North, published as "[Urban Food Planning: Seeds of Transition in the Global North](#)" (Routledge, 2016).

Demographics

Data on the demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) in each of the new urban development projects in the presentation.

Data tends to be anecdotal based on the type of housing units and the perception of housing managers. It would be interesting to see if different designs of gardens suited different clientele, how influential is the availability of a garden adviser, or whether a collective model would be more sustainable than private plots. Transience of residents may also be relevant. These questions arose from the case studies and remain to be investigated. Answers could be critical to the future design of spaces in new developments.