



Greening Communities Programme

Seeds for Growth charity

Supporting social housing tenants to create and enjoy their own community gardens.



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Seeds for Growth charity

Greening Communities programme

Seeds for Growth, a charity registered in 2006, is committed to working with, and alongside communities to enhance their health and wellbeing.

Initially established in the East End, our operations have expanded to many London communities. We are now poised to extend our social housing estate garden projects throughout the United Kingdom.

Greening Communities identify and transforms underused spaces in social housing estates. We enthuse and support residents to establish tenant-led committees to facilitate the creation of shared garden spaces. We train and empower tenants to launch, and to then maintain their own communal gardens. We plan to inaugurate 600 community gardens across the UK every year.

The community gardens foster social engagement, offer a secure play area for children, encourage interactions among neighbours, and provide a venue for growing a variety of plants, including ornamentals, fruits, and vegetables.

Planting more greenery and increasing green spaces reduces the negative impact of climate change. The health, social, and ecological benefits of engaging in outdoor activities and physical exercise are evidenced in this report.







Amwell Court, N7

In November 2022, two workshops were conducted for residents and members of the local community garden group at Amwell Court. Residents expressed enthusiasm for creating new growing spaces behind the housing block, running parallel to the canal.



We created garden beds by utilising the existing brick supports of the iron fencing. We completed the work by collaborating with construction companies to supply the necessary materials and undertake the work at no cost.

The planters were constructed with generous support and material donations from IG Construction and Bourne Amenities.

This development was met with excitement from residents, who were eager to commence planting.



Volunteers from the Royal London Asset Management Group assisted in filling all 13 planters that were created.

We hosted a community event for residents to celebrate their new garden.

A Whatsapp group was created and is used by the resident gardeners.

We have also provided 'How to run a community garden' sessions. The residents' collaboration has been very strong.







Barkantine Estate

The Barkantine is a large social housing estate, including three high rise blocks, in Millwall, Isle of Dogs, Tower Hamlets. The estate opened in 1968 and provides homes for over 2,000 people.

At the centre of the estate is the Quarterdeck, a pedestrianised, uncovered promenade and park which includes a Masjid for the Muslim community, a primary school, shops, and a pub. On the edge of the estate is a health centre, church, community centre and nursery.

A community growing club was launched to provide tenants and residents with the confidence and skills to grow their own food and herbs.

Volunteers from the Modulaire Group company supported us in creating a new community growing bed.



Barkantine Estate community gardens



Alexander
Community Garden

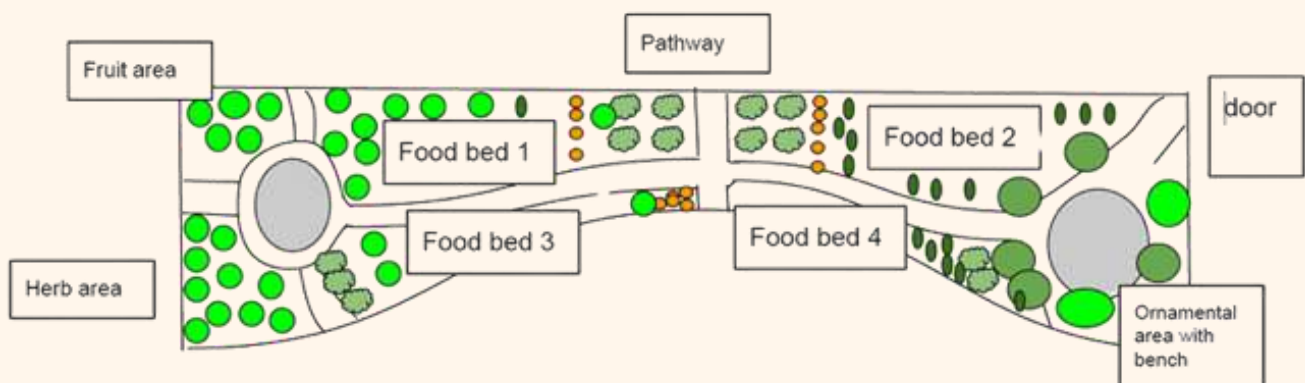


Spinnaker Community
Garden



The Old Surgery new
garden bed for herbs and
shrubs

New food growing beds on the Quarterdeck



Launch of Barkantine Orchard

We organised a charity event for the community in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Archana Begum our local MP launched the new Queens Jubilee orchard.



Seven Mills Primary School

We delivered a lively successful 90 minute 'How does your Garden Grow' workshop at Seven Mills Primary School. The session included pupils decorating their own pots and planting bulbs – with a prize to be awarded to the most successful grower!



Bridge House Estate

Bridge House is a new housing development without suitable space for residents to grow plants. However, many residents have spacious balconies for growing food and flowers.

We inspired some residents to start a growing group and organised community day events for the prospective gardeners. 30 residents registered to join the Bridge House Green Balcony program.

Greening Communities provided and distributed Balcony Growing Kits to residents during the Bridge House community event.

Greening Communities returned to the estate to provide ongoing encouragement and we distributed many free chili plants. Residents were also given Mushroom/Micro Salad Growing Kits.

We have collected feedback on the balcony kits and discussed future projects with the newly formed Tenants and Residents Association.





Gascoyne Estate, E9

Three raised beds, along with the ground between them, were identified to support increased resident engagement. One resident was tending to all three beds, and the Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) aimed to expand the project to involve the wider community on this large estate.

We organised weekly lunch sessions followed by growing workshops on Wednesday afternoons.

Greening Communities provided six growing sessions at two community events. The initial two sessions were with a small group of children, some of whom did not live on the estate, followed by sessions with members of the pensioners' luncheon group.

A group of women began to show interest in the growing activities. Most sessions were conducted inside the hall because the planters, situated on a mound, were not accessible to many attendees with mobility issues.

However, due to limited resident participation and accessibility issues with the planters, Hackney Council decided to temporarily discontinue the project at Gascoyne Estate.

Hassette and Balance Road Estate, E9

We visited the site, and a small gardening group was initiated by a few households residing between Hassette and Ballance Roads on Gascoyne Estate. They trimmed back shrubbery near residents' front doors that created "dark, hiding spots" and established a wildflower meadow in planters to deter anti-social behavior.

The group connected with more residents along the walkway and provided opportunities for them to use planters outside their homes to grow herbs and more wildflowers.

Resident consultation flyers with QR codes were designed and distributed to all residents along the walkway, allowing them to register interest, gather information about the growing project, and meet the current group.



Headway East, E2

Headway East is an organisation that provides services to brain injury survivors, their families, and carers. This organisation includes a day service, neurological therapies, community support, and casework.

Headway East sought the assistance of Greening Communities in collaboration with them to enhance their outdoor space into a more inviting area for members and staff to relax and enjoy.

Support has been provided with fundraising and two seed sowing sessions have been provided in their gardens.

The charity will offer to develop conceptual design plans and a garden design consultation with the organisation and its members.



Hills Court, N7

We met with residents who requested training and advice on maintaining their garden sites, caring for fruit trees, and managing the compost pile.

The lead, who had been responsible for upkeep and organisation of the growing space for many years, found these tasks tiresome and wanted to rekindle her passion for gardening and growing.

A pruning training and practical workshop were conducted by both growing organisers.

Twelve people participated, and many fruit trees were pruned by the attendees under the supervision and guidance of the growing organisers.

The maintenance team addressed identified issues with growing beds, and all necessary seeds, plants and tools were purchased. The group is functioning well, and the space is being utilised effectively.

Greening Communities promoted and delivered a range of workshops for the resident group to support their collective journey in gardening.





Kyverdale Estate, N16

A weekend garden design session was held for residents to plan and design a communal garden. The residents aimed to create a low-maintenance garden featuring herbs and vegetables to mitigate the impact of climate change.



We suggested planting hedgerows along the street-side fence line. A suitable site for a children's garden was identified based on their request. A broader consultation was planned with tenants, and a conceptual garden design plan was drafted and agreed to by everyone.

The planters were constructed and installed. Residents established a WhatsApp group which includes most of the gardeners. Soil was obtained from Hackney Council and volunteers from Good Gym assisted in filling and topping up the planters, while Modulair Group corporate volunteers provided support to cut out space for wildflowers. Three gardening sessions were conducted for residents.



Herbs, onions, late-season lettuce, kale, strawberries, peas, and broad bean seeds have been grown. Five English Heritage Rose bushes and two seasonally interesting shrubs were planted.



A meeting was held to update residents on storage shed and water tank placement, as residents were exploring ways to harvest water in compliance with council regulations. Two further training sessions were conducted on-site covering "Introduction to Growing in Raised Beds" and "What, Where, and When". Residents have formed a group and are close to finalising their constitution with the resident engagement team at Hackney Council.

The residents plan to plant more herbaceous perennial plants and bulbs, and sow wildflowers under the windows and balconies of ground-floor residents. Residents will be invited to discuss their preferences for planting with Greening Communities.





Landfield Estate, N16

A site meeting was convened and attended by the Tenants & Residents Association committee where Greening Communities collaborated to plan a gardening project.

The objective was to clear and develop the site into a resident-managed gardening project. Residents specifically requested a low-maintenance herb garden that could benefit residents' health and well-being, along with a vegetable growing area.

An 8-week program of garden-based sessions and workshops, including 2 community day events, was delivered to encourage families and residents to start growing in the new gardens.

Accessible planters were constructed and installed in the growing space to enhance growing capacity. Seeds, plants, and tools were procured for the gardening group.

The growing group comprises 5 regular elderly attendees, with an additional 8 residents joining sessions when available. Four families, totaling 7 children, participated in the sessions.

Residents received support with four workshop training sessions.





Pond Farm Estate, E5

Pond Farm Estate features raised planters around the car park in the center of the estate. One planter was overgrown, but it contained several perennial herbs including rosemary, mint, and tarragon.

Another planter holds flowers, while residents aim to use the third planter for growing fruits and vegetables, intending to maintain them as low-maintenance and attractive beds.

Greening Communities growing organisers contacted the residents and they expressed a desire to transform the space into a new community garden, complete with a secure shed, tools, and a water butt.

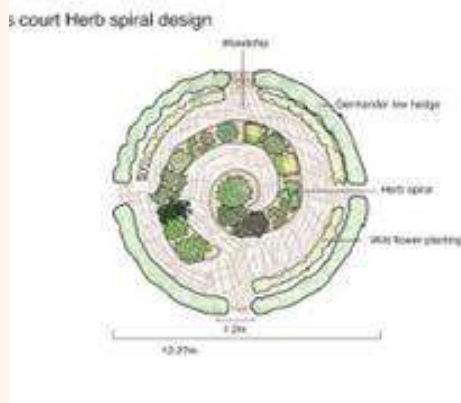
A community day was held to tidy the beds, allow residents to share their vision for the space and what they want to grow, and to conduct training sessions. Residents also collaborated to create an annual growing calendar.

A community day event was held, and this led to planting a variety of vegetables in the beds and the establishment of a committed resident gardening group.

Greening Communities held family-friendly sessions from 4 to 7pm during the spring and summer months. Within the group, some residents preferred to immediately start planting, while others preferred to plan and be more organised.

The residents are enthusiastic about hosting a variety of workshops to support their efforts, such as "How to Run a Community Garden" and "What, Where, When".





Regents Court

Residents encouraged other tenants to attend the family-friendly gardening sessions and workshops using existing planters and smaller areas around the estate.

Following a resident consultation, organised by the tenants and residents' association, it was agreed that the circular patch in the middle of the estate would be an ideal space to start. A conceptual plan, along with initial cost estimates for an herb spiral, was designed.

The growing organisers participated in and conducted a growing herbs booth at the estate's annual tenants and residents' association resident community day.

The tenants and residents' association has decided to temporarily postpone the herb garden but expressed a desire to continue offering residents growing opportunities using existing planters.

A consultation with residents regarding this was scheduled for the next tenants and residents' association meeting.



Whiston Estate, E8

Growing organisers attended an estate tree planting event and assisted in digging the holes for planting the trees.

Whiston Estate has a group of interested residents who would like to garden, with a few already tending to areas outside their properties that open onto the main grassy area.



New raised planters were placed in the area following consultation with residents. The purchase of a variety of herbaceous and perennial plants allowed Greening Communities to collaborate with the ground's maintenance team, giving residents the opportunity to engage in planting and encouraging them to register their interest in the growing project.



Four artwork crates were donated to Hackney Council by MoART and they were installed at two locations on Whiston Estate.

Two resident gardening sessions were conducted to prepare the crates for planting.







Wick Village, E9

A few residents expressed great enthusiasm and determination to create a new community food-growing garden open to everyone in the community, but they needed physical help and support to encourage and engage residents.

They had begun clearing the space of rubbish and unwanted construction materials. A community consultation day was held for residents to share their views and to contribute to the garden's design and future use.



New planters were designed and installed, and residents were encouraged and supported to start growing.

A resident tree seat building session was organised to engage more residents, coordinated by Greening Communities, and delivered by Woodshop of Recycled Delights, a Hackney-based community interest company, specialising in reclaiming wood from construction sites destined for landfill and using it in community woodwork sessions/builds.



Garden design plans were revised, and after two resident consultations, five wooden planters were installed in the garden. A gardening session to fill the remaining soil into the planters and lay wood chips on paths was held.

An "Introduction to Growing in Raised Beds" workshop was provided for the residents. The planters were partly filled with funding from employees at Hilton Excel who attended a community volunteering day facilitated by Greening Communities.

Two resident training workshop sessions were delivered. A storage shed, tools, and seeds were purchased.





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