

13.1 Workplaces growing together

Improvement Project Title: Workplaces Growing Together
Executive Sponsor (Chair of Outcome Improvement Group): Jillian Evans
Project Lead: Steven Shaw, Environmental Manager
Aim statement Aim: Increase community food growing in schools, communities and workplaces by 2021 Much good work is already taking place with regards to advancing food growing in schools and communities. This particular project aims to focus attention on workplaces which are harder to reach. Measure: Baseline 2019/20 = 0 (as far as we know, there are no organised or systematic efforts for food growing in the workplace therefore we have no data available). Target 2021 = 6
Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan: Improvement Project is direct product of: <u>Prosperous Place</u> Stretch Outcome 13 No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026 Key driver 13.2 Developing and supporting community efforts in making our green space productive and resilient. Improvement Project Aim Increase community food growing in schools, communities and workplaces by 2021. Improvement Project has links with: <u>Prosperous People</u> Stretch Outcome 11 Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 (Resilient, Included, Supported Group) Key driver 11.3 Increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions
Why is it important Extract from LOIP Refresh 2019. <i>“The population needs assessment shows wide divisions in health and life expectancy between the richest and the poorest communities in our City. People living just a few streets apart in some areas of Aberdeen find themselves with life expectancies more</i>

than 14 years apart, we have committed to address this through a stretch outcome to increase the healthy life expectancy for the people of Aberdeen. A families ability to nourish themselves is a key factor in healthy life expectancy and it is alarming that 8% of respondents in our last City Voice survey reported that there was a time during the last 12 months when they were worried they would not have enough food to eat, with 3% reporting that their household had run out of food at some time over the last year. Helping people affected by household food insecurity is therefore a key focus for the Partnership. We hope to be able to see a future improvement in the data as a result of initiatives being put in place now; such as free school meals during holidays in our priority localities and supporting communities to grow their own food.

To support our ambitions, we will harness the capabilities of our communities and develop and support efforts to make our green spaces more productive. Our focus will include educational support for gardening, cooking and trading and working to improve food resilience while promoting a holistic approach to health and well-being.”

Much good work is already taking place with regards to advancing food growing in schools and communities. Across the city many communities, Friends groups and gardening groups are making use of Aberdeen’s plentiful green space to create their own growing spaces. Schools are now more involved in community growing than ever before through project Craster. This is a project developed by Aberdeen City Council’s Environmental Services which is aimed at getting primary school children outdoors and growing vegetables. The project is only in year one but already has 34 primary schools across the city taking part, ranging from nursery to p7s.

This project seeks to build on the previous School Gardening Improvement Project by linking the outputs / outcomes from those schools with new workplaces. The benefits of food growing in workplaces are similar to growing food in other locations but it also has the potential to deliver additional and wider benefits that the other places may not (these are listed later in this section).

Therefore, this project aims to focus attention specifically on workplaces where in addition to the well-being benefits for those involved, it will help to change attitudes towards food growing. Our use of workplace ambassadors or ‘Food Champions’ will create positive role models for communities and schools, helping to get broader sustainability measures across, such as reducing food waste and recycling.

As well as discrete testing of food growing in workplaces, one of the changes will be to link workplace growing with a community and schools. The Northfield locality wishes to engage with this and have identified the land in which to do so.

The changes we test within this charter will provide useful intelligence and complement the work of the Sustainable Food City Partnership and inform Aberdeen’s Food Growing Strategy. <https://www.cfine.org/granite-city-good-food> Granite City Growing; a food growing strategy for Aberdeen 2019-2024

Therefore our business case involves testing (catalysing, facilitating and measuring success of) the development & implementation of **different** food growing initiatives at the workplaces of six new and unique project partners by end 2020/21.

General benefits of food growing:

- Improved health & well-being¹
- Improved access to affordable healthy food²
- Developing skills and confidence around food, nutrition, cooking, health, gardening etc.³

Benefits of growing in the workplace:

- Potential to improve air quality in / around workplaces
- Improved relationships in the workplace – increased interaction and breakdown silos
- Improved productivity in workplace – happy, interactive people are productive people
- Improved workplace reputation and staff retention⁴
- Circular economy potential at workplaces – use of produce in workplace kitchens
- Circular economy potential between workplaces – use of produce between different workplaces, i.e. being part of a wider local food supply network (perhaps something to build on as initiatives ‘grow’.)
- Building / strengthening connections between workplaces and schools / communities

1. https://www.sustainweb.org/resources/files/reports/GH_Stress_Factsheet.pdf
2. <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/case-studies/tullibody-community-garden>
3. <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/learning-exchange-scotland>
4. <http://fortune.com/2011/04/11/gardening-at-work-is-sprouting-up-all-over/>

Measures: (How will we know if a change is an improvement?)

- 1) Number of new food growing places (in LOIP)
- 2) Number of organisations with participating workplaces (subset of LOIP measure)
- 3) Number of staff participating per place (subset of LOIP measure)
- 4) Numbers and types of other participants, i.e. children, community via Northfield locality (LOIP)
- 5) Amount (weight / value) of produce per place (LOIP)
- 6) Improvement in staff well-being as a result of being involved in food growing in their workplaces (before & after survey on a range of indicators – see benefits)

Change ideas (What can we do that will result in improvement?)

- To what extent would a high profile awareness event encourage an increase of food growing in workplaces?
- To what extent could children from food growing schools influence workplace leaders and increase food growing in workplaces?
- To what extent could a visible food champion raise awareness and change thinking about wider sustainability issues in communities and schools?
- To what extent do different ‘models’ of workplace growing achieve the wider benefits for staff and organisations and best overcome the barriers (e.g. windowsill planting to workplace allotments)?

Potential Barriers:

- Getting the timing right for launch event – term time / aligned with / avoiding conflict with other related activities / events, i.e. ACHSCP HIF food event / Britain in Bloom, etc.
- Promoting the event to secure the right mix of attendees
- Securing attendance / participation of schools / children in the process
- Getting workplace / staff engagement and commitment at specific sites
- Building / facilities management arrangement at specific sites
- Aligning the aims and contributions of different project partner
- Human resource commitment to develop / implement / monitor the project
- Getting the right skills in place to support projects
- Funding for site specific projects
- Identifying / getting buy in from a suitable Champion

Project Team:

- Steven Shaw, Environmental Manager, ACC
- Sinclair Laing, Team Leader – Environmental Policy, ACC
- Sandy Gustar, Sustainable Development Officer, ACC
- Joanne Riach, NHSG
- Jenny Gordon, ACHSCP
- Amanda Gauld, ACHSCP (Health Improvement)
- ACC Facilities Management, Andy Campbell
- Facilities Management, NHSG (TBC)
- Schools / children (TBC) to support / attend event / link to workplace growers
- Food Champion (TBC)
- CFINE – Links to SFCPA & potential food skills, networks, etc.
- Dr Stephen Close NHS, Improvement Support

Outline Project Plan

Project Stage	Actions	Timescale
Getting Started (Project Score 1-3)	Form the project team and prepare for event in Sept. This is timed specifically to coincide with wider sustainability activities, aiming to address the potential barriers (described earlier). Most of the actions at this stage are geared towards minimising the risk of low participation and engagement.	September 2019
	Develop list of existing practices in schools, communities and workplaces (from Aberdeen and beyond, if beneficial examples elsewhere – tie into Health Improvement Fund & other projects)	September 2019
	Include a range of potential workplace partners (e.g. ACC, NHSG, ASV, UoA / RGU, Bon Accord Care) – ensuring some degree of success of sign up before the event.	September 2019

	Involve children from school growing projects in planning the event who will challenge attending workplace leaders to implement food growing in their workplaces in some format or other.	September 2019
Designing and Testing Changes (Project Score 4-7)	<p>Undertake a high-profile awareness raising event in September 2019 to promote the benefits of food growing in the workplace and encourage sign up.</p> <p>Get support from chamber of commerce and other commercial businesses to begin ongoing and wider promotion of workplace growing, and raise the benefits of circular economy</p> <p>Link up with Aberdeen Inspired to tap into their links with city centre businesses as well as the City Bees project (part of the Community Food Growing Project).</p> <p>Link with ACH&SCP, Aberdeen Sports Village, NHSG in their current promotions of the benefits of food / growing, etc. (potential link up of events)</p> <p>Identify 'Food Champions' (from any sector but someone able to speak for the benefits and really engage audiences, especially those traditionally harder to reach) to help promote this work and sustainability in general</p> <p>Link with Northfield locality team and community to develop shared project with workplaces</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p>
Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement (Project Score 7-10)	<p>Implement 6 different food growing projects in 6 different workplaces</p> <p>Monitor each journey, and their outcomes in terms of benefits & barriers identified.</p>	<p>Spring 2020</p> <p>Spring 2020 through full growing season 2021</p>
Spreading Changes (Project Score 9-10)	<p>Continued promotion of project. Encourage others to take part and talk up their success.</p> <p>Celebrate the continued success of all partners and the increase in community food growing in schools, communities and workplaces.</p>	<p>Summer 2021</p> <p>Summer 2021</p>