Natural Environment Officer (Growing Spaces) Report

October 2022

Introduction

Thank you for welcoming this report to the Glasgow Allotment Forum (GAF) AGM. It provides a timely opportunity for the Food Growing Team at Glasgow City Council to provide some highlights from the last year or so of delivery of the aims of the Food Growing Strategy (FGS).

Considering how these highlights have been delivered against the challenging backdrop as the world emerged from Covid restrictions to be faced with volatile market forces, the team of dedicated officers at Neighbourhood, Regeneration and Sustainability, are delighted to provide this update.

Since the adoption of the FGS and associated Action Plan at committee in June 2021, the Food Growing Team have successfully delivered the following increase and growing spaces and the launch of the Let's Grow Together Fund

- Bellahouston Demonstration Garden – Welcomed Police Scotland Youth Volunteers to their plot on site
- Welcomed the African Growers Group to a plot on site.
- Supported Lloyds Bank Corporate Volunteer day to reskin a polytunnel and provide a training opportunity for local Friends of Groups and our Countryside Ranger Services. New footpaths were installed, fruit tree pruning workshops delivered A video highlighting the day's activity can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cf2xtA8fqk4
- Growchapel Community Allotment Gardens – Launched in October 2021, Growchapel has gone from strength to strength in its first year. The site is 6,000m^2 and provides just under 40 new growing spaces for individuals, families and organisations active within the G15 post code areas. The site has developed in response to anti-social behaviour within the area on an underutilised piece of Open Space between Halgreen Avenue and Abbotshall Avenue. A video highlighting the development of the site in its first 145 days can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAuBDRR4kl8
- Mansewood Allotments – An additional 22 plots and accessible raised beds were delivered as an extension to the existing Mansewood Allotments. This was complimented by the delivery of an on-site orchard with plans to support underplanting to develop the orchard as a food

forest. An area of footpath had an accessible ramp installed to improve accessibility for plotholders.

- Croftburn Allotments – The development of 14 introductory sized plots to provide opportunities for new growers to learn about growing without committing to a full size plot which can be overwhelming for inexperienced growers.
- Let's Grow Together Fund – launched in Sept 22 the fund will provide £50k annually to support the development of growing spaces across Glasgow. Further information on this can be found here: https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29654

We trust these developments offer a glimpse of the work delivered already by the Food Growing Team as we strive to deliver the action plan associated with the Food Growing Strategy

Food Growing Strategy Development & Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

Glasgow City Council, with its stakeholders, has produced a Food Growing Strategy and associated action plan to encourage and support current growers and inspire non-growers to consider growing food locally. Further information on the Food Growing Strategy can be found here: https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=23744

Information provided to this service, subsequent to previous FGS engagement events, has suggested that demand for food growing space has grown substantially over the past 2 years, reflecting the 'Better Outside' approach to taking social and physical activity outdoors as COVID restrictions eased, as well as the food insecurity issues many will have experienced, as a result both of socio-economic disadvantage as well as potential changes to supply chains as the ongoing cost of living crisis and Brexit become understood.

Officers will continue to liaise with Glasgow Community Food Network, and Food Pantries within Glasgow, to understand how actions taken within the Food Growing Strategy can contribute to the City Food Plan Theme 1: Fair Food for All.

The Glasgow Food Growing Strategy (FGS) contains sixteen, high level actions so that the city delivers more growing spaces and supports more growers. These actions are listed in the table below - it should be noted they are not in order of priority.

Action Number
1 To increase the number of plots on existing allotment sites
2 To develop new allotment sites
3 To engage with the planning process with regard to new growing sites within new developments
4 To engage with Housing Associations to encourage the development of more growing sites
5 To develop and maintain an online map of both existing and potential growing sites
6 To review current procedures for accessing GCC potential growing sites
7 Signposting to resources for getting community support for a new growing project and/or for capacity building advice for new growing group(s)
8 To signpost to funding support resources
9 To consider introducing a “Let’s Grow Together” fund to assist new growing projects
10 To signpost to growing advice resources
11 To develop and issue a “Let’s Grow Together” growing guide
12 To develop, maintain and enhance the Glasgow Food Growing Strategy webpage
13 To initiate a GCC officers internal Food Growing Group
14 To initiate a Food Growing Strategy Mentoring Group involving citywide stakeholders
15 To produce an Annual Allotments and Food Growing Report
16 To monitor and assess progress within SIMD areas

Glasgow Food Growing Strategy - Action Plan

Key developments are summarised below under the following four broad headings along with their associated specific actions:

- Increase Growing Spaces
- Increase and improve sources of information
- Support greater networking and information sharing
- Support policy and process improvements

Increase in Growing Spaces

In its 2021/22 budget, GCC made a one-off allocation of £200,000 to Food Growing advising that the budget allocation was aimed at: 'Investment to support delivery of the city's Food Growing Strategy (FGS), lowering emissions and increasing access to healthy, nutritional, local food, including in schools.'

Officers have started to draw in match funding and engage with stakeholders to:

• Create an additional 259 growing plots across the city

Outlined in more detail
https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDNDXUTZ381NT

• Draw in match funding of £218,750 via ENV2 contributions

• Overall potential funding package: £418,570

• Have a new growing or expanded allotment project in each Ward

Actions 1, 2, 13 and 16 all support increasing the number of growing spaces in Glasgow. Project timescales will reflect the characteristics of each site and the communities wishing to grow there. To offer some indication of timelines from inception to occupying the site at Growchapel took 30 months. Reflecting on statutory obligations under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 our approach was to focus on "shovel ready" projects in the first year of delivering the FGS Action Plan. This approach provided the opportunity to deliver several projects reaching key milestones.

These include the following:

• 22 additional plots at Mansewood Allotments, improved accessibility and development of an accessible growing space and an orchard bringing an additional 1,800m^2 (0.18 hectares (ha)) into productive use.

• Delivery of an additional 14 entry level plots at Croftburn Allotments bringing an additional 370m^2 (0.037ha) into productive use.

• The delivery of an additional 36 plots, event space, outdoor education space, scented sitooterie, polytunnel, wildflower/biodiversity area and an orchard at the 6,000m^2 (0.6ha) Growchapel site in Drumchapel.

• The development of the 2,244m^2 (0.22ha) Sighthill allotments which will provide an additional 20 plots when populated in early 2023.

• The relocation/expansion of Greyfriars Garden and the development of Grow 21 site in Ruchazie will also add a further 5,780m^2 (0.58ha) land into productive use and are currently programmed within the procurement calendar. Greyfriars Garden contract is currently being reviewed with a contractor to be appointed in the next few weeks. A contract for Ruchazie is currently under development for taking to the market to identify a contractor.

• Social enterprise leasing the 22,000m^2 (2.2ha) former plant nursery in Bellahouston Park

• New growing spaces being developed at the former changing rooms in Queens Park Recreation Ground 4,600m^2 (0.46ha).

We are supporting Food and Climate Action activators based in St Paul's Youth Forum to expand and develop an existing growing space utilising land within the Education Estate. This offers a model for co-location within growing spaces by both the schools and wider growing community with benefits including activity being be programmed year-round as well as inter-generational learning on this 16,000m^2 (1.6 hectare) site.

In general, we have prioritised projects where land has been available with consideration of communities of socio-economic disadvantage.

Increase and improving sources of information

Actions 5, 7, 8, 10 and 11 will all enhance the information available to aspiring growers or communities wishing to identify potential growing spaces in their area. The webpage includes digital mapping of such potential growing sites but will also include advice on how to access permission to develop the site, find funding and where to get help to start growing:

https://glasgowgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=d277ea6d8d7c4e07b4fbed01ff05a3f0

Recent actions include the following:

• Approximately 170 sites nominated at the FGS engagement events have been mapped so far. Further assessment of the sites will provide details on what sort of growing they may be suitable for.

• A Growing handbook to assist new growers has been developed with the support of the allotment community and is available on the website.

Launched in February 2019 in conjunction with the RHS and 'Learning for Sustainability', the Glasgow's Growing Schools Project recommenced in February 2022 after covid restrictions were lifted, with the first sessions delivered in May. The project provides a series of four thematic CPD twilight sessions for Educational Staff delivered by the RHS to provide the basic skills to set up growing projects within schools and contribute to the Curriculum for Excellence. 32 schools citywide have participated in the 2 sessions so far with 2 further sessions planned for Spring Summer 2023.

Support Greater Networking and Information Sharing

Actions 3, 4, 12 and 15 all recognise that increasing the number of growing spaces in the city will be best accomplished with the support and input from within the Council family, public organisations, community groups and key stakeholders from the existing growing community.

As such the following actions been initiated:

• GCC Officers Food Growing group held its inaugural meeting on 7th June 2021, with quarterly meetings thereafter. This will deliver a collaborative approach to Food Growing across the various properties managed by the Glasgow Family.

• The Housing Associations Forum held its inaugural meeting on 15th June 2021 with quarterly meetings thereafter. This allows Housing Associations to share with us their aspirations for Food Growing and encourage Housing Associations to support the development of additional Growing Spaces across their land holdings.

• The Glasgow Community Food Growers Forum held its inaugural meeting on 28th June 2021 with quarterly meetings thereafter. Officers presented details of the 'Let's Grow Together' fund at the second meeting of this forum. This fund is intended to support growers Citywide through knowledge exchange, mutual support, sharing of best practice and potential opportunities amongst other matters key to the delivery of more growing spaces. Through a participatory budgeting approach, the group will administer the Let's Grow

Together Fund. The group will also provide a platform for all growers Citywide to participate on a collaborative basis in governance, production and delivery.

The fund is currently open for applications from interested parties across the City with funds available of between £500 to £5k up to a value of £50k. Further information on this can be found here: https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29654

We also continue to have representation at the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership and Glasgow Community Food Network working groups as we seek to increase food growing opportunities across the City and support the Community Food Theme of the City Food Plan.

We also remain an integral part of the Tripartite Group comprising of Local Authority Officers, Scottish Allotments and Garden Society representatives and Scottish Government Officers to support the development of Food Growing Strategies and implementation of Part 9 of the Community Empowerment Scotland (2015) Act.

Local Housing, Government and Housing Committee Report

Further to the call for evidence from the above Scottish Government Committee, officers from Glasgow City Council provided comment to committee in June 2022. The agreed report can be viewed at the following link: Allotments and community growing: the impact of Part 9 of the Community Empowerment Act (azureedge.net)

Allotment Rules and Regulations Engagement

As we seek to meet our statutory obligations in line with Part 9 Allotments of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the Food Growing Team at Glasgow City Council are looking to engage with existing Allotment Associations on land owned or leased by Glasgow City Council for the purpose of providing allotments, to seek their input into the revision of the existing GCC Allotment Rules and Regulations document (1959). Our aim is to develop documents that are reflective of the needs of associations, ensuring they are more applicable for food growing in the 21st Century.

These documents will be influenced by recent policy commitments such as the GCC Climate Plan and by recognising the importance of different growing techniques such as permaculture / no till approaches and ensuring a robust transparent set of documents to support the governance of allotment sites.

We are planning to undertake a series of 3 public engagement events to discuss the Allotment Rules and Regulations and devolved site management. We would like all Allotment Associations to be represented at these discussions where possible, as we are keen that everyone who wishes to contribute has their voice heard.

As we are seeking to maximise association participation, we have arranged an engagement event for each of the City sectors (north, north east and south). There is no burden on you to attend all 3 events, just attend at a date/location that suits you best.

Each day will run as two sessions 11am -1pm and 2-4pm, with a break for lunch. The morning theme will be rules and regulations and the afternoon theme will be devolved management.

The preliminary dates and venues are as follows (note: venues are still to be confirmed)

Saturday 19th November at the Kats Centre, Sighthill

Saturday 26th November - tbc (Glasgow Life)

Saturday 3rd December - Kinning Park Complex

We would ask that you make a note of these dates in your diaries now as more specific details on these events with details on how to register for a session will be forwarded soon.

Community Wellbeing

Many of the additional benefits arising from delivery of the FGS Action Plan are difficult to quantify, however, these can be evidenced qualitatively. Recent examples include:

SACRO – Bellahouston

SACRO, have employed an Educational Gardener based in Bellahouston Demonstration Garden, complementing the Educational Gardener working at their plot in Tollcross Park Allotments as part of the wider Garden Project SACRO delivered in collaboration with Glasgow City Council. An additional project worker will provide practical and emotional support to participants across the two sites. The project aims to teach some of the most marginalised members of the community gardening skills, to encourage improved self-esteem, wellbeing and employability skills and address food poverty through the cultivation of organic produce. An informative video on Sacro's work can be found at the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46e5NuwChNE&t=83s

Growchapel

The development of the Growchapel site has supported focus group work that provides growers with the opportunity to tell us what the site means to them and what benefits they feel from being involved in the space. In addition, Children's Neighbourhood Scotland are working on site with young people who find the non-traditional educational setting to be of immense benefit and working with our colleagues in GCCNHS NW Health Improvement Team, a memorial tree planting ceremony took place on site in December 2020 as part of the White Ribbon project seeking an end to violence against women and equality for all. Growchapel were also one of 8 community projects in Glasgow to be awarded one of the Queen's Green Canopy Jubilee Trees which will be planted on site this month and was recognised by Glasgow Allotment Forum's (GAF) New Plotholder Award which was awarded to plot 12 at Growchapel with the presentation being delivered on site in October 2022

We are aiming to replicate growing spaces with these holistic aims in the North East of the City to ensure each sector of the City has such a resource where citizens of this City sector can access these benefits too.

Support GCC internal policy and processes

Actions 6, 9 and 14 relate to matters that GCC will take forward to assist potential growers meet their ambition to develop a growing site. We will

provide information on how groups can access land and, in some cases, provide starter funding.

In support of the ambition to provide starter funding the following actions have been carried out:

Details of a Let's Grow Together Funding have been brought forward and shared via the Food Growing Strategy webpage. Informed by the participatory budgeting process undertaken for the Wee Green Grants, a call for bids has been issued by Glasgow Community Food Growers Forum, inviting existing and aspiring growing groups across the city to submit proposals for capital projects which:

• Support delivery of the city's Food Growing Strategy.

• Create new growing spaces or plots.

• Include a proportion of accessible growing space, and

• Enable growing groups to play a more active role the management of their new sites by becoming constituted and via community asset transfer and the People Make Glasgow Communities process.

It is intended that a sum of £50,000 per year for 5 years from 2021/22 onwards is made available, from existing approvals, to build on this approach.

A sum of £115,000 is currently available citywide in support of food growing projects on vacant and derelict land. It is envisaged that this funding will be allocated to preliminary works by NRS which remove barriers to community food growing on such sites, such as the need for clearance works, soil analysis and other works required to ensure sites are "shovel ready"

A strategic sectoral allocation approach will be developed by officers, in line with City Development Plan guidelines, for use of £253,677 of developer contributions, and as informed by the sites which communities have identified as potential growing spaces in their area via a number of sources including the online mapping portal, Area Partnerships or local community groups. It is likely that some projects may receive funding from more than one of these sources, and from additional sources external to Glasgow City Council such as National Lottery.

Future Reports

The Community Empowerment 2015 (Scotland) Act requires each local authority to prepare and publish an annual allotments report for its area. The information set out within this report will be presented to the Scottish Government for consideration.

Further to this requirement, GCC officers participating in the Tripartite Group comprising of Local Authority Officers, Scottish Government Good Food Nation Officers and Officers of Scottish Allotment and Gardens Society are aware that 14 Local Authorities have currently published Food Growing Strategies with 18 other Local Authorities still to complete and publish a Food Growing Strategy for their area.

The Tripartite Group are currently developing a forum for Local Authority officers to share experience of developing and delivering FGS's to encourage and support all Local Authorities in achieving their requirement to publish and FGS for their area. GCC will deliver their Annual Allotment Report to the Scottish Government upon completion of this work with the Tripartite Group.

A number of allotment associations within Glasgow report that waiting lists have increased in line with wider interest in outdoor activity and food during the pandemic, with work underway by officers to gather in and process this information citywide. In light of our statutory duty to take reasonable steps to provide sufficient allotments to keep the waiting list at no more than half of the authority's current number of allotments, it is envisaged that future reports will provide further information in relation to waiting lists, and in relation to the resources associated with these steps.

The support of GAF in encouraging associations citywide to share such information is welcome.

Current/Future Projects

As we work towards delivery of the Action plan, the following is a list of projects either currently under development or include in the Action Plan to be delivered within the timeframes of the current FGS 2020-2025:

The following are projects which will increase growing provision at existing sites or will create new opportunities for growing in each ward. Please note that the number of growing spaces identified is expected to develop as part of

usual project processes including site assessment and community/grower engagement.

Ward 1 – Linn Allocation (with ENV2): £16,254 Growing spaces: 12 Explore options to for additional growing spaces created at Kings Park in partnership with the local Gardening Club.

Ward 2 – Newlands/ Auldburn Allocation (with ENV2): £9,515 Growing spaces: 22 Explore options to for further works to improve Mansewood Allotments or alternatively contribution to proposed new growing project in Maxwell Park.

Ward 3 - Greater Pollok Allocation (with ENV2): £54,729 Growing spaces: 10 New Growing Space at Househill Park in partnership with Swamp.

Ward 4 - Cardonald Allocation (with ENV2): £12,739 Growing spaces: 10 Examine options for food growing at Rosshall Park in partnership with Friends of Rosshall Park. Other proposals are being sought as feedback has identified a lack of desire for a growing space in Rosshall Park

Ward 5 – Govan Allocation (with ENV2): £19,32912 Growing spaces: TBC Work with Health Improvement Team and partners to develop growing site at Elder Park. Links to local community projects and City Mission enquiries to vacant depot site.

Ward 6 – Pollokshields Allocation (with ENV2): £10,861 Growing spaces: 20Options being explored with site at Mossview Quadrant currently being reviewed for suitability

Ward 7 – Langside Allocation (with ENV2): £10,809 Growing spaces: 10 Explore options for additional growing space in partnership with South Seeds and/or Urban Roots.

Ward 8 - Southside Central Allocation (with ENV2): £13,915 Growing spaces: 6 Explore options to bring forward proposals for raised bed growing in partnership with Govanhill Baths Trust.

Ward 9 - Calton Allocation (with ENV2): £17,088 Growing spaces: 10 Explore options to create new growing space at Bridgeton Community Learning Campus

Ward 10 - Anderston City/Yorkhill Allocation (with ENV2): £14,327 Growing spaces: 4 Create additional growing spaces at Yorkhill Centurion Allotments 12

Ward 11 - Hillhead Allocation (with ENV2): £9,378 Growing spaces: 10 Explore options to work in partnership to with Queens Cross HA to create new food growing opportunities in the area

Ward 12 - Victoria Park Allocation (with ENV2): £9,837 Growing spaces: TBC Explore options to for expansion of growing spaces at Beechwood Allotments

Ward 13 Garscadden/Scotstounhill Allocation (with ENV2): £11,427 Growing spaces: 8 Expansion of Yoker Allotments

Ward 14- Drumchapel/Anniesland Allocation (with ENV2): £15,008 Growing spaces: 20 Contribution to Growchapel Phase 2

Ward 15 Maryhill Allocation (with ENV2): £25,726 Growing spaces: 10 - Explore options to for enabling works in support of food growing as part of Maryhill TRA or Friends of Maryhill Park

Ward 16 - Canal Allocation (with ENV2): £27,761 Growing spaces: 6 - Explore options to for expansion of Hamiltonhill Allotments

Ward 17 -Springburn/Robroyston Allocation (with ENV2): £13,830 Growing spaces: 10 - Explore options to for contribution to new growing space being delivered by St Paul's Youth Forum.

Ward 18 East Centre Allocation (with ENV2): £47,585 Growing spaces: 20 Explore options to for new Growing Space at Greenfield Park on former Bowling Green.

Ward 19 Shettleston Allocation (with ENV2): £11,048 Growing spaces: 10 Explore options for additional growing space to be made available at Westhorn Allotments

Ward 20 -Baillieston Allocation (with ENV2): £10,279 Growing spaces: 3 Additional growing space at Baillieston Demo Garden

Ward 21 North East Allocation (with ENV2): £44,922 Growing spaces: 20 Explore options to for new growing space in Ruchazie in partnership with the Pantry.

Ward 22 Dennistoun Allocation (with ENV2): £7,345 Growing spaces: 6 - Explore options to expand provision at Petershill Allotments 13

Ward 23 Partick East/Kelvindale Allocation (with ENV2): £2,853 Growing spaces: 4 Explore options to create growing spaces/opportunities at Glasgow Botanic Gardens in partnership with FoGBG.

Please note that the number of growing spaces identified is expected to develop as part of usual project processes including site assessment and community/grower engagement.

Beyond the Action Plan

As we seek to increase delivery of growing spaces across the City, we have been working with colleagues in Parks Development and at Local Area partnerships to ensure consideration of Food Growing is included in the Parks and Open Space Investment fund spends. So far this has led to the delivery of an additional food forest format at Elderslie St/William St in Anderston in conjunction with the Friends of Anderson Greenspaces and The Ark as part of a two-phase approach to increasing growing spaces in that ward. The 2nd phase of this project has a contract currently under development to be scheduled in our procurement calendar which will provide 10 additional growing spaces at Elderslie St.

We have also been working in conjunction with SIMY to increase food growing spaces at Lister St Bowls which SIMY have under lease from Glasgow City Council. 7 fruit trees have already been planted here and discussions are on-going with SIMY to increase growing spaces at the site for use by the local community.

We are also working with colleagues and stakeholders to review the agricultural landholdings in Glasgow as we seek to increase opportunities for Market Garden/peri urban farms based on regenerative agricultural practices to lessen food miles and carbon footprints associated with food supply chains in Glasgow. 4 sites are currently in scope and further information will be made available as these discussions and reviews progress.

Please remember the Food Growing Team can be contacted by email at: glasgowfoodgrowing@glasgow.gov.uk