



East Dunbartonshire  
Draft Food Growing Strategy  
Summary Document  
2019 - 2024



sustainable thriving achieving  
**East Dunbartonshire Council**  
[www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk)

# 1 Introduction

The draft Food Growing Strategy aims to increase access to affordable, healthy, sustainable food by providing more opportunities for people in East Dunbartonshire to 'grow-your-own'. The Strategy is based on an assessment of current demand for communities to grow food across our area and sets out how these needs can be met. The Strategy sets out a clear Vision and a set of aims which provide a clear direction for the Strategy and ensure its successful delivery.

## AIMS

A Vision that everyone in East Dunbartonshire has access to healthy and nutritious food by having the opportunities to grow their own fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers to create an increasingly healthy environment

### 1. Community Engagement

Empower and engage with communities to take forward food growing projects, to learn from each other and to have opportunities to develop skills to achieve their Grow-Your-Own aspirations

### 2. Increased Food Growing opportunities

Increase food growing opportunities by identifying sites suitable for allotments and other growing provision, and support the development of sustainable growing spaces across East Dunbartonshire

### 3. Understanding and Skills Development

Give all generations an understanding of the benefits associated with food growing, access to skills development and growing spaces, and encourage intergenerational activities

### 4. Health and Wellbeing

Promote Grow-Your-Own initiatives to support healthier, more active lifestyles, and reduce physical and mental health and wellbeing inequalities

### 5. Sustainability

Be considerate of, and contribute to, the achievement of the wider sustainability agenda through growing activities

The Strategy defines and identifies opportunities to increase food growing provision in East Dunbartonshire in response to our legislative duties under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – ‘the Act’, encompassing food growing in its widest sense and the many benefits it offers. Though, traditionally, the cultivation of food has been in the form of allotments, there has been a more recent shift towards other types of growing models within a number of different settings, including community growing, community gardens, school grounds, parks, raised beds in private gardens and growing on window sills.

The Draft Strategy provides a robust cross-organisation approach for ensuring that the Council takes reasonable steps towards meeting the duties set out in the Act and sets out opportunities for Council Services and external partners to work in partnership to deliver these duties at a local level.

A set of objectives has been developed to support the delivery of the vision and aims, and reflect the links between food growing and other social, economic and environmental priorities in East Dunbartonshire and Scotland. The Strategy contains a Delivery Programme with a range of actions which support its aims.



# Strategy Development

The draft Strategy has been prepared in partnership with greenspace scotland as a key partner supporting the development of the Strategy and consultation with internal stakeholders and external organisations. Two phases of early public engagement informed the direction and content of the Strategy. The first series of early public engagement events were held in May 2017 to gauge local demand for food growing and to ask community members to suggest spaces in their local area that could be considered for food growing projects. Following this, fit-for-purpose assessments of each site were carried out, in partnership with greenspace scotland. The findings of these assessments were used as a basis for an additional phase of community engagement in March 2018, which provided an opportunity to discuss the overall content of the draft Strategy on which we are now consulting.



# What is food growing?

Food growing is defined in the Act as the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers. There are a number of models from traditional types to the innovative, and the most appropriate approach will depend on factors such as location, infrastructure requirements, types of food to be grown and the individual needs or capabilities of gardeners.

Food growing activity in Scotland has, on the whole, decreased in recent years despite increasing allotment waiting lists, particularly in urban areas. Greenspace Scotland conducted a greenspace use and attitude survey in 2017 which found that, whilst there has been an 8% decrease in people growing their own fruit and vegetables between 2011 and 2017, the number of people growing their own food in areas of socio-economic disadvantage has increased to 20% in 2017 from 14% in 2011. The survey highlighted that the decrease in participation may be partly due to a lack of garden space, limited knowledge and too few allotment plots, resulting in a lack of opportunity for those who wish to grow their own food. The early engagement exercise found that the situation in East Dunbartonshire mirrors the national findings, with many people discouraged from growing their own fruit and vegetables due to a lack of practical skills, formal food growing spaces and space to do so at home. This illustrates the need to increase opportunities for food growing locally and nationally.

## Types of food growing

There are a number of different Grow Your Own models to suit community aspirations including:

**Allotments** – can be privately owned and leased, or owned and leased by the local authority, for the purpose of growing fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers. Allotment plots range in shape and size, but a full-size plot can be up to 250m<sup>2</sup>

**Community Gardens** – less traditional food growing opportunity to allotments, with the setting up and management of the space done as part of a communal approach. They often provide a space to offer not only food growing activity but skills development, education, urban greening and community capacity building.

**Community Orchards and Woodlands** – provide an opportunity for the local community to take ownership of underutilised spaces to grow their own fruit with additional ecological and social benefits, including habitat creating, resilience against urbanisation and social cohesion.

**Civic Planting, Edible Borders and Hedgerows** – planting that utilises civic areas, underused spaces, borders and hedgerows, particularly in urban areas. This allows smaller spaces to be occupied for growing fruit and vegetables.

**Hydroponics and Aquaponics** – both require a non-traditional technique for growing food that require growing in a soil-free environment and are best suited to environments where traditional methods cannot be practiced.

**At-Home Growing** – allows individuals to utilise their own gardens, indoor growing space or window boxes, usually on a smaller-scale to allotment or community growing, to grow their own produce.

**Institutional Growing Spaces** – Schools, health centres, offices and universities, for example, have shown how to utilise spaces on site for small-scale food growing projects to help improve the sense of wellbeing and aesthetics of its location.

**Shared Gardens** – allows people to have access to someone else's garden, or other similar space, to grow food. It stems from informal agreements between neighbours but is now widely promoted as an initiative to connect people wishing to grow with a space to do so.

**Green Roofs and Walls** – elements of the built environment, including roofs and walls, can provide surfaces suitable for planting.

**Stalled Spaces** – involves the temporary use of site awaiting redevelopment, for example a housing development. With agreement from the landowner, community groups may be able to use such spaces on a temporary basis for a given period for the purpose of food growing.

The benefits of participating in food growing opportunities are underpinned in international, UK and Scottish policy, where sustainable food production is recognised for its contribution to social, economic and sustainability agendas. The benefits of food growing for health, the environment, enterprise and the economy, education and a social community are highlighted over the page.

### **Health**

- low-impact exercise and physical activity
- access to the outdoors
- social inclusion
- understanding of food and nutrition

### **Environment**

- local carbon sequestration, soil management and flood risk adaptation
- reduction in food waste
- contribute to local ecosystem services
- strengthen green networks and increase and enhance greenspaces

### **Enterprise and the Economy**

- monetary savings by supplementing food purchases
- employment and volunteering opportunities
- social enterprise opportunities

### **Social**

- create a sense of community
- training and skills development
- food security

### **Education**

- links to Curriculum for Excellence
- new skills and knowledge to support learning and future job prospects
- understanding of food and healthy eating
- links to other school subjects

## Food Growing in East Dunbartonshire

East Dunbartonshire's network of growing projects is varied and offers a multitude of benefits and opportunities for people to get involved. The following list of existing food growing opportunities showcase some of the projects that are encouraging participation in community food growing in East Dunbartonshire.



**Rosebank Allotment, Kirkintilloch**



**Edible Twechar, Twechar**



**Hillhead Community Garden, Kirkintilloch**



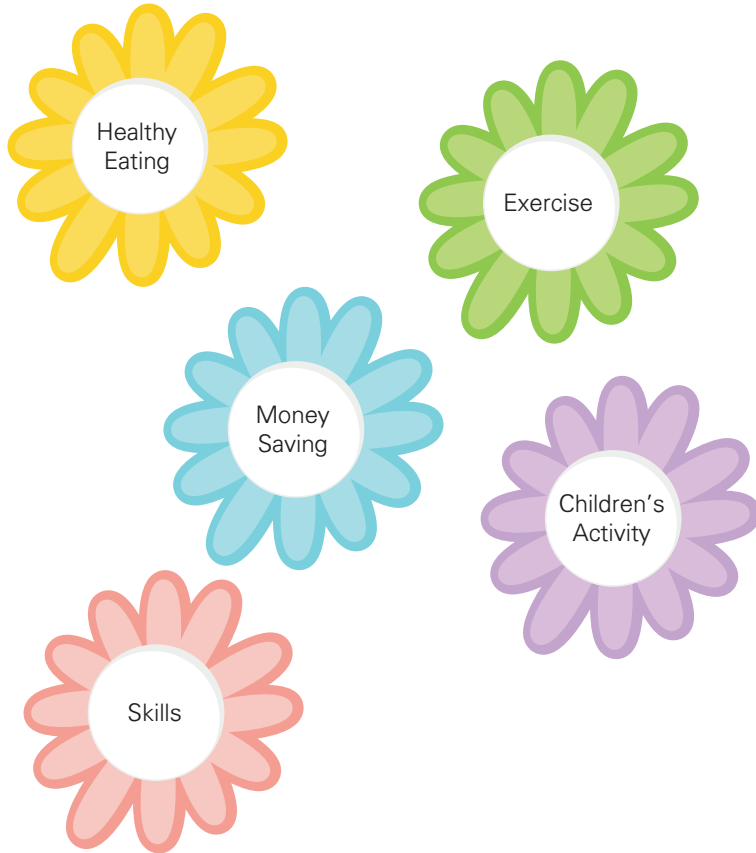
**Torrance Ornamental and Demonstration Garden, Torrance**

Schools such as Clober Primary School, Milngavie Nursery and Primary School, Torrance Primary School, Douglas Academy, Lenzie Meadow Primary School and Nursery, Colquhoun Park Primary School and Turnbull High School are also engaging in food growing activity.



## Growing demand

The different projects in East Dunbartonshire demonstrate that there is a local demand for different types of food growing activities, from less formal initiatives such as growing within school grounds and orchards to larger community gardens and allotments. The demand for growing fruit and vegetables either at home or in a more formal environment in East Dunbartonshire was investigated in early public engagement; it was found that the main reasons for growing your own food include:



Local demand for allotments is also evidenced by our allotment waiting list which has been held for over ten years. At the end of 2018 there were 47 people on the allotment waiting list.

## Strategic Options: new food growing opportunities

### New opportunities

There are several ways in which we intend to deliver our legislative duties to increase allotment provision and support our communities to realise their food growing ambitions; this includes identifying and assessing a suite of potential food growing sites. The assessment process and public engagement has created a shortlist of sites which can be seen on page 44 and 45 of the Strategy and the Online Map, viewable at <https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/draft-food-growing-strategy>.

A number of additional potential food growing sites, which can be seen on page 45 of the Strategy<sup>1</sup>, have been identified through early community engagement. The Delivery Programme sets out our intention for assessing these sites for their suitability for all types of food growing, but community groups are encouraged to consider these options for a new food growing project where there is demand.

### Place Areas

Section 119 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that the Food Growing Strategy sets out how the local authority intends to increase food growing provision in communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantages. In East Dunbartonshire these are identified as our Place Areas in Hillhead, Auchinairn, Twechar and Lennoxton. During consultation on this draft Strategy particular emphasis will be placed on establishing local demand for, and the scope for community groups to take forward, those food growing sites which are either within or easily accessible from Place communities.

### Delivery mechanisms

In order to increase allotment provision in East Dunbartonshire a number of key actions have been identified as delivery mechanisms as part of the Delivery Programme. Some of the key actions are set out below:

1. Work with the community as part of the preparatory and development stages of any new allotment sites
2. Deliver allotments to meet current demand, in partnership with local community groups
3. Encourage and support the establishment of Allotment Associations in order to give community groups more ownership of their growing space

---

1

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/draft-food-growing-strategy>

4. Support community-led allotments and continue to encourage communities to be empowered to find additional sites suitable for allotments in the future
5. Consider the integration of our legislative duties in relation to allotment provision and community growing as part of the emerging Local Development Plan 2
6. Revise our allotment regulations and plot leases to align with the requirements of the Act and to set concessionary pricing to support the elderly, people with disabilities and people living in our Place Areas to get involved in food growing.

Similar delivery mechanisms have been identified in the Strategy to support community groups to set up their own community growing spaces. This includes a list of potential sites and recommendations as a starting point for groups to consider on their journey to setting up a community growing space, encouragement to consider other spaces in their local community that are underused or derelict and existing projects that individuals can get involved in. Some other key actions are detailed below:

1. Support community groups to follow the appropriate procedures for requesting use of a Council-owned space, and provide information for seeking use of privately-owned land
2. Share information, funding opportunities and advice on our website
3. Give people the understanding of the support and resources available to them to begin their GYO journey
4. Assist community groups with information relating to land ownership, Common Good Land and land subject to burdens.



**Edible Twechar, Twechar**

## Allotments

As well as a commitment to encouraging community-driven food growing opportunities, the Council is required to take reasonable steps to increase allotment provision under Part 9 Section 112 of the Act. To meet this duty, the waiting list has been considered along with the potential food growing sites in order for new allotment sites to be identified. The following three sites have been identified as having the potential for development to deliver 87 allotment plots over the life of the Strategy:

- Craigfoot Field, Milton of Campsie
- Etive Park, Bishopbriggs
- Ashburn Gardens, Milngavie.

Preparatory design work for the delivery of Craigfoot Field is already under way and, during the consultation period, we will be seeking views on whether the proposed sites at Etive Park and Ashburn Gardens should be taken forward.

We will work with local communities to ensure that the delivery of future Council-led allotments is carried out with community support and involvement. Future allotment sites may be Council-led, if funding is available, but the Council also supports community-led allotment provision. This approach could be supported by the Council and other organisations such as Social Farms and Gardens and greenspace scotland.

The process outlined on page 52 of the Strategy sets out the Council's approach to identifying and delivering allotments on suitable sites.



**Rosebank Allotment, Kirkintilloch**

## Getting Involved in Community Growing

The Council recognises the importance of community empowerment for encouraging greater participation in local issues and provision as a way of improving the quality of life within communities. In terms of food growing, empowered individuals within a community can lead to the delivery of significant opportunities in response to local need and demand.

In order to support evolving aspirations for food growing projects the Strategy recognises the need to give communities fair and accessible opportunities to begin their journey, including information about key issues to consider from the outset. This includes legal rights to use or own land, site constraints and planning considerations, for example. The diagram below sets out the key issues to be considered:



Chapter 8 of the Strategy sets out procedures relating to identifying and managing contaminated land risks and for taking forward a community growing project as well as practical advice relating to the setting up or finding a community group, site management and ensuring long-term sustainability of a food growing initiative.

## Resources and Support

We want as many people as possible to be given a fair opportunity to get involved in the setting up, management and use of community food growing projects. There are a number of existing resources and support mechanisms to give communities opportunities for skills development and the knowledge to set up and manage a food growing initiative. The Council has expertise that they can share with those interested in getting a project off the ground. There are also a number of advisory and delivery bodies who may be able to assist groups interested in community food growing. Chapter 9 lists a number of external organisations with significant expertise to advise groups and individuals to start their Grow-Your-Own journey.

### Allotment Waiting List

East Dunbartonshire Council holds a central Allotment Waiting List for people to register their interest in a plot. As plots become available those entered on the list will be asked if they would like a plot. Plots are allocated by distance to the allotment and time on the waiting list. Parallel growing activities should be considered as alternative options for growing to meet needs until plots are available.

**If you wish to register your name on the Allotment Waiting List please contact [communitygrowing@eastdunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:communitygrowing@eastdunbarton.gov.uk) or follow the links on the Council's website**

## Implementation and Monitoring

The implementation of the Strategy is linked to various factors including the allocation of Council resources, funding opportunities, partnership working between the Council, Community Planning Partners, Health and Social Care Partnership and other organisations, and the participation of our communities.

Throughout the life of the Strategy a number of actions will be taken to monitor its successful delivery. This includes an annual allotment report, detailing progress towards meeting legislative duties to increase allotment provision, an assessment of allotment demand every two years and overall monitoring to support updates to the Strategy after five years of implementation.



## Delivery Programme

Through the work undertaken to develop East Dunbartonshire's Food Growing Strategy, a set of actions has been agreed to support delivery of the Strategy vision, aims and objectives by all of the partners involved in the collaboration of the Strategy. It should be noted that the success of delivery for the actions is dependent on the availability of funding and resources, including staff capacity. These actions are set out in the Delivery Programme in Chapter 11.



## Consultation

# Have your say on East Dunbartonshire's Draft Food Growing Strategy

Have you got green fingers? Do you want more opportunities to grow your own fruit, vegetables and flowers in allotments, community gardens and orchards in East Dunbartonshire?

We want your views on the Draft Food Growing Strategy. You can get involved at a drop-in session or visit <https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/draft-food-growing-strategy> and have a say online between 15 April and 9 June 2019. You can also view the Strategy at Community Hubs and Libraries.



Date of Drop-in	Time	Venue
Monday 15 April	3.30-7pm	Twechar Healthy Living and Enterprise Centre
Wednesday 17 April	3.30-7pm	Lennoxtown Community Hub
Monday 29 April*	3.30-6.45pm	Auchinairn Community & Early Years Centre
Wednesday 15 May	3-7pm	Hillhead Community Centre
Thursday 23 May	3-7pm	The Fraser Centre, Milngavie (Please note change of venue due to European elections)
Wednesday 5 June	3-6.30pm	Caldwell Halls, Torrance

\* Please see

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/greenspace> for more information on the Climate Ready Park at Woodhill and Etive Park in Bishopbriggs consultation which is also taking place on Monday 29 April 2019 at 3.30pm at Auchinairn Community & Early Years Centre.

For further information e-mail [communitygrowing@eastdunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:communitygrowing@eastdunbarton.gov.uk) or call the Sustainability Policy Team on 0300 123 4510





# Other formats

---

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or on audio CD and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Corporate Communications Team at 12 Strathkelvin Place, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow G66 1TJ Tel: 0300 123 4510

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0300 123 4510。

اس دستاویز کا دور خواست کرنے پر (اردو) زبان میں ترجمہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ براہ مہربانی فون نمبر 0300 123 4510 پر رابطہ کریں۔

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0300 123 4510 ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Gabhaidh an sgriobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0300 123 4510

अनुप्रास करने पर यह दस्तावेज हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फोन कीजिए।



sustainable thriving achieving

**East Dunbartonshire Council**

[www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk)