



# Community Food Growing Strategy

Argyll and Bute Council.  
Food-Growing Strategy  
April 2020



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### Images on front cover:



Garden in Cairndow -



Rothesay School



Ann Ashton Johnson



Helensburgh Allotment –Henry Bell Street-Marina Curran-Colthart.

## Foreword

“I am pleased to introduce the Argyll and Bute Council Community Food Growing Strategy, which we have a duty to produce by April 2020 as set out in Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

“As a rural local authority with 23 inhabited islands, we have a long established culture of growing our own food, with its multitude of benefits from the availability of nutritious and affordable food to social, health and environmental benefits.

“I’m impressed with the variety and range of growing spaces we have in Argyll and Bute, including allotments, community gardens, school gardens, orchards, crofts allied with the use of vacant sites, adding life to otherwise forgotten spaces.

“As a council, we are committed to assisting individuals and community groups to achieve their goal of growing their own and have put in place a number of measures to help achieve this. “Our Community Food Growing Strategy will contribute to Scotland’s wish to become a Good Food Growing Nation by enabling those people interested in growing their own to enjoy and benefit from nutritious, healthy food.

“I am pleased to promote our culture of growing our own food through the Argyll and Bute Council Community Food Growing Strategy and to acknowledge productive growing activity while also empowering people and community groups to take up the challenge.”



Cllr. Aileen Morton – Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

## **Acknowledgements.**

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of every individual officer in the project team - Local Development Policy, Governance and Law and Communications. A special thank you to the stakeholders who completed the survey and to those who supplied photographs.



**Helensburgh Allotment Association- MCC**



## Executive Summary

This is Argyll and Bute's first Community Food Growing Strategy aimed at encouraging and empowering people to grow their own food. Argyll and Bute is a very diverse area from towns near the Glasgow conurbation to remote rural areas. It has 23 inhabited islands and is known as a crofting county with a long history of people growing their own food. As a local authority, we recognise that there are currently many different forms of community food production in the area including: orchards, community growing spaces and gardens, edible hedgerows, school growing spaces and three allotments, thus reflecting the existing diverse culture of Growing (Y) our Own.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill which was enacted on the 24th July 2015, places a duty on local authorities to take reasonable steps to protect and provide growing spaces to meet community needs. It requires local authorities to provide a food growing strategy that reflects their area and to identify potential land in our Local Development Plan which may be used for cultivation by community groups.

The Argyll and Bute Community Food Growing Strategy explains how we support current community growing provision and how we will respond to future demand and support new approaches such as community lead growing space establishment.

The Argyll and Bute Council Community Food Growing Strategy provides an insight into what the allotment and community growing provision already exists within our area. This was informed by a stakeholder engagement survey, the results of which have enabled us to capture the current status, management arrangements and interest of the community in growing their own food.

In order to address the objectives of the strategy we will encourage and empower communities to establish their community growing spaces/gardens by providing information to community groups. These groups will independently manage their respective growing spaces addressing all day-to-day issues relating to plot holders.

The strategy outlines an approach that should deliver best value for Argyll and Bute Council Area and all community groups that have an interest in growing their own.

**Vision** – Our vision is to encourage and enable people in our community who wish to grow their own food, by providing: information on potential community food growing spaces, advice and guidance.



**Helensburgh Allotment-MCC**



**Individual plot- North Argyll-MCC**

## Section 1 – Introduction, Vision, National Policy, Legislation and the Local Development Plan

### 1.0 Introduction:

This Community Food Growing Strategy covers the whole of the Argyll and Bute Council area. This area contains a number of towns but is predominantly remote rural in nature, including 23 inhabited islands. The strategy reflects this diverse area taking the varying needs and opportunities into account.

### 1.1

**Vision** – Our vision is to encourage and enable people in our community who wish to grow their own food, by providing: information on potential community food growing spaces, advice and guidance.

Argyll and Bute Council is supporting the Scottish Government’s aspiration for the country to become a Good Food Nation; a land of food and drink, not only in what we produce but also in what we buy, serve and eat. Food is one of the most important components of life and a key part of what makes the people of Scotland proud of their food is that it is tasty, nutritious, fresh and environmentally sustainable. The Community Food Growing Strategy provides a framework to help us deliver on this aim.

**1.2 National Policy:** Argyll and Bute Council embrace community food-growing in all its forms, one of which is growing food in community growing spaces and or gardens. Grow-your-own food (“GYOF”), can be in a community garden/space, school growing space, allotment or croft. All these areas can give control to our food growing community over how and what they grow; thereby increasing access to affordable, healthy and environmentally sound food; the very essence of being a Good Food Nation.

**1.3 Legislation:** The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“the Act”) aims to help empower communities across Scotland and for those wanting to GYOF, it will encourage community groups to access land for food growing purposes. Argyll and Bute Council supports all forms of community food-growing, including improving access to land for food-growing purposes and giving more people the opportunity to grow their own food. This will have a range of social and environmental benefits from health and wellbeing, social interaction, knowledge improvement and exchange allied with doing their bit for biodiversity, and will help contribute to and improve our long term food security.

**1.4 The Local Development Plan (LDP)** is a land use planning document that guides development in our towns, villages and countryside. This helps create places where we can work, live and enjoy our lives by encouraging development in sustainable locations and safeguarding environmental resources such as open space. Food Growing Strategies identify growing spaces in our communities and have important links with Local Development Plans which identify and safeguard green infrastructure, including allotments and other open space. The Argyll and Bute Community Food Growing Strategy is covered by two Local Development Plans; The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp> and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Local Development Plan: <https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/planning-guidance/>.

As part of the Community Food Growing Strategy process, we identified existing and potential community growing spaces with the assistance of stakeholders, community groups and individuals.

Through the Strategy we will help create further opportunities for people to grow their own food by:

- Encouraging developers through the planning process to include space for community gardens and food growing within new developments;
- Review our open spaces in order to present opportunities to provide community growing spaces for interested groups; and
- Empowering communities to growing their own as part of open space and public realm
- Improvements.



**Gortanvogie – Strawberries**



**1 of the raised beds and composter at Strath of Appin Primary School**



**Gortanvogie – Peas in Planters**

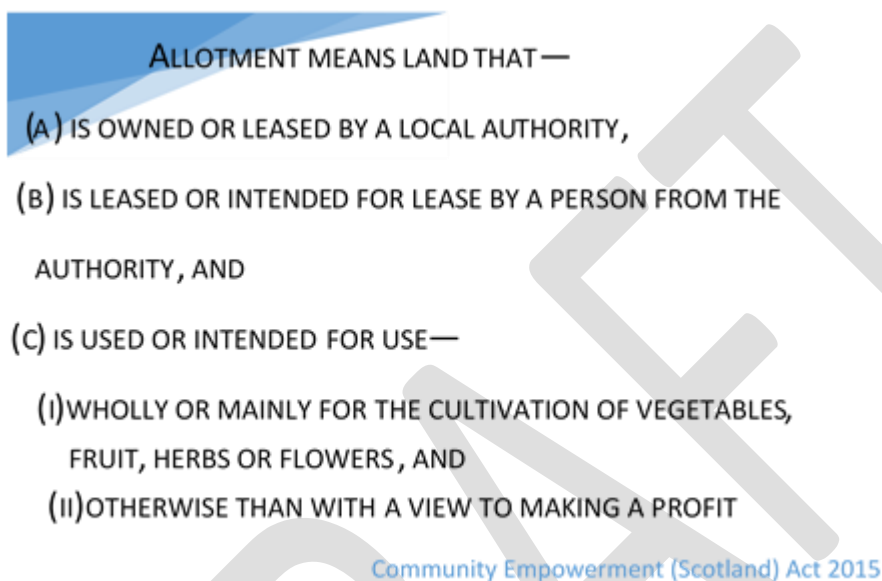


## Section 2 – Focuses on Current growing space provision within Argyll and Bute Council

### 2.0 What is an Allotment?

Many people will have differing views on the nature and description of what an allotment or growing space is and they can vary markedly from area to area as they do within Argyll and Bute. Any growing space can be defined by its own users, and none of these descriptions would be incorrect.

However for the purposes of this strategy, the definition of allotment that is required to be adopted is that set out by the Community Empowerment Act, where Allotments are defined as:



### 2.1 Community Growing gardens and Allotments:

In preparing the Argyll and Bute Community Food Growing Strategy, we consulted a variety of stakeholders and community groups that have embraced the culture of growing your own food-GYOF in its many formats and locations; the information was captured from a survey with the following results providing a summary of the variety of spaces used for growing food in our area.

#### 2.1.1 Summary of analysis:

As part of the Community Food Growing Strategy stakeholder engagement, Argyll and Bute Council carried out a survey of a variety of groups and associations. We sent 154 questionnaires in total with a response of 23 in total.

In terms of the geographical spread, all areas were well represented with a variety of growing spaces identified from school grounds to allotments and community gardens. The respondents grow a variety of vegetables, herbs, fruit and flowers. Some grow trees and have a wormery but all have a variety of composting facilities. We noted that with most people having a wide range of experience in growing their own.

Our survey also revealed that there is interest in people growing their own, highlighted by series of responses varying from interest in learning about and actively growing their own food, to health and wellbeing, biodiversity and environmental benefits.



Stakeholders were helpful with responses to further demand and identified potential Growing spaces such as areas within open space designations, derelict sites and Council, Housing Association and Government owned land.

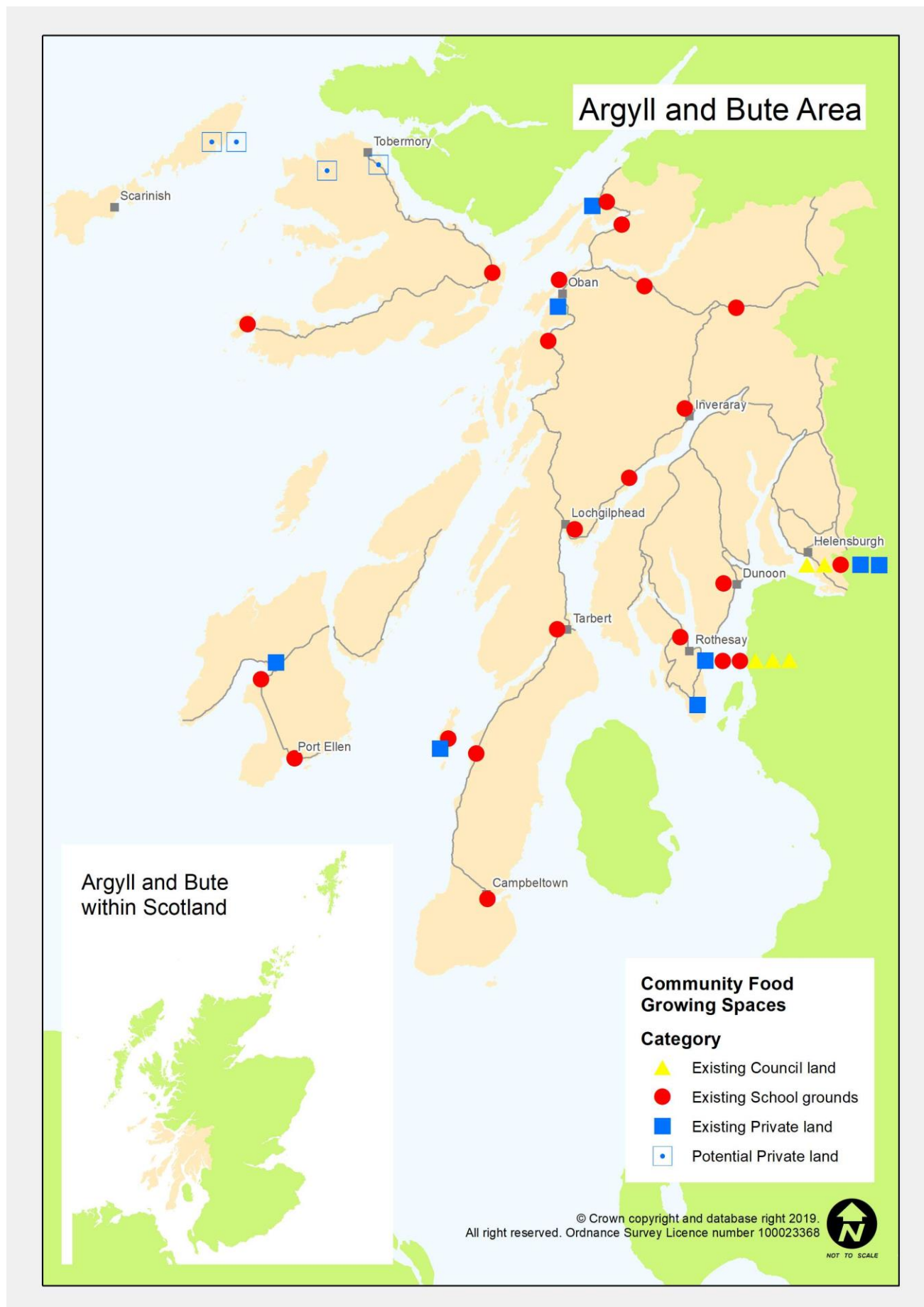
Some of the barriers identified in the survey revealed that the cost of development, lack of community resources, availability of suitable land particularly in reference to climate and soil types.

In summary stakeholders were keen to provide us with information and a steer as to the benefits and where the opportunities for additional growing spaces could be developed.



**Individual Growing Spaces- Kinlochlaich Gardens.**

2.2 Current Allotment provision in Argyll and Bute- Indicative Map.



### 2.3 Current Allotment Management Arrangements.

Argyll and Bute Council are the land owners for three well established allotments. These are managed by dedicated allotment associations. They are based in:

- 2.3.1 Helensburgh Allotment Association – Henry Bell Street, Helensburgh:** was established over 10 years ago where plots holders grow a variety of fruit, vegetables, flowers and herbs. In terms of interest there is a slow and steady turnover of plot holders.



**Helensburgh Allotment-MCC**

- 2.3.2 Bute Allotment Association, The Meadows by Barone Street, Rothesay**

The site is Community managed the Bute Allotment Association who organise the plots, rental of individual plots and waiting lists. The site is 0.28 Hectares.



**Bute Allotment Association- Rothesay**



### 2.3.3 Saint Andrews Allotment Association – Columns Hill Street, Rothesay

The allotment identifies as a community growing space and was established in 2011 with a variety of plots and the addition of a communal area. It is managed by the association. The plot holders grow a variety of vegetables, fruit, herbs, flowers and even cactus. The site also supports a pond, a wildlife area and a chicken coop. The allotment is also used by St. Andrews Primary School and Apple Tree Nursery.



**Aerial View of the St. Andrews Allotment- Rothesay.**

## Section 3.0 – Advice for Community Groups

### 3.1 Waiting List Register

Under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the council is required to keep a Waiting List Register. People can register their interest by emailing: [areagovernance@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:areagovernance@argyll-bute.gov.uk) or alternatively please call: Stuart McLean – Governance and Law on: +441436658717

### 3.2 Planning Process

The following information is only relevant to a group wanting to establish a new growing space in their area.

When choosing a site for a community growing space it is important to engage at an early stage with planning staff in either the Council <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-application-guidance> or Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority <https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/our-planning-team/contact-planning-team/> who can advise on the relevant planning requirements, consents and advise in relation to the proposed site.

Planning consent may be required for a number of reasons, including:

- Change of use,
- Proposals within a designated area, for example garden and designed landscapes, sites of special scientific interest and conservation areas; and,
- Erecting structures on the site, such as outbuildings, fencing and parking.

There may also be other land use constraints for any potential food growing site. Notably, the use or disposal of ‘common good’ land or properties can be restricted by conditions imposed by those who gifted or sold the land or property. Similarly, land titles may impose burdens as to its use. These factors will need to be considered and investigated further before permission is given to prospective users. In some cases, court action will be required in order to reach a decision regarding use or purchase land with common good titles or burdens.

### 3.3 Guidance for Community Groups-

The purpose of the Community Growing Space Guidance is to provide a framework for community groups who wish to grow their own food.

The guidance contained in Appendix B will set the scene for a community group to consider and factor in basic and aspirational elements into their site when developing their community food growing space or community garden and if appropriate, how the space can link into neighbouring green or open space.

Please go to **Appendix B** for further information.



Barcaldine Primary School.



School project- protecting the apples

### 3.3.1 List of advisory organisations:

1. Keep Scotland Beautiful Publication of new Creative Inquiry films to help groups plan and get started on food growing. <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainable-development-education/food-and-the-environment/library/>
2. Scottish Allotments and Gardens Association. <http://www.growyourownsotland.info/support-organisations/>
3. Social Farms & Gardens [admin@farmgarden.org.uk](mailto:admin@farmgarden.org.uk)
4. Community Food and Health (Scotland) or CFHS: <https://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/funding/funding-sources/>
5. As with all effective health interventions, therapeutic gardening is an evidence-based practice. <https://trellisscotland.org.uk/>
6. The Royal Horticultural Society are driven by a sheer love of plants and the belief that gardeners make the world a better place - this underpins all we do. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/scotland>
7. Allotments and Biodiversity publication with advice to encourage and retain a variety of habitat creations and associated species: <https://www.queensgateallotments.org.uk/home/bio-diversity/>
8. Funding opportunities: Access the Argyll and Bute website for further information: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/grants-and-funding>
9. Argyll College UHI: <https://www.argyll.uhi.ac.uk/courses/nc-horticulture/>



Helensburgh Allotment- MCC



## Section 4.0 – Monitoring and Review of the Argyll and Bute Community Food Growing Strategy

### 4.1 Monitor and Review:

Argyll and Bute Council will monitor and review its Community Food Growing Strategy under Section 120 of the Act. This review will be carried out within 5 years of the date of the publication of the initial food growing strategy, and every five years thereafter. If the strategy needs to be changed following a review, then Argyll and Bute Council will update and publish the revised strategy.



**Pearl-bordered Fritillary – Sheila McKenzie**



**Lochgilphead Community Growing Space- construction phase.**

## Section 5.0 – Appendices

Appendix A - Questionnaire Summary Analysis

Appendix B - Community Food Growing Guidance leaflet.

### Appendix A – Questionnaire Summary Analysis.

#### Community Growing Spaces – Summary Analysis

##### Who responded?

Who responded	
Community Councils	2
Schools	5
Local Groups	7
Public	4
Care Homes	2
Housing Association	1
Anonymous	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

##### Q. Are you a member of a local horticultural or gardening society?

Are you a member of a local horticultural or gardening society	
Yes	4
No	18
<b>1 didn't answer</b>	

##### Q1. Where is your community? E.g. Lochgilphead, Helensburgh, etc.

Where is your community	
Bute and Cowal	5
Helensburgh and Lomond	3
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	7
Oban, Lorn and the Isles	8
The National Park	1

##### Q2. Is your organisation or are you actively involved in growing plants or food in your local area? (e.g. allotment, community garden, community orchard, private garden etc)

Is your organisation or are you actively involved in growing plants or food in your local area? (eg allotment, community garden, community orchard, private garden etc)	
Yes	17
No	6

### Q3. What type(s) of growing space do you have?

What type(s) of growing space do you have?	
Private Garden(s)	9
Community Growing Space(s)	7
<b>Details of Community Growing Space(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barcaldine Primary School</li> <li>• Young Green Fingers at Rothesay Joint Campus</li> <li>• Lorn Organic Growers</li> <li>• Bute Produce</li> <li>• Lochgoilhead Park and Gardens</li> <li>• Hermitage Park Kitchen Garden</li> <li>• Helensburgh Allotments</li> <li>• St. Andrews Allotment- Rothesay</li> </ul>	
<b>6 didn't answer question</b>	

How long have you been active at this location	
Less than 1 year	2
1 – 5 years	2
6 – 10 years	1
Over 10 years	3
<b>15 didn't answer the question</b>	

What type of plot is it	
A shared plot/community growing space	3
Allotment	2
School grounds	2
Other (please describe)	1
developing a kitchen garden for use by various community groups and to support Hermitage Park	
<b>15 didn't answer the question</b>	

### Q4. Please tell us about what you grow here

What do you grow here	
Vegetables	8
Herbs	8
Fruit	8
Flowers	8
Other (please describe)	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wormeries</li> <li>• Trees</li> <li>• Chicken Coop</li> <li>• Pond</li> <li>• Wildlife area</li> </ul>	
<b>15 didn't answer the question</b>	



**Q5. How many years' experience do you have of growing?**

How many years' experience do you have of growing	
Less than 1 year	2
1 – 5 years	5
6 – 10 years	3
Over 10 years	12
<b>1 didn't answer the question</b>	

**Q6. Would you be happy to share a photograph of your growing space with us?**

Would you be happy to share a photograph of your growing space with us	
Yes	8
No	11
<b>4 didn't answer the question</b>	

**Q7. Do you know of any other community growing spaces in your local area that you are not actively involved in? E.g. Allotments, community gardens, community orchards.**

Do you know of any other community growing spaces	
Yes	11
No	9
Don't know	3

If yes, can you give us any information about this community growing space eg. Name, location etc.	
Name	Location
Local Allotment Association	Henry Bell Street, Helensburgh
Glenshellach Growers	Oban
Appin Community Development Trust	<a href="mailto:trust@appincoop.org">trust@appincoop.org</a>
Bute Produce	Bute
St Andrews Allotment Society	Bute
Bute Allotment Association	The Meadows, Rothesay, Isle of Bute, PA20 0ED
Kilchattan Bay Community Orchard	Bute
St Andrews Primary Square Foot Garden	Bute
North Bute Primary Square Foot Garden	Bute
Rothesay Primary Garden	Bute
Appletree Nursery Garden	Bute
Grow, Grow, Grow	Lochdonhead, Isle of Mull
Islay House Community Garden	Isle of Islay
Mount Stuart Trust	Bute
Dunbritton Housing Association Pot to Plot	Helensburgh
Ardardan Allotments	Ardardan Estate, Cardross, G82 5HD
Hermitage Park	Helensburgh
Geilston Gardens	Cardross

**Q8. Do you think there is demand for further growing space in your area?**

Do you think there is demand for further growing space in your area	
Yes	12
No	3
Don't know	8

**If yes can you tell us why you think this demand exists?**

If yes can you tell us why you think this demand exists	
Lack of private gardens	1
Lack of community growing spaces	8
A growing interest in horticulture	8
A growing interest in the wider benefits of growing such as relaxation, health, biodiversity	9
Other reasons (see below)	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are increasingly keen on reducing food miles and working jointly for the common good. There are the additional benefits of sharing jams, chutneys and sharing heritage recipes, there is the social aspect which benefits health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• We have a waiting list for ours</li> <li>• People are interested in growing their own food. People in flats would like a garden area.</li> <li>• We have started an Incredible Edible journey and are seeking to grow food such as fruit and herbs in place of generic municipal planting.</li> <li>• Desperate need for young families to grow their own food - we have very little access to fresh fruit and vegetables or other healthy food and as a result we have very poor health, teeth, poor mental well-being and a much higher than average number of children and adults with additional support needs.</li> <li>• No hard evidence, but I grow veg in my garden and people say they wish they could too. One of the real issues for us here is deer and rabbits eating things so there would be a need for funding for fences etc.</li> <li>• I know of a staff member who has moved house and there is very little garden - potentially if there was allotments she would have been interested in this.</li> <li>• Existing provision is not enough and require "men's sheds" provision such as in other areas.</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing, the natural NHS.</li> <li>• I think publicity about healthy foods and gardening programmes on TV have stimulated some interest, but I think the demand is fairly low in Helensburgh. Experience shows that only one or two people per year seek an allotment and some people try running a plot but find it too time consuming and give up after a couple of years. So there is a slow but steady turnover of active plot holders.</li> </ul>	
<b>10 didn't answer the question</b>	

**Do you know where this potential demand for growing space could be accommodated?**

Do you know where this potential demand for growing space could be accommodated	
Yes	7
No	4
<b>12 didn't answer the question</b>	

If Yes please tell us about the location e.g. Where it is, how big, who owns it

If yes please tell us about the location	
• Forestry Commission land	
• There are many disused and derelict sites around Rothesay, Ardbeg and Port Bannatyne that could be used	
• Fyne Homes have gifted us an area of land suitable for growing but we are without the financial or physical means to develop this site for community food growing.	
• Don't really know, but there appears to be a lot of spare land, probably owned by the estate near here.	
• In front of Kilarrow House (area office) there is a large piece of grass that could be made into a few small allotments. I think the Council owns this. Small field at the end of Beech Avenue that could be made into allotments.	
• In and around our Council owned building and the linked NHS buildings.	
• Hermitage Park, Helensburgh has more than enough space to accommodate additional plots if required. This may be enough to satisfy the low demand experienced at Helensburgh allotments as previously commented upon.	
• Also James Street, Helensburgh Playpark/Garden could support a very small number of plots.	

Is there community capacity to help set up and run a growing space?

For example groups or individuals with skills and other resources.

Is there community capacity to help set up and run a growing space	
Yes	10
No	2
Don't know	3
<b>8 didn't answer the question</b>	

If No, please can you tell us why you think there is limited or no further demand for growing space?

If No, please can you tell us why you think there is limited or no further demand for growing space?	
Private gardens available	2
Community growing spaces available	1
Limited interest in growing/gardening	
Limited gardening skills	
Lack of time	2
Growing conditions e.g. Soil, weather	
Rural area with local produce readily available	
Crofting community	1
Other reasons:	
• A small community of permanent residents.	



**Q9. What do you think the constraints are to bringing forward more growing space?**

<b>What do you think the constraints are to bringing forward more growing space?</b>	
Availability of suitable land in local area	9
Cost	14
Lack of local community resource (skills/time)	11
Weather/climate	1
Quality of local soils	1
Lack of interest	3
Other	12

**What other constraints do you think there are?**

- **Time** As a school there are a lot of pressures and deadlines to be met. I am keen to do some gardening in particular some vegetables with the children but when July comes along we are on holiday for 6 weeks and often things need regular watering especially if in poly tunnel.
- **Bureaucracy** - The council used to have gardeners, but a lot of these have been released from employment by the council
- **Time** - we have a lot of other things to fit into the day in school.
- **Time / transport** - we are a very spread out community - so if you sited one community space at one end, say, it would be hard for others to get to without quite a lot of effort. The land next to the village hall is privately owned but that would be a possible solution as it at least is where community / gatherings are currently located and people are used to travelling there as a "hub".
- **Expertise** to set up the area and accessible help to keep things going.
- **Capacity** needs to be grown and supported with practical help and small amounts of budget. Things like groups being sent tax bills when they take over land and also Scottish Water need to be addressed.
- **access to materials and physical machinery** to clear land, build beds, reseed and cultivate, planting materials and support for watering etc. we have no funding and also would need a bit of support for folks that find it hard to access social or physical activities but really want/need to grow their own food.
- **Deer and rabbits.**
- **organisation of the work** needed
- I think asking the community whether they would be interested in an allotment would be the way to go.
- **Political and lack of vision**
- **The main constraints** are people having the time and interest in developing and maintaining growing spaces. After a year or two the novelty of growing vegetables etc wears off many of those who think they would like to try growing things. Those who benefit most are retired individuals who have already developed some interest in horticulture and now have more time on their hands.

Left Blank.

**Q10. What do you think are the most important benefits a “growing space” can bring to the community?**

(Please choose as many as you think are important and rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important, 2 the next most important etc.)

What do you think are the most important benefits a “growing space” can bring to the community?														
Health – improved diet	Health - exercise	Health - mental well being	Environment - biodiversity, bees and pollination	Environment - green networks	Environment - reduce food waste, reduce transport (climate change)	Education – learning about the environment and food	Economy - development of soft and technical skills	Economy - potential associated grant and funding regimes	Economy - savings from growing your own	Economy - potential links with local enterprise	Community - sense of community, reduce isolation	Community - volunteering opportunities	Community - sharing life skills, youth engagement	Other - please tell us what
3	2	1	11	4	10	5	6	7	9	8	12	13	14	
		3	5		2	1	4							
3	5				1	7	4				2		6	
		3			1	2					4			
2	3	4							1					
4	5	2	3	12	11	1	9	7	8	6	14	13	10	
3	9	8	4		1	2			5		6		7	
	4	1	2								3			
8	7	1			4	3	9		5		2		10	
1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	
2	3	4	1	5										
10	9	8	2	3	1	5	4		7		11	12	6	
1	3	2	4	14	13	9	12	8	6	7	5	11	10	just getting fresh food on the table for your family and being able to provide that if you are unemployed and living in a rural
1	9	6	12	11	5	3	10	13	4	8	2	9	7	
8	3	2	6	7	10	4	12	13	11	5	1	14	9	
1	3	5	4		2	8			6				7	
1	1	1	1	3	3	1	5	5	3	5	2	2	1	
5	4	1	3						6				2	
1	2	3	4	5	7	6	8	9	11	12	10	13	14	
2	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	1	
11	10	2	8	9	7	6	5	14	13	12	1	4	3	
4	1	2	3	5					7		6			
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	All equally important.

**Q11. Is there anything further you would like to add in relation to community food growing in your area?**

Is there anything further you would like to add in relation to community food growing in your area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be better integration across council departments, for example in planning there should be questions about what space there is for community growing when new developments are planned e.g. community orchards. When there are environmental developments like paths, there should be edible hedging, fruit trees planned as part of the development.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit Bute Produce and the incredible edible Bute work for a unique model that focusses on inclusion, food, and employability</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need help, finance, opportunity - we have been gifted land for food growing but need assistance and finance to make this space ready for planting and accessible for everyone that wants to grow.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our school is working in partnership with the community group Grow, Grow, Grow.</li> <li>• We have a school garden and polytunnel and members of Grow, Grow, Grow come into school to work with the pupils and teach them about planting and harvesting. We allow them to also use the polytunnel out of school hours to grow their own vegetables.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There used to be a 'horticultural' group here but it folded - I think it became too serious? Need to keep things practical. A recent gardener's question-time event held by the church was well-attended so I think there is a lot of interest. Apart from people's own gardens there is nothing on the island to encourage this and the provision of allotments would be a great benefit.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islay community garden has children visit from the schools to help, volunteers and they employ young people who go on to do other jobs after this.</li> <li>• Here at Gortanvogie we have raised planters, where we grow vegetables and have patio fruit trees so that the residents who wish to be involved in growing these, picking them and preparing for use. This is our Grow for it project.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to all age groups and abilities</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not repeatable as targeting other group in their area as being a waste of funding and time.</li> </ul>	

**Q12. As a customer, are you happy with the way we have presented this survey and is there any way we could have provided a better service?**

As a customer, are you happy with the way we have presented this survey	
Yes	21
No	1
<b>1 didn't answer the question</b>	

Is there any way we could have provided a better service?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The question asking to put things in order was a bit tricky. Perhaps this could be condensed or put in a way that only the top three are selected or similar.</li> <li>• I'm not really sure if it was meant for a school to reply to ??? but it came to my inbox and I try and complete surveys when I can. I had thought it was enquiring if the school had land which could be used in an emergency situation to grow food until I completed the questionnaire.</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B – Community Food Growing Guidance leaflet.



### Community Food Growing Space Guidance



#### Introduction:

The purpose of the Community Growing Space Guidance is to provide a framework for community groups who wish to grow their own food.

The following information will set the scene for a community group to consider and factor in basic and aspirational elements into their site when developing their community food growing space or community garden and how if appropriate how the space can link into neighbouring green or open space.

In terms of involving local people, the community food growing space must be functional, attractive, accessible and meaningful in order to give them a sense of pride of place and ownership.

In terms of finding land:

<https://sc.communitylandadvice.org.uk/en/sc/homehttps://sc.communitylandadvice.org.uk/en/resource/finding-land-site-features-checklist>.



Example of Community run allotment.





## How can Community food growing spaces contribute to green spaces<sup>1</sup>?

- Biodiversity – space and habitat for wildlife with access to nature for people;
- Amenity – places for outdoor relaxation and recreational activities;
- Climate change adaptation sustainable management of green spaces;
- Environmental education;
- Improved health and well-being – lowering stress levels and providing opportunities for exercise;
- Local character – the special qualities of an area;
- Education, Skills and Enterprise;
- Inequalities.

## Our Growing Community



www.greenspacescotland.org.uk



## What are the multitude of benefits of People growing their own food?

Working in a community garden can give you a sense of belonging and provide a platform for social interaction. The benefits of community gardens include:

- Knowledge sharing,
- Social activity – meet and working with local people and developing friendships,
- Physical outdoor activity in a pleasant environment,
- Participation and communication,
- Activities that foster self-help,
- Nutritional health,

<sup>1</sup> Green space is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features.

- Supportive environments that promote social inclusion (for example, for frail, older people, people with disabilities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds),
- Reducing your carbon footprint,
- Complimenting your food chain and experiencing the joy and satisfaction of harvesting produce from the garden.



### Steps to Setting up a Community Food Growing Space Group:

1. **Gauge interest-** in the local community by engaging with a range of age groups, either individually or via existing clubs/groups.
2. **Establish a group-** here is a general framework: management team, constitution, bank account, community growing space rules<sup>2</sup>, membership, funding, resources etc.
3. **Funding:** Access the Argyll and Bute website for further information: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/grants-and-funding>
4. **Finding a growing space-** contact the local authority at your earliest convenience: re. Unused land owned by councils or social housing providers, reclaiming disused land and or an allotment.
5. **Factors to consider when choosing a site-** take account of practical issues such as:
  - (i) Site based within easy reach of the community,
  - (ii) Access to water,
  - (iii) Electricity- not essential but worth checking out.
  - (iv) Space for a shed or storage,
  - (v) Access and security
  - (vi) Length of lease - how long will you be able to use the land for  
If you intend to apply for grants, funders will often want you to have a land/lease agreement for a minimum of five years.
6. **Legal aspects:**
  - (i) **Leases-** In implementing a scheme for devolved management, it is important to ensure that the community organisation taking on responsibility has an appropriate and democratic constitution
  - (ii) **Public Liability** – The lease should also include a requirement for the association to take out an appropriate scheme of insurance to indemnify the local authority and protect the association, its volunteers and its members as well as third parties on site – with or without permission. Some insurers offer policies specific to the needs of allotment sites and associations; again, representative bodies can offer advice.

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<sup>2</sup> Community Growing Space Plotholder Management Obligations (Rules)  
<https://dtascommunityownership.org.uk/sites/default/files/Scotland%20Community%20Garden%20Starter%20OPack.pdf>

**(iii) Equal opportunities** – Community Growing Spaces should operate within the spirit of equal opportunities and are rented out on a first-come first-served basis, without preferential treatment.

Your age, gender, race, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or health are not a barrier to you renting a plot.

7. **Plan your garden**, the headings below will assist the group in planning their community food growing space.
8. **Factor in Biosecurity**- which is defined as a set of preventive measures designed to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases in crops and livestock, quarantined pests, invasive alien species, and living modified organisms (Koblentz, 2010). On page 7 is an example of a poster suitable for your growing space.



### **What Community Groups need to consider when designing their new community growing spaces?**

**Planning Permission**- seek guidance from the local authority.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/pre-application>

#### **Planning consent will be required for:**

Change of use of land, for example from open space to allotment;

- Any works within a Conservation Area; and
- Structures on site, including:
- Outbuildings and sheds on each individual plot;
- Communal buildings;
- Fencing; and
- Parking facilities.

A detailed design of new sites involves striking the right balance between the preferences of new plot holders and the interests of the broader public. It should also incorporate and sound environmental practices which should include biodiversity benefits.



### **Factors to Consider:**



**Access**- gated and lockable, car parking (restricted mobility, and to enable deliveries of manure and other essentials, parking for bikes.



**Infrastructure and facilities:** Note not all components will be required when setting up a growing space site; the list will provide the group with identifying priorities: paths- wide enough to accommodate a variety of users, flexible layout, variable height beds, adjacent to conventional plots, water, communal shed and or tunnel with rainfall collection facility as not all plots will be able to accommodate individual shed.



Where sheds, greenhouses and polytunnels are not supplied but are permitted, there should be clear design and/or supplier guidelines to ensure the overall quality of the construction on site and to enhance the external view.

The need to provide toilets will depend on whether alternative facilities are already accessible in the vicinity; where there are none, then the most environmentally friendly alternative is recommended such as a composting toilet



**Perimeter Fence:** (palisade) with mixed hedging in for shelter and provide a habitat.



**The Layout:** should meet the needs of the users with a variety of plot sizes: starter to more advanced- this can include raised beds. There are a number of ways of cultivating the plots themselves that achieve maximum environmental gain alongside the production of a rich crop of fruit and vegetables should be given positive support. For example, a section of the site may be reserved for use by organic growers. For other ways that plot holders on new (and existing) sites can be encouraged to reduce their environmental impact by adopting green gardening practices.



**Plots:** will vary in size and all must be demarcated and numbered.



**Composting and Waste disposal:** there should also be a policy, though the details (and associated infrastructure) will depend in part on site conditions (e.g. is there an otherwise unusable space that could be used for communal composting?).



**Integrating Biodiversity into your Community Food Growing Space:** as an important community facility your growing space can provide a valuable habitat for many native plants and animals, especially in more built up areas where green space may be limited. The variety of food growing in the cultivated plots, compost heaps, grass areas, sheds and boundary plantings of trees and hedgerows can attract a variety of birds, invertebrates and mammals.



**Example of a variety of food and flowers in a raised bed.**

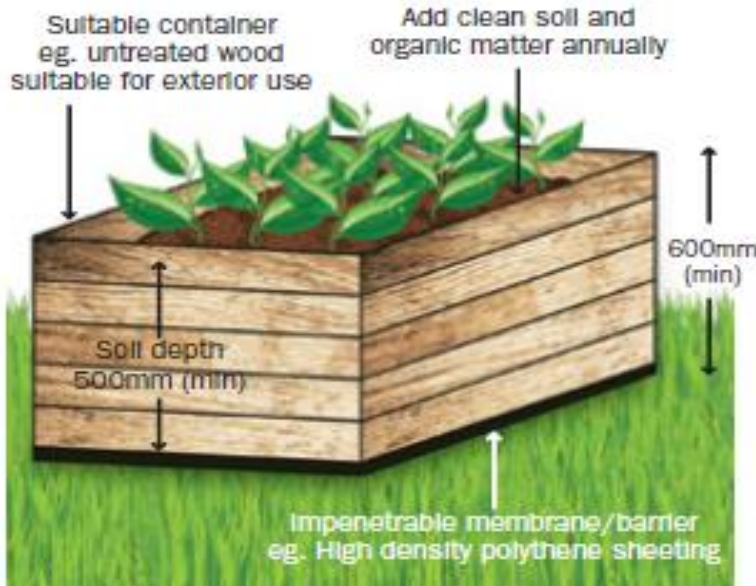




**Guide for Growing on Contaminated Land: the guidance is very useful.**

<http://www.growyourownsotland.info/wp-content/uploads/images/Guide-for-growing-on-contaminated-land.pdf>

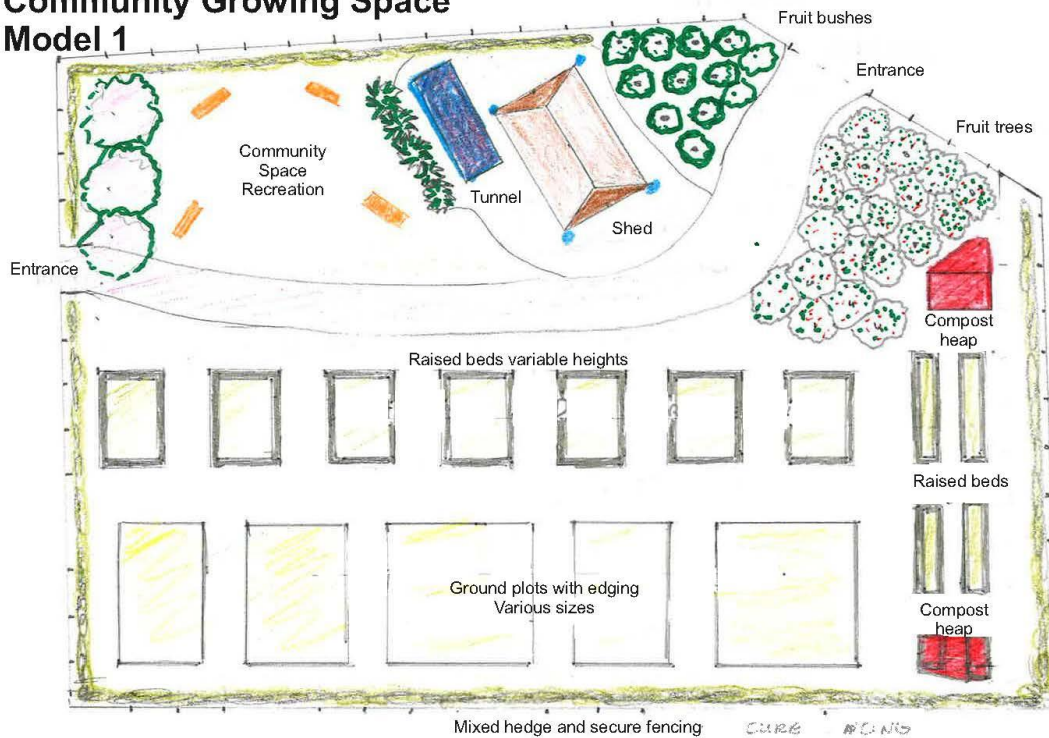
**Diagram of a “perfect” raised bed**



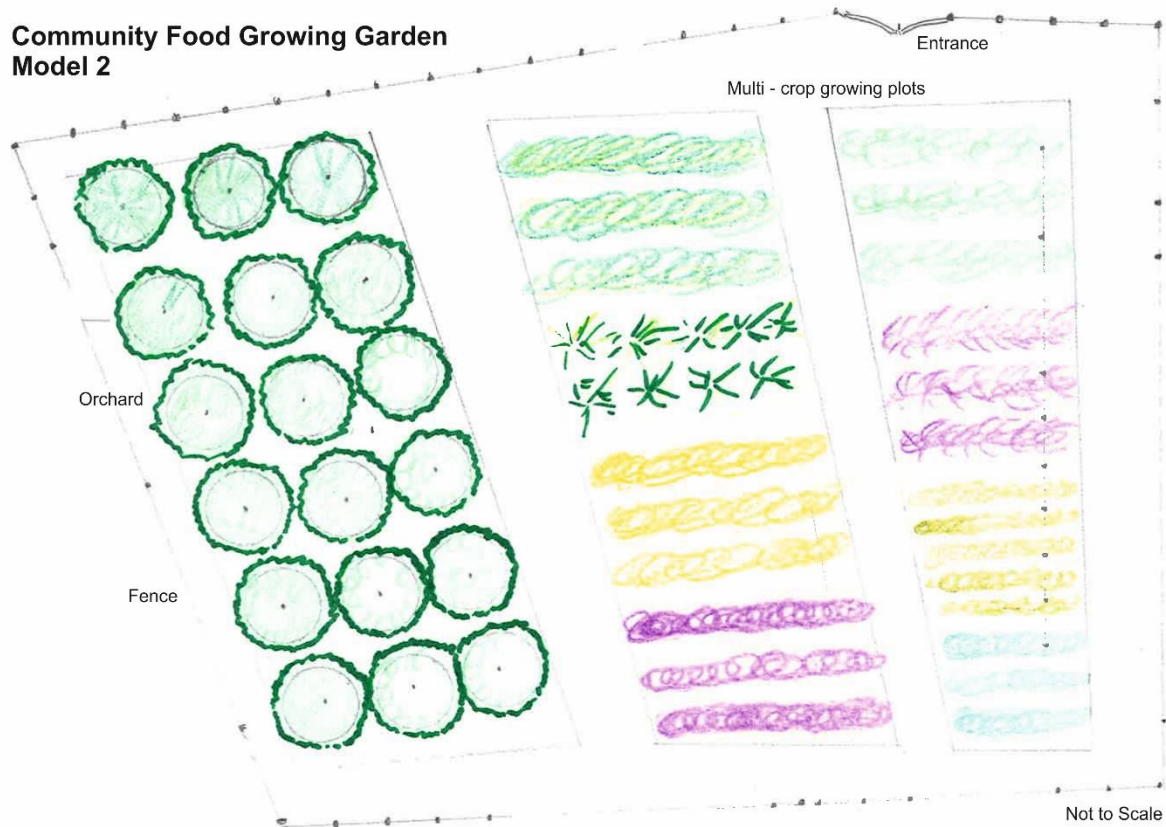
**Examples of Community Food Growing Space Sites-**

**Model 1-** with a variety of amenities/facilities and **Model 2-** community garden.

**Community Growing Space Model 1**



## Community Food Growing Garden Model 2



Biosecurity for your Community Growing Space – an example:

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Gmq-CgAAQBAJ&pg=PA249&lpg=PA249&dq=national+trust+biosecurity+turning+over+a+clean+leaf&source=bl&ots=6eaf0-VG8N&sig=ACfU3U1OyOla4og1-jeK1ShNiFTRBOSVRw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwix1-u-8-vjAhVUa8AKHQjeBqEQ6AEwAHoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=national%20trust%20biosecurity%20turning%20over%20a%20clean%20leaf&f=false>

## How to protect your garden from pest and disease invaders

**1 Plants coming in:** this is the way that most pests and disease-spreading pathogens enter a garden!

**What can you do?**

- Use reputable suppliers who have been 'checked out'
- Source locally if possible
- Avoid cheap imports and semi-mature specimen trees from abroad

**2 Plants on arrival** need careful inspection. **Remember to:**

- Check paperwork for compliance with purchase order form and plant passport if needed (eg EC Plant Passport UK/EW 12345)
- Only accept delivery if you are sure that the plants are healthy

**3 Quarantine areas** should be isolated from the main garden and the public.

**What more can you do?**

- Restrict access to the area
- Be scrupulous about hygiene
- Use dedicated tools
- Hold new arrivals for 2-6 weeks and monitor frequently

**4 Day-to-day hygiene:** many pests and pathogens are carried on boots!

**It's important to:**

- Wash all soil and plant material from footwear, and disinfect them
- Clean and disinfect tools and machinery

**5 Basic path maintenance** can help too.

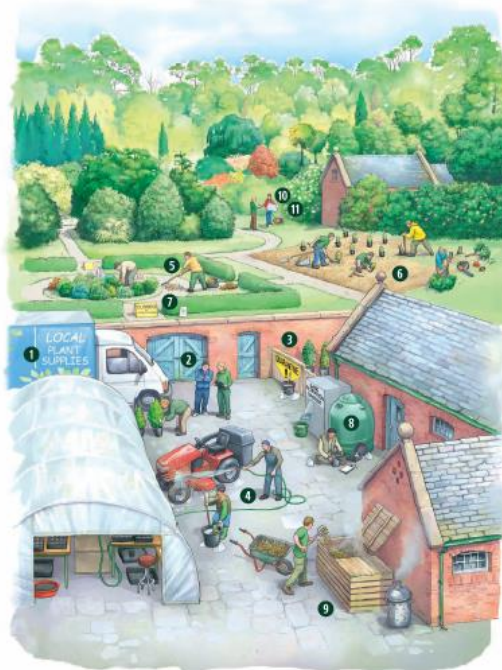
**How?**

- Surfacing and levelling avoids puddles
- Cleaning and clearing removes leaves and plant debris that can harbour pests and pathogens

**6 Good plant husbandry** also matters.

**What can you do?**

- Use the right plant in the right place
- Mulch when planting perennial ornamentals to prevent soil splashing onto foliage
- Use spacers to help ventilation and reduce humidity
- Manage plants to encourage vigorous, healthy growth
- Prevent plants such as *Rhododendron ponticum* from choking the garden



**7 Clear information** helps keep visitors informed and aware.

**Why put up a notice?**

- To inform visitors of serious outbreaks
- To restrict access to ground under repair
- To suggest responsible behaviour eg clean shoes, not taking cuttings, keeping to paths, dogs on leads etc

**8 Irrigation water** should be clean and free from plant pathogens.

**How can you ensure this?**

- When using recycled water, eg collected off roofs, try to clean it before use (sand filtration works well)
- Cover water tanks to prevent leaves blowing in
- Regularly test water to check for pathogens

**9 Organic waste** can harbour pests and pathogens.

**What should be done with it?**

- All dead plants, prunings, fallen leaves etc should be collected and disposed of safely
- Composting is the best way, as it kills most pests and pathogens
- Or you could collect waste in a covered skip for removal to an approved landfill site
- Small amounts can be burnt where they lie

**10 Plant collections** know what you've got.

**What can you do?**

- Make a record of the plants in the garden
- Develop a management plan to conserve important plants
- Propagate important plants through the Plant Conservation Programme

**11 Regular monitoring** of the health of your plants lets you spot problems early and take prompt remedial action.

**What can you do?**

- Familiarise yourselves with the main pests and diseases of plants in your garden
- Get problems identified
- Report all suspicious symptoms to your Garden Adviser
- Notify suspect findings of quarantine pest and diseases to Plant Health authorities

DRAFT