

Southwark Council support for food growing and community gardening




What the role covers

- Main point of contact within council for existing community growers and new enquiries about community gardening and food growing
- Supporting the network of growers via e-newsletter, informal introductions, linking to existing networks and mapping
- Organising networking events, development of a working group
- Increase food growing opportunities on estates, focus on building resilient and sustainable groups and projects, and give advice to others in the borough
- Community engagement link for other related projects such as reduced mowing trials and composting
- Strategic development promoting community gardening and food growing within the council – working with Public Health, Ecologist, Planning, New Homes, Grounds Maintenance, Resident Services, Climate Change, Housing teams



Allotment Expansion Guarantee

- The AEG aims to increase the number of food-growing plots available in the borough, by establishing a process and support for residents to create new food-growing spaces on housing land
- Launched in April 2021 with a target to create 200 new growing plots in 2 years
- Residents can find out more and register their interest via a dedicated website: <https://allotmentexpansionguarantee.commonplace.is/about>
- New groups are encouraged to join Southwark's map of community gardening and food-growing sites and to benefit from being part of this network (www.goodtogrowuk.org/map/southwark)



Council:

- Meet interested residents; site suitability/ permissions
- Support group development, advise on project plans, designs and engagement activities
- Provide funding, or advice about funding sources
- Coordinate build of gardens
- Provide initial food -growing training and ongoing advice

Residents:

- Bring together group of at least 5 residents to develop project
- Work in partnership with the council to establish local needs, create project plan and resident consultation
- Sign an agreement to manage any future garden, including coordinating plot allocations
- Fundraise for garden development, ongoing garden costs and repairs

So far..

- By end of March 2024 18 new community allotment gardens created. 220 plots completed with 5 new projects in development
- Short film to show two of new projects – at Elmington and Brandon Estates:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9GH5NluW-AQ>
- Map of food growing plots and community gardens, developed in partnership with Sustain:
<https://www.goodtogrowuk.org/map/southwark>

Videos



Would you like to grow your own food?

YouTube · southwarkcouncil
7 Jan 2022

Southwark map | Good to Grow

good to grow

Map Join us About us News Sign in

All gardens Good to Grow Day Southwark food-growing plots Volunteer Search

The place to find and volunteer for community gardens in Southwark.

Click on a pin on the map to show gardens in that area, or use the option above to find Good to Grow gardens near you.

Key

- Gardens in the Good to Grow Day (23 - 26 April)
- Gardens
- Gardens looking for volunteers
- Inactive Gardens
- Southwark food-growing plots: plots available
- Southwark food-growing plots: join waiting list
- Southwark food-growing plots: plots not available

Southwark Council
southwark.gov.uk

Training

Food Growing Training

New sites receive monthly sessions with a local Community Gardener to bring new groups together and increase skills for new growers. Groups can apply for Getting Involved funding to continue to have sessions after year one.

Community Organising Training

Two free day courses funded by Natural England to increase organising skills of community gardeners in Feb and March 2024; Introduction to Community Organising and Action for Change.



Network building

- Support a borough-wide Community Gardening network
- *Who?* Everyone involved in community gardening or food growing in Southwark
- *How?* E-newsletter, SLACK channel, introducing projects to each other, and networking events
- *Outcomes?* The network promotes peer-to-peer support to enable residents to share experience and good practice
- Engaged group who advocate for and engage with more greening opportunities in the borough
- Connects gardeners with council and external initiatives related to climate change, mental and physical wellbeing



Network events

13 July 2023

- Listening event at Red Cross Garden
- 26 attendees
- One of the outcomes was the ask for council support for a community gardening working group to focus on relevant topics

14 October 2023

- Community Gardening Working Party at the Paper Garden in Surrey Quays
- 40 attendees
- The working group focus was on solutions to dealing with green waste and increasing composting and made several interesting recommendations



Composting Pilot 2024

Compost Doctor

The Compost Dr will go around the borough to inform and train residents at community gardens / allotments on how to compost and improve their composting within their unique space. Launch at St Francis Park 15th March 2024

Community Compost Hubs

These hubs will act as demonstration sites for others to visit and learn from. The composting hubs will be provided with new compost bins, tools and equipment and a garden shredder. They will also have support from a Compost Dr who will train all the participants. Collaboration with Grounds Maintenance and Trees team for hyper local materials



Countisbury Estate



Melford Court



Brandon Estate



Elmington Estate



 **ELMINGTON
COMMUNITY
GARDENS**

Hello! We are Elmington Estate residents carrying out gardening projects, with the TRA

Want to get involved?

We hold monthly sessions. All welcome 😊
elmingtoncommunitygardens@gmail.com
Facebook & Instagram @ElmingtonCommunityGardens

Projects:
Creating a **community allotment** by Langland House
Litter picking & adding **bird & bat boxes** on Brisbane St
Adding **pollinating flowers & bulbs** across the estate

Upcoming:
Re-opening "Elmington Woods"
Working with Southwark to reduce flood risk, add bike & bin storage



Camberwell Triangle



Rouel Road



Rouel Road



Gloucester Grove



Rockingham Estate





communitygardening@southwark.gov.uk