



AGENDA ITEM NO: 10

Report To: Inverclyde Alliance Board **Date:** 18 March 2024

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Subject: Community Food Growing Strategy: Year One Progress

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Alliance Board on progress made in relation to year one actions contained within the Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy and to highlight year 2 actions and priorities.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires each local authority to prepare a food growing strategy for its area, to identify land that may be used as allotment sites, identify other areas of land that could be used for community growing, and describe how the authority intends to increase provision for community growing, in particular in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage.

2.2 A draft Food Growing Plan was developed in June 2020 and was intended to be a holding statement that set out the Council's intention to produce a fully developed Community Food Growing Strategy for Inverclyde. A fully developed Community Food Growing Strategy was approved in March 2023.

2.3 The Community Food Growing Strategy outlines the vision for food growing in Inverclyde, which is to increase opportunities for communities to grow their own food and contribute towards a reduction in food poverty. This vision will be achieved by:

- Building capacity within communities to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to take part in food growing.
- Creating strong partnership working between communities, the Council and housing associations.
- Ensuring communities have the resources they need to be able to take part in food growing.
- Contributing towards a reduction in poverty through strong partnership working.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Alliance Board

- notes the progress made in the first year of the Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy; and
- notes the priorities/actions for year two.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015) requires each local authority to prepare a food growing strategy for its area, to identify land that may be used as allotment sites, identify other areas of land that could be used for community growing, and describe how the authority intends to increase provision for community growing, in particular in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage.

4.2 A draft Food Growing Plan was developed in June 2020 and was intended to be a holding statement. The statement set out the Council's intention to produce a Community Food Growing Strategy for Inverclyde that would meet the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and contained details of:

- The legislative requirements,
- Food growing contributes to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017-22;
- Links to key Council policies
- Information in relation to allotments; and
- How community groups can access assistance.

4.3 A fully developed Community Food Growing Strategy was approved by the Alliance board on the 13th March 2023 incorporating the following vision:

“To increase opportunities in Inverclyde for communities to grow their own food and contribute towards a reduction in food poverty. We want these opportunities to be well used by communities and for it to result in more local residents growing and using the food they grow.”

4.4 To achieve this vision, the Food Network have identified the following four priorities:

Priority 1: Build capacity within communities to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to take part in food growing.

Priority 2: Create strong partnership working between communities, the Council and housing associations.

Priority 3: Ensure communities have the resources they need to be able to take part in food growing.

Priority 4: Contribute towards a reduction in poverty through strong partnership working.

5.0 PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN YEAR ONE

5.1 In March 2023 Inverclyde Council was successful in receiving UK Levelling up funding to implement the Invergrow project. This funding will be used to help the development of growing spaces across Inverclyde and support the implementation of the Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy.

5.2 The Inverclyde Community Food Strategy, appendix 1 of this report provides an update on the progress that has been made in achieving the four priorities during year one. The report provides information on the progress made under each action and the status of the action. In addition, each template contains details of key achievements made by the Inverclyde Community Food Growing Network. Highlights include:

- Appointment of the Invergrow worker November 2023.
- 50 community have been trained in community cooking
- Facilitation of Community Food growing planning event
- Planning and delivery of events to promote food growing such as Potato week moveable feast.
- Establishment of the Food Network Strategy group
- Establishment of Community fridges.
- Development of food growing sites by partners such as Branchton Community Centre and Inverclyde Shed
- Development of small community sites such as Craig End, PG Health Centre.
- Increased membership of the Community Pantries

6.0 YEAR TWO PRIORITIES/ACTIONS

6.1 Year two priorities and actions can be seen in appendix 1, below is a summary of key actions that will be priority during year 2:

- ICFN members undertake a training needs analysis to help developing the relevant training.
- Develop an events calendar to help co-ordinate a structured approach to growing across the ICFN.
- Maximise the additional funding and resource from the Invergrow project funded via the UK Levelling up fund.
- Invergrow worker to create a robust recording process to capture the number of community members. involved in growing across the ICFN.
- Continue to explore opportunities to encourage community members take part in community growing.
- Development of growing spaces as a result of the Invergrow fund.

7.0 GOVERNANCE

7.1 The following governance arrangements will ensure the successful development, implementation and monitoring of the strategy: The development of the Community Food Growing Strategy is led by the Council's Communities Service:

- The Food Network will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the strategy.
- Progress will be reported to the appropriate Alliance thematic group in the new structure on a quarterly basis and will inform the Partnership Plan quarterly progress report; and
- An annual progress report will be submitted to the Alliance Board.

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed on the Community Food Growing Strategy and approved by the Council's Corporate Policy Team.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal: none at present
Finance: none at present
Human Resources: none at present
Equality and Diversity: An equality impact assessment of the Community Food Strategy is being carried out.
Alliance Partnership Plan: The Community Food Strategy contributes to Theme 3 – Healthy People and Places and Theme 1 – Empowered People.

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 Ongoing consultation and engagement with both communities and partner organisations has taken place out to inform the development of the Community Food Growing Strategy.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

Inverclyde's Community Food Growing Strategy



'Growing Inverclyde Together'

Moving Forward Together



Inverclyde Alliance



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FOREWORD

Councillor Elizabeth Robertson, Chair of Inverclyde Alliance

As Chair of the Inverclyde Alliance, the Inverclyde Community Planning Partnership, I am delighted to introduce Inverclyde's Community Food Growing Strategy. The strategy sets out how Inverclyde Council and its community planning partners will support community food growing across Inverclyde.

In the 2023-33 Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan our outcomes include:

- Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need;
- Communities can have their voice heard, and influence the places and services that affect them;
- Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced; and
- Easy access to attractive and safe public spaces, and high quality arts and cultural opportunities.

The Community Food Growing Strategy will help us to achieve these. There is community support for local food growing as evidenced through the consultation on the Strategy and the Inverclyde Community Food Network has shaped the vision and actions within the plan. Our approach aims to use community food growing to help address poverty in our communities, and reduce the barriers to people accessing low cost and nutritious food. It will help establish more spaces and places for food growing.

Community food growing enables people to get involved in their local community, meet new people, enjoy the outdoors and take part in growing. It is the combination of these elements that makes it so appealing. Indeed, there has been an increase in the number of people who are keen to participate in outdoor activities such as gardening and food growing. This is partly due to the Covid-19 pandemic and also the many benefits of food growing. The Community Food Growing Strategy will help us to provide more opportunities for local people to get involved in food growing and enjoy the benefits that it has to offer.

Inverclyde has a network of green spaces, community gardens and allotments, as well as a Food Network which brings together all partner organisations that are involved in food growing. This, combined with a strong voluntary sector with knowledge and expertise in food growing and an abundance of local people who are keen to get involved, means that we have the foundations upon which to build a successful approach to community food growing.

Inverclyde Alliance is committed to providing local communities with more opportunities to get involved in food growing and the Community Food Growing Strategy will help us to achieve that.

WHY ARE WE DEVELOPING A FOOD GROWING STRATEGY?

A Community Food Growing Strategy for Inverclyde has been developed to meet the requirements of national policy and legislation, contribute towards the achievement of local priorities and ensure that Inverclyde benefits from a wide range of benefits associated with food growing.

National Policy

The Scottish Government has set out a vision that by 2025 Scotland will be "a Good Food Nation, where people from every walk of life take pride and pleasure in, and benefit from, the food they produce, buy, cook, serve, and eat each day."

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015) requires each local authority to prepare a food growing strategy for its area, to identify land that may be used as allotment sites, identify other areas of land that could be used for community growing, and describe how the authority intends to increase provision for community growing, in particular in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage.

Local Policy

The Community Food Growing Strategy has a key role to play in helping Inverclyde Alliance, the area's Community Planning Partnership, to achieve its vision and priorities for Inverclyde. The development of the Community Food Growing Strategy has therefore been informed by the 2023-33 Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan.

The Community Food Growing Strategy will make a significant contribution to the achievement of all four outcomes in the 2023-33 Inverclyde Alliance Community Plan.

- Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need;
- Communities can have their voice heard, and influence the places and services that affect them;
- Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced; and
- Easy access to attractive and safe public spaces, and high quality arts and cultural opportunities.

Benefits of Community Food Growing

The Scottish Government has identified a wide range of benefits associated with community food growing. For example:

Food – Food growing provides communities with access to environmentally sound, healthy and locally sourced food. It also offers monetary savings in comparison to buying produce from retail outlets.

Health & Wellbeing – There are many health and well-being benefits to food growing. Not only do people who grow their own food tend to eat more healthily but



Figure 1 Variety of fruits and vegetables grown at Shore Street Garden. (cc) Inverclyde Shed

gardening activities can provide low-impact exercise and help to improve physical health. Community growing can lower stress levels, offer mental health benefits and a supportive social environment. Creating green space in built up areas improves air quality and provides recreational opportunities that encourage socialising, decreases isolation and leads to improved confidence and self-esteem.



Figure 2 Group from Belville Street Community Garden visiting Muirshiel Gardens

Community – Food growing can help to improve the quality of life of local residents by bringing vacant or derelict land back into use. Participation in food growing also helps to foster a sense of community as it brings communities together and provides volunteering opportunities. Food growing can also help to reduce social isolation and loneliness amongst older people and more vulnerable groups who are socially isolated.

Biodiversity - Community growing spaces can improve biodiversity as well as create important green corridors for wildlife. The Community Food Growing

Strategy will help to meet the objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Local Biodiversity Action Plans, as well as the Pollinator Strategy for Scotland.

Climate Change - Community growing sites can help to alleviate climate change through good soil management and appropriate ground cover management via healthy and appropriate plant cover. Community food growing spaces contribute to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change through carbon reduction and sustainable design. Other sustainability benefits can be considerable, such as reduction in air miles, reduction in carbon emissions and improvements to air quality through locally grown food.

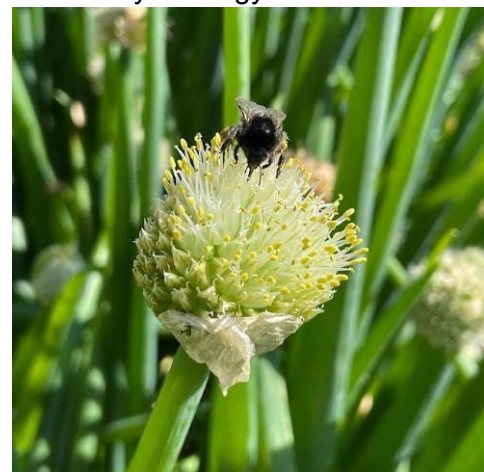


Figure 3 Bee pollenating flower at Shore Street Garden. (cc) Inverclyde Shed

Recycling & Food Waste - Community growing can

lead to a reduction in food waste through composting and reduced food packaging. People are also less likely to waste the food that they grow, and are more likely to put grow-your-own waste into the compost, thereby returning nutrients to the soil. Community food growing spaces can also make positive contributions to sustainable drainage through the permeable surfaces of food growing spaces and the harvesting of rainwater.

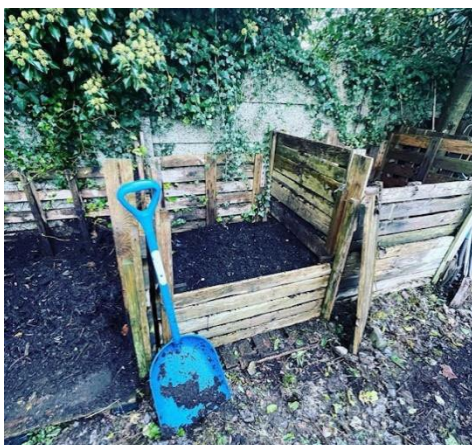


Figure 4 Composting at Shore Street Gardens. (cc) Inverclyde Shed

Soil Management - An organic approach to community growing can help to reverse soil degradation. Reversing this trend will help to address the loss of organic matter from the soil, reduce soil compaction and erosion, and help to reverse the trend in mineral decline in vegetables.



Figure 6 Weekly tasks delivered by Parklea Association Branching Out

Education & Training - Food growing spaces provide a learning environment, where young and old can learn about a wide range of topics, including: biodiversity; skills to grow-your-own; botany; climatology; cookery; geography; recycling/upcycling. Food growing programmes in schools can have positive impacts on pupil nutrition and attitudes towards healthy eating, specifically related to the willingness to try new foods; and allows pupils to learn about their natural environment, how to grow and harvest food, and to be less wasteful of natural resources. Taking part in community growing activities can develop 'soft' skills such as communication skills, problem solving, and team working etc. that help to increase employability.

Local Economy - Community growing can contribute to the local economy and encourage enterprising activity. For example, from selling produce such as fruits and vegetables and jams and chutneys, providing training and contributing to personal development opportunities.



Figure 5 Inverclyde Shed produce stall at Walled Gardens pop-up market. (c) Inverclyde Shed



FOOD GROWING IN INVERCLYDE

Community food growing is already well established in Inverclyde and the area possess a number of assets that we will utilise to help us increase the opportunities that are available for local communities to participate. These assets are detailed below.

Inverclyde Community Food Network - is a group of local partner organisations and volunteers who support and encourage food growing and food sharing across Inverclyde by:

- Encouraging and supporting local people to get involved in food growing activities;
- Raising awareness of what support services are available around food insecurity and food waste;
- Enabling communities to access food and surplus food, and
- Reducing food waste.

Some of the group's achievements so far include:

- 50 local people have been trained in community cooking;
- Running events such as a moveable feast to which new Scots were invited;
- Belville Community Garden set up "soup and a bleather" which runs every week;
- The distribution of excess food from supermarkets;
- The establishment of community fridges; and
- The delivery of food boxes during the pandemic, as well as gardening boxes and the establishment of soup sheds.

The Community Food Network was widely consulted during the development of the Community Food Growing strategy and will play a key role in its implementation.

Community Gardens – Inverclyde has a number of community gardens and allotments where local people can participate in community food growing. The community gardens are all very welcoming and offer a great way to make friends, improve physical and mental health and enjoy the outdoors. There are regular clubs and more informal drop-ins and events, details of which can be found at www.icfn.org.uk

Parklea Branching Out

Parklea Playing Fields, Greenock Road, Port Glasgow PA14 6TR. Telephone: 01475 744516 Email: admin@parkleaassociation.org.uk Informal garden drop-in usually Tuesdays and Fridays. Please call for more information.

Belville Community Garden

53 - 57 Belville St, Greenock, PA15 4UN Telephone: - 01475 726034 Email: info@belvillecommunitygarden.org.uk Gardening Club Mondays 1.00-3.00 Come along or call for more information. Raised bed allotments including disabled access beds available at small annual cost

Branchton Community Centre

78 Branchton Rd, Greenock, PA16 0XX Telephone: 01475 638481 Email: branchtonmanager@gmail.com Gardening club Tuesday mornings. Please call for more information.

Shore Street Garden –

Shore Street, Gourock Email: contact@inverclydeshed.co.uk Gardening club Mondays 10.00-12.00 weather dependent. Please call for more information

Muirshiel Lane Market Garden

Muirshiel Ln, Port Glasgow PA14 5XS Email: contact@inverclydeshed.co.uk Informal volunteering. Please get in touch for more information.

The Drying Green Garden

South West Library - 159 Inverkip Rd, Greenock PA16 9HG Telephone: 01475 715667. Informal volunteering, with a view to regular garden club. Please get in touch/check social media for more information.

Blooming Inverkip

Kip Park Main Street, Greenock PA16 0FZ Telephone: 01475 520740. Informal volunteering on Saturday mornings with a view to regular gardening club in 2023. Please call for more information.

Wellington Allotments

Wellington street, Greenock Telephone: 0785 1454042 Email: alison.duncan@ntlworld.com Allotments available on waiting list basis.



Inverclyde Food Map – Inverclyde Community Food Network has produced a food map of Inverclyde which provides details of where communities can access the following:

- Community food growing sites;
- Food banks, cafes and pantries;
- Excess food donations;
- School gardens;
- Allotments; and
- Cooking sessions.

The food map can be accessed via the Inverclyde Community Food Network website at www.icfn.org.uk/food-map

What land is available in Inverclyde for food growing?

Allotments - Inverclyde Council has one official allotment site located in Wellington Street, Greenock. The allotment has 35 plots ranging from full size, half quarter and raised beds. The allotments are managed by an elected committee.

Other land - In terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Inverclyde Council is required to publish a register of all land which, to the best of the Council's knowledge and belief, is owned or leased by the Council. Below is a link to the Land Register. Please note that this list has not yet been finalised and therefore may change.

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/asset-transfer-requests/register-of-land>

What local organisations are involved in community food growing?



The Inverclyde Shed create places for people to meet, make, grow and share. Their primary aim is to tackle poor mental & physical health, addressing loneliness and particularly but not exclusively amongst older men, often a hard-to-reach group. Their spaces include an established community garden in Gourock, a new fruit orchard space in Port Glasgow and a network of school / nursery 'small growing spaces'.



Parklea 'Branching Out' is a voluntary organisation established in 1997 to help develop local individuals with support needs so that they can reach their potential. Parklea use horticulture as a vehicle to provide a variety of different training, work experience, supported employment, recreational and social facilities for a variety of clients including adults and children with learning and/or physical disabilities, those with mental health problems, school leavers, young and long term unemployed, elderly groups and community groups. Parklea also provide training to SVQ level in horticulture and employability programmes.



Belville Community Garden Trust is a registered Scottish charity formed in 2014 by local people to bring community groups and individuals together in the east end of Greenock. Belville promotes a safer, stronger community around improving lifestyles and health primarily through gardening, horticulture and healthy eating. Since opening in 2014, Belville Community Garden have developed a status within the community as a central food growing hub, organising and co-ordinating community groups and schools in growing projects.



Inverclyde's Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) plays a key role in co-ordinating the work of the Food Network. It also supports all aspects of food, including food poverty, supporting Fairshare distribution and organises accredited training to train local people to delivery cookery classes. The HSCP also provides small amounts of money to purchase food for the cooking classes and further training.



Branchton Community Centre is an important community hub serving the Greenock South West area. Its main priorities are to provide classes, courses, services and activities to tackle social exclusion and all kinds of poverty. Over the last 2 years the Community Centre has added food growing and food distribution to its list of services. It has a community garden beside the Centre and has taken ownership from the Council of a plot of land near the Centre to expand its growing activities. This is supported by a strong volunteer growing group. Food distribution is also an important element of the work of the Centre and it collects and hands out food donated by local supermarkets to reduce food waste. The Centre also has a charity shop to hand out food and household goods.



Community Learning and Development (CLD) are responsible for the development of the Food Growing Strategy and work in partnership with West College Scotland to run local horticulture classes which helps to both grow interest in horticulture and develop skills within the community.



Bluebird Family Centre Organisation works in partnership with various local organisations to introduce food growing with staff and the children. Members of the community build planters and areas for planting to take place.



Consultation and Community Engagement

Extensive consultation and engagement with both communities and partner organisations was carried out to inform the development of the Community Food Growing Strategy.

Engagement with Communities

Feedback was gathered from local residents who either have an interest in or are involved in community gardening / growing and below is what they told us:

- Community food growing enables people to get involved in their local community, meet new people, enjoy the outdoors and take part in growing. It is the combination of these elements that makes it so appealing.
- The social aspect of food growing is one of the main reasons why people choose to take part.
- There is a lack of awareness of the food growing opportunities that are available across Inverclyde.
- There are a lot of older people who would like to take part but see their age as a barrier and perceive food growing to be labour intensive.
- There is a lack of knowledge of how to use the produce grown. To address this issue, local people would like to attend cookery classes to learn how best to use the produce grown.

Engagement with partners

The Food Network was consulted throughout the development of the strategy and below is the feedback they provided:

- A lack of skills and knowledge is one of the key barriers that prevents local communities from taking part in community food growing. The first step is to increase the capacity of individuals to grow their own food before looking at increasing the amount of land that is available for food growing.
- There is a lack of awareness amongst the public of the food growing sites that are available in Inverclyde.
- Communities find it difficult to access information about community asset transfer and find the process to be complicated. This is a barrier that prevents communities from accessing land for community food growing.
- Access to funding, tools and equipment, seeds and compost are barriers that prevent communities from taking part in food growing.



- Access to compost is one of the biggest problems and communities need access to a car to be able to access and transport it.
- There is a gap around how excess food is shared and distributed.
- It is important that the strategy contributes to addressing food poverty.
- Inverclyde does not currently have a grow your own facility.
- Work with schools and pre-5 establishments is an important element of providing access to food growing, increasing knowledge and skills and addressing food poverty.



OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

Our vision for community food growing in Inverclyde is:

To increase opportunities in Inverclyde for communities to grow their own food and contribute towards a reduction in food poverty. We want these opportunities to be well used by communities and for it to result in more local residents growing and using the food they grow.

We have identified four priorities that will help us to achieve this vision. The identification of these priorities has been informed by extensive consultation with communities and organisations who are involved in food growing locally.

Priority 1: Build capacity within communities to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to take part in food growing.

Priority 2: Create strong partnership working between communities, the Council and housing associations.

Priority 3: Ensure communities have the resources they need to be able to take part in food growing.

Priority 4: Contribute towards a reduction in poverty through strong partnership working.



Priority 1: Build capacity within communities to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to take part in community food growing.					
<p>Why is this a priority?</p> <p>This is a priority because one of the main barriers that prevents local communities from taking part in community food growing is a lack of skills and knowledge. Building capacity within communities through training and skills development is therefore vital in enabling communities to be able to grow their own food.</p>					
Where do we want to be?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?	What will success look like?	Who is responsible?	Progress Year 1
					<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 2px;">On track</div> <div style="background-color: yellow; color: black; padding: 2px;">Progress made</div> <div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">No action taken</div>
<p>The Invergrow project will provide training to increase the capacity of individuals to grow their own food. (Please note this action is dependent on a successful funding application).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If funding is awarded, the first step will be to recruit and appoint a Project Officer. - The Project Officer will work with the Food Network to assess training requirements and develop suitable training. 	<p>Year 1 – recruitment of Project Officer.</p> <p>Year 2 – A training needs analysis will be undertaken with the Food Network and community groups. Pilot training courses will also take place during year 2.</p> <p>Year 3 – a programme of training will be developed and implemented.</p>	<p>Communities will be able to access training courses to help them develop their skills and knowledge to be able to grow their own food.</p>	<p>Invergrow Project Officer</p>	<p>The Invergrow worker was appointed November 2023 G</p> <p>Blooming Inverkip have developed various how to videos which are hosted on the ICFN website. G</p> <p>Initial conversations have taken place during the November planning event in which training around risk</p>



					<p>assessment and health and safety were raised. A</p> <p>A training needs assessment will be carried out by ICFN members by March 2024 A</p>
Engage with children and families to find out how best to go about providing access to growing opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a resource booklet for schools and nurseries on what to grow and when. - Undertake a mapping exercise of food growing currently taking place in schools and nurseries. - Share case studies and visits to schools and nurseries so that establishments can learn from what others have done. - Apprentices provide support to schools and nurseries to prepare sites for food growing. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p> <p>Year two</p> <p>Year two/three</p>	Food growing opportunities will be developed tailored to the needs of children and families.	Food Network	<p>A resource booklet has been developed and can be accessed via the ICFN website. G</p> <p>Inverclyde Food growing map can be accessed via the ICFN website. G</p>



Classification : Official

<p>Create a section for food growing on the online learning platform Moodle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make informal learning available on Moodle. For example, quizzes and case studies on volunteers. - Develop “How to videos”. For example, how to plant seeds, harvest, cook etc - Develop an SQA course on food growing in conjunction with West of Scotland College. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p> <p>Year two/three</p>	<p>Create a section for food growing on the online learning platform Moodle.</p>	<p>Make informal learning available on Moodle. For example, quizzes and case studies on volunteers.</p>	<p>Ongoing conversations are taking place with ICFN in relation moodle being a suitable platform as opposed to h... A</p> <p>resources on ICFN website with links to external free resources.</p> <p>Blooming Inverkip have developed variuos how to vidoes hosted on the ICFN website. G</p>
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Key Achievements

- ICFN Partnership event held in November which allowed all members of the Inverclyde Community Food Network (ICFN) to engage with each other.
- ICFN Launched Potato Week & Harvest Week
- Facilitated planting/growing harvesting sessions across various growing sites
- Establishment of a Mentor Network includes active knowledge & skills sharing via:
- ICFN monthly meetings
- Community Garden meetings & What’s App Group
- Kidron Community Garden What’s App Group
- Parklea Volunteers What’s App Group
- WCS have provided various Horticultural courses across Inverclyde
- Shared ICFN information at Food Growing and Community Garden Networking Event at Hub Grub Food Bank in Dunoon



- Enabled a diversity of volunteers from across Inverclyde to participate in a research study facilitated by Trainee Health Psychologist Caledonian University.
- The creation of regular networking / learning events & training opportunities has enabled a diversity of people from across Inverclyde to enhance their knowledge & skills, get involved in community gardens and grow their own food.

Priority 2: Create strong partnership working between communities, the Council and housing associations

Why is this a priority?

This is a priority because a successful approach to community food growing is dependent on communities, the Council and housing associations working together to ensure that communities are aware of how they can get involved in community growing and the food growing sites that are available across Inverclyde.

Where do we want to be?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?	What will success look like?	Who is responsible?	Progress Year 1 On track Progress made No action taken
Further develop the Food Network's map of Inverclyde to include all sites available for food growing and community assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the map to include schools and nurseries. - Uptake the map to include food sharing across Inverclyde. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p>	Communities will be able to easily access an interactive map to find out what sites are available for growing food in Inverclyde	Food Network	<p>Inverclyde Food growing map can be accessed via the ICFN website. G</p> <p>Inverclyde Council provide an asset list available. Accessibility of the existing list is being reviewed. A</p> <p>Inverclyde Shed have created an interactive map. G</p>



					ICFN website hosts an up to map of food share locations across Inverclyde that is regularly updated.
Develop a promotional campaign to promote the opportunities available within Inverclyde for growing food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide information to support people to be able to grow at home. - Develop and distribute a "growing kit". - Promote the food map and all the partners that are involved in food growing in the Greenock Telegraph. - Run themed promotions, e.g. food growing, cooking 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Year one</p> <p>Year two</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Communities will have greater awareness of how they can get involved in community food growing and how they can access training.</p> <p>Communities will have increased knowledge about how to grow food at home, leading to more people growing food at home.</p>	Food Network	<p>Work has been undertaken by ICFN to maximise digital engagement opportunities such the Facebook page and the Website with resources.</p>
Develop and share a calendar of food events taking place across all partner organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and populate a calendar and create a process to keep it updated. - Promote the calendar. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Food events will be coordinated and promoted across all partner organisations which will lead to increased attendance and participation.</p>	Food Network	<p>Initial conversations around creating a calendar of events and activities was discussed at the November planning event. This will be in place by April 2023</p>



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<p>Develop guidance and support for communities to help them with the asset transfer process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and publish case studies of successful community asset transfers. - Revise and update guidance for communities on asset transfer. - Review and update information on asset transfer on the Council's web site. - Run events to provide communities with information about asset transfer and how to go about it. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>It will be easy for communities to access information about how to apply for an asset transfer with information available via the Council web site and support available from the Communities Service.</p>	<p>CLD Services</p>	<p>The current process and guidelines are being reviewed and developed by the asset transfer working group. This includes, an initial interest form, road map and an are asset transfer ready checklist. The new process and guidelines will be subject to approval.</p>
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Key Achievements

- ICFN Food Map updates ongoing – interactive map on website - [Inverclyde Community Food Network | Atlist](#)
- Collated information and produced flier on food access / sharing / distribution across Inverclyde.
- Ongoing community engagement to find out what is in place/what is required.
- Communities now have access to an interactive map / information to find out what sites are available for growing / accessing food in Inverclyde.
- ICFN have developed the Website, Social media – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Posters
- Range of networking events and pop up shops - [McGilp's Pop Up Shop — Inverclyde Community Food Network \(icfn.org.uk\)](#)
- Communities have a greater understanding of how to access training and get involved in community food growing.
- Communities have access to information to increase their knowledge on how to grow food at home, leading to more people growing food at home.
- Asset transfer guidance and support information is currently being reviewed by the Asset Transfer working group,
- Inverclyde Shed have launched an interactive asset map using google maps: [CAT IC Assets – Google My Maps](#)
- Due to ICFN co-ordination and promotion of Food Events by partners there has been increased attendance and participation.
- PBO provided veg & herbs & ICFN supported individuals and groups to grow their own food.
- Due to ICFN co-ordination and promotion of community gardens & food growing opportunities there has been an increase in the number of people growing food at home / in community gardens / in nurseries & schools.



Priority 3: Ensure communities have the resources they need to be able to take part in food growing.

Why is this a priority?

This is a priority because access to funding, equipment, tools and compost is currently a barrier that makes it difficult for community groups to take part in food growing.



Key Actions?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?	What will success look like?	Who is responsible?	Progress Year 1 On track Progress made No action taken
<p>The Invergrow project will establish 6 pop up sites and 10 new food growing sites across Inverclyde. (Please note this action is dependent on a successful funding application).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The identification of possible pop up sites and good growing sites. - Engagement with communities regarding the location of sites. - Establishment of pop- up site - Establishment of food growing sites. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p> <p>Year two</p> <p>Year three</p>	<p>There will be more opportunities for communities to take part in food growing and this will lead to an increase in the tonnage of locally grown food</p>	<p>Invergrow Project Officer</p>	<p>The Invergrow worker started in November 2023, to support the development of additional food growing activities a community grant fund was launched on with a closing date of February 22nd 2024. The aim of this grant to provide funds for community groups develop/expand existing growing spaces.</p> <p>A pilot project in partnership with ST Stephens High School has begun,</p>



				<p>looking to maximise the open space within the school campus. G</p> <p>Invergrow will work in partnership with RCH to install raised growing spaces across the various sheltered/residential accommodation. The starting point will be community engagement with current residents. A</p>
<p>Develop a food growing library that will provide community groups with access to tools, seeds and book/websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a seed library at South West Library. - Set up an ask and offer site for community groups through mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a seed library at South West Library. - Establish an ask and offer site for community groups through mechanisms such as Facebook. 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p>	<p>Community groups will find it easy to access the tools and seeds they need to be able to participate in food growing, as well as information to encourage further learning.</p>	<p>Food Network</p> <p>A representative from CCA Glasgow held a Sow and Grow event at South West Library that provided more information on seed libraries to volunteers and other members of the Food Network. There is a small seed library at the</p>



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<p>such as Facebook.</p>					<p>Sout West Library that requires expansion.</p> <p>ICFN staff have engaged with local food growers and explored using various digital platforms, it was agreed that what's App was the most practical tool to use in order share information and resources.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p>
<p>Actively explore options to enable community groups to access a starter fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop eligibility criteria, spend deadlines and feedback and evaluation processes to support the distribution of the Food Network's £15k growing fund. 	<p>Year one</p>	<p>Community groups will receive funding to enable them to begin growing their own food.</p>	<p>Food Network</p>	<p>ICFN have provided financial starter funds to 6 community groups.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p>
<p>Investigate the possibility of local businesses providing sponsorship / in kind support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate the possibility of local businesses providing sponsorship / in kind support. 	<p>Year one</p>	<p>Local businesses provide sponsorship or a discount for the materials required by</p>	<p>Food Network</p>	<p>Various business within Inverclyde have supported growing spaces by</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish links with local businesses to obtain a discount on compost. - Explore the possibility of bulk buying compost. 	<p>Year One</p> <p>Year One</p>	<p>community groups to be able to participate in food growing.</p>		<p>allowing staff to volunteer within the sites. For example staff from EE helped out at the Muirshields Growing space. Further work is required to build stronger links with local business.</p> <p>Compost is now delivered to the various growing spaces across Inverclyde by HSCP's unpaid work team, using soil provided by Inverclyde Council.</p>
<p>Establish links with the Council's apprenticeship programme to investigate the possibility of apprentices providing assistance at growing sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilise apprentices to help with planting bulbs, supporting schools and nurseries and planting orchards. - Work with West College Scotland to link in with their horticulture courses. - Investigate the possibility of the 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year two</p> <p>Year one</p>	<p>Partner organisations will receive assistance with site maintenance and apprentices will gain new skills and knowledge which will help them to access employment.</p>	<p>Food Network</p>	<p>As part of Inverclyde Council apprentice program, apprentice's were recruited to support various growing space such as Parklea Branching out. 12</p>



Classification : Official

	<p>Scouts/Girl Guides etc providing support at food growing sites.</p>				<p>are in year 2 and 6 in year 1. G</p>
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Key Achievements

- South West Library – hoping to provide a seed bank, seed collection for next year – [Sow and Grow Facebook Promotion](#)
- Ad hoc - across ICFN partners there has been a range of seeds/plugs (PBO) shared with a diversity of communities for herbs, veg and flowers.
- South West Library – provide access to gardening / growing books
- Branchton & Belville – have books for people to take away.
- Easy access to seeds & plugs seeds (of choice), alongside information sheets and demonstrations has enabled more people to participate in food growing encouraged further learning.
- EE have collaborated with The Inverclyde Shed by volunteering at Muirsheil Gardens in Port Glasgow by filling up leaf bays and moving wood chips - [facebook.com](#)
- CFN has allocated funding to: 6 x community groups , to enable this to happen ICFN produced / disseminated application forms, progress & process system now in place, shared information on other funding opportunities. 6 Community groups have received funding to enable them to grow their own food.
- ICFN Facilitated collaborative working between Inverclyde Council & the Unpaid Work Team, enabling compost to be delivered to community gardens Community groups now have access to compost to reduce costs and make it easier to partake in food growing.
- ICFN letters / posters information disseminated to a range of businesses.
- For the most part the apprentices have assisted their designated organisations, and ICFN network



Priority 4: Contribute towards a reduction in food poverty through strong partnership working.

Why is this a priority?

Providing communities with opportunities to grow and cook their own food and distributing food that would otherwise go to waste are two ways in which we can contribute towards a reduction in food poverty.

Key Actions?	- How will we get there?	When will we get there?	What will success look like?	Who is responsible?	Progress On track Progress made No action taken
Actively explore the possibility of establishing a local grow your own facility in Inverclyde.	- Conduct a feasibility study regarding the potential establishment of a grow your own facility.	Year three	Local residents will be able to access a grow your own facility in Inverclyde where they can obtain fresh fruit and vegetables.	Food Network	
Work with schools and pre-5 establishments to create an orchard and / or growing space within each school / pre-5 establishment.	- Establish links with the Health and Wellbeing Network within Education to develop a project plan	Year one	Every school and pre-5 establishment will be offered the opportunity to develop an orchard and / or growing space that will enable pupils to help themselves to food.	Food Network	The Inverclyde Shed and Belville Gardens have created growing spaces for St Andrews Primary School. ICFN will continue to engage with pr-5 establishments. <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;"> G </div>





Classification : Official

<p>Work with partners to help the Food Network distribute food that would otherwise go to waste.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a method to promote and share food that is available. - Develop a bank of recipes 	<p>Year one</p> <p>Year one</p>	<p>Supermarket food near the end of its "Use By" and "Best Before" dates will be donated to local charities to distribute and use.</p>	<p>Food Network</p>	<p>Community centres and groups receive donations from local supermarkets on a regular basis. The information is shared across social media and a dedicated Whats App group.</p> <p>The Inverclyde Pantry membership continues to and access to the Pantries is promoted by the various partners.</p> <p>Belville Community Gardens have a variety of recipes hosted on their webpage, there are also recipes available on the ICFN webpage.</p>
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					Initial conversations have taken place with HSCP unpaid work in relation to distributing surplus food, further development of this is required. 
Undertake a campaign to change the rules around food "Use By" Dates.	- Promote the petition to extend "use by" dates by one day.	Year one	Supermarket food is currently donated to local organisations on the day of its "Use By" date. The campaign will ensure that charities receive this food 1 day earlier ensuring that no food goes to waste and that food is given to people in need.	Food Network	The Inverclyde Community Food Network has launched a Change.org campaign to try and change the way Use-by Dates are treated by supermarkets. 

Key Achievements

- The Inverclyde Community Food Network has launched a Change.org campaign to try and change the way Use-by Dates are treated by supermarkets. Currently our food banks and food shares are having to throw away mountains of food that they get late on the day of the Use-by date. If the supermarkets released the food on the evening prior to the Use-by date then that food could be given away for free the next day to those in need and to prevent it ending up in landfill. greenocktelegraph.co.uk
- Exploration continues – currently mapping what is available and in the process of creating an ICFN (Eatwell) Plate
- Inverclyde Shed & Belville Community Gardens involved in work with schools and pre-five establishments



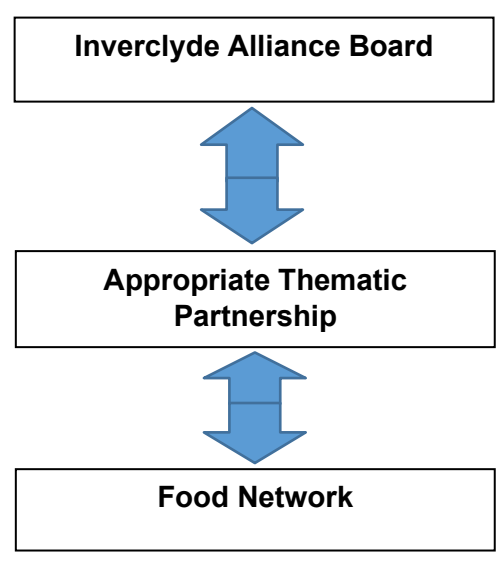
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- St Andrews Primary School received a new growing space - [Greenock school is 'growing places'](#)
- Enabled better working links & food sharing between partners and the broader community.
- Cookery classes: various cooking classes have been provided in Inverclyde for example; WCS cooking on a budget, Community cooking sessions, Belville – Carers cooking classes and WCS Flat Plack Meal demos



GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The governance structure for the delivery of the Community Food Growing Strategy is set out in the diagram below. Please note that community planning governance structures will be under review in 2023 and therefore the governance arrangements may change.



Role of Inverclyde Alliance Board

The Alliance Board is Inverclyde’s Community Planning partnership (CPP). It has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015), including the development and implementation of a Community Food Growing Strategy. A report on progress made on the actions contained within the plan will be submitted to Inverclyde Alliance Board on an annual basis to enable the Community Planning Partnership to scrutinise performance.

Role of the appropriate Thematic Group

Following a review of the Alliance delivery structures in line with the new 2023-33 Partnership Plan, the governance of the Food Growing Strategy will be allocated to the appropriate thematic group. The appropriate thematic group will have the Food Growing Strategy as an action within their delivery plan and will report on progress with the implementation of the strategy to the Alliance in their quarterly progress report.

Role of the Food Network

Responsibility for the delivery of the Community Food Growing Strategy will lie with the Food Network. The Food Network brings together all partner organisations that are involved in either growing food, distributing food, food poverty or cookery classes. This strong partnership approach will enable the Food Network to co-ordinate food growing across Inverclyde and to report progress to the Environment Partnership and the Alliance Board.