



Report To:	Inverclyde Alliance Board	Date:	17 March 2025
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Subject:	Community Food Growing Strategy: Year Two Progress		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Alliance Board on progress made in relation to the year two actions contained within the Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy.

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 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 during year two of the Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy.

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;
- how 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 with the 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 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; and
- Priority 4: Contribute towards a reduction in poverty through strong partnership working.

4.5 At the Alliance board meeting on the 18th March 2024 an update on the progress for year one was presented, in which positive feedback was provided in relation to the progress made. The paper can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16975/10-AB-Food-Growing-Strategy.pdf>

4.6 The Inverclyde Community Food Strategy, attached as appendix 1 to this report provides an update on the progress that has been made in achieving the four priorities during year two. The report provides information on the progress made under each action and the status of the action. Highlights include:

- the allocation of £46,000 to support community growers via the Invergrow fund;
- both Inverclyde Pantry projects experiencing significant growth since opening with a strong membership base at both John Wood Street (JWS) and Grieve Road locations. JWS has 885 members, while Grieve Road has 1,221 members.
- the various events hosted by ICFN;
- Inverclyde Shed being the UK Wide Winners of the 2024 RHS / Keep Scotland Beautiful Community Engagement Awards;
- the development of growing sites such as Walled Gardens in Gourock and Larkfield Gardens; and
- the role of volunteers supporting growing spaces and food provisions, for example for Parklea; in the reporting period (April – October 25) 3280 volunteer hours (137 hours per week) were recorded. Broomhill Community Hub have 12 regular attendees, which equates to an average of 150/160 hours a week if they all attend

4.7 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 Strategy group will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the strategy;
- Progress will be reported to the Thriving Communities Alliance Board thematic group; and
- An annual progress report will be submitted to the Alliance Board.

4.8 Over the next 12 months, the key focus will be:

- the gathering data to update actions for year 3 of the strategy; and
- initiating the development of a new strategy that encompasses the needs, ambitions, and capacities of groups involved in growing and food provision.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 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.
Population: The Community Food Growing Strategy will contribute to the achievement of the Population priority.
Inequalities: The Community Food Growing Strategy will contribute to the achievement of the Inequalities priority.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

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

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/16975/10-AB-Food-Growing-Strategy.pdf>
The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

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.

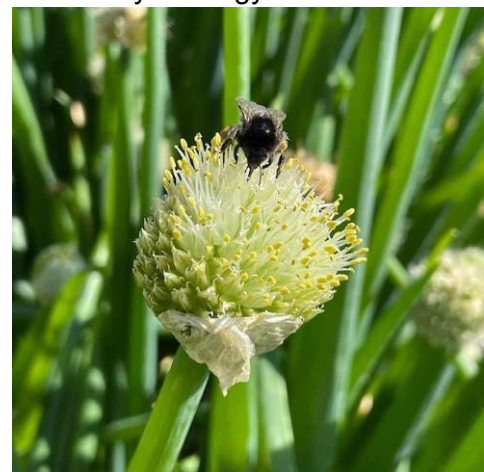


Figure 3 Bee pollenating flower at Shore Street Garden. (cc) Inverclyde She

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 Gourrock, 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.

Why is this a priority?

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.

Provide training to increase the capacity of individuals to grow their own food.

- Invergrow Project Officer and ICFN worker attended various community events to promote the various growing spaces and support, such as the Highland games, Gourrock Garden party etc.
- Blooming Inverkip and Wellington Allotments both held a ‘Keep Scotland Beautiful’ event on the 4th of June 2024, this event allowed ICFN to share practice with other community gardens.
- Branchton Community Centre held a Garden open day / event on the 18th of August 2024. This event was to show people how to grow and harvest produce.
- Drying Green held an open day on the 13th of August 2024, to show locals how to grow and harvest what was already grown.
- The Invergrow officer attended a Sow and Grow event on the 30th of January 2024 at South West Library, to get information on sowing seeds.
- Branchton Community Centre and Gardening club have been promoting and hosting a gardening West College Scotland course with and without Invergrow funding.
- Parklea Branching Out have used Invergrow funding to keep the ICFN polytunnel stocked. • Parklea Branching Out have used Invergrow funding to keep the ICFN polytunnel stocked and provided propagation and growing facilities/resources to support ICFN partners growing projects/activities
- Community event held at Parklea in August to help establish a new community orchard, with over 40 apple trees planted.
- A St. Stephen’s pupil has created a ‘how to guide’ that informs readers how to create their own raised garden bed from old pallets.
- The Drying Green used Invergrow funding to host a herbal butter making class on the 12th November 2024.

Mentor Network includes active knowledge & skills sharing via:

- ICFN monthly meetings
- Inverclyde Community Garden Group face to face meetings & What’s App Group



- Kidron Community Garden What's App Group – Craigend & Lyle Gateway
- Parklea Volunteers What's App Group
- Food Share What's App Group
- Presentations to local groups, i.e. Kilmacolm and Gourock Horticulture Societies

Training 2024

WCS Horticultural Training sessions

- WCS have delivered 6 courses at Parklea Branching Out and Branchton Community Centre

ICFN attended the following RIG Arts @ The Drying Green cascade learning sessions

- Angela Smith (RHS)– Community Gardens in Inverclyde
- Kitty (Dunoon) Fermentation talk
- Grow Food Course info session
- Growing Calendar / seed sharing Feb 2024

Belville Community Garden –

- Outdoor Cooking and Hygiene Course
- First Aid Course (alongside a number of community chefs)

ICFN assisted raised bed gardening sessions @

- Belville Community Gardens
- The Drying Green
- Muirsheil

ICFN facilitated / Growing / Planting / Harvesting sessions @

- Craigend
- Lyle Gateway
- Barnardos (
- Parklea Branching Out



ICFN input into:

- Expert Forager - Herbal Medicine Workshop @ PBO (8 participants)
- ICFN foraging session for medicinal herbs @PBO (4 participants)
- ICFN Medicinal balms workshop @ PBO (4 participants)

ICFN attended and contributed to:

- Coorie In @ Glasgow Botanic Gardens with Eden Project Communities (50+ practitioners/volunteers)
- Glasgow Community Food Network (50+ practitioners/volunteers)
- WASH House Garden Glasgow (10 ICFN Network practitioners)

Belville & ICFN - RBS Mortgage Centre

- 8 person team assisted Belville growing spaces

Parklea Branching Out

- 10 CVS Staff Team volunteered at PBO, celebrating Volunteer Week Feedback : Thank you, they all really enjoyed themselves so much. Thank you for helping to set this up. They said they wished they could do it every day. Tony Volunteer Engagement Manager
- 6 Insight Travel staff team
- 12 Riverclyde Homes Team – as part of their “Working in Neighbourhoods” initiative, assisting with grounds and garden maintenance as well as tidy-up tasks at our growing project.
- In the reporting period (April – October 25) 3280 volunteer hours (137 hours per week) were recorded. We are seeing an increase in our volunteers through promoting our work and new opportunities are being provided through our growing projects and partnerships.

ICFN facilitated POTS OF LOVE

- Belville – Valentines Day Mothers Day (12 participants) – Pay it forward to Jericho (Men’s & Ladies House) 12th February 2024
- Auchmountain (Book Bugs) (15 participants) – Mothers Day / International Women’s Day
- Wellpark Nursery–(12 participants)
- Aileymill Nursery x 2 sessions (18 children and caregivers each session) – Pay it forward to John Galt House & Rainbow Garden

Engage with children and families to find out how best to go about providing access to growing opportunities.

- Auchmountain collaborated with the Inverclyde Shed using Invergrow funding to establish a new growing space with the local playscheme.



Classification : Official

- Blooming Inverkip and the Inverclyde Shed used Invergrow funding and pupils to assist with a growing project at Inverclyde Academy that created 2 new large growing spaces for all pupils to access.
- Weekly leaflet drops in attempt to increase knowledge of growing opportunities within Inverclyde for all ages.
- (Project In progress with Inverclyde Shed that will include a network of schools piloting a community garden / school collaboration).
- The Invergrow Project Officer attended Belville Community Garden Will o' the Wild events early 2024 to engage with families and young persons to shape their introduction to growing.
- The Invergrow Project Officer collaborated with Craigmarnock, Port Glasgow High School, and St Stephen's pupils by showing them when and how to plant bulbs in the CLD raised garden beds.
- Parklea Branching Out welcomed the yearly Transit Group from Port Glasgow High School. The pupils took part in planting activities and harvested potatoes and vegetables to take home.
- Kilmacolm Primary School visited Parklea to see our growing space and to select plants for the school grounds

Inverclyde Shed

- Setup a No Dig Garden & Orchard at Lomond View Academy who were supported by Invergrow
- Setup a No Dig Garden & Orchard at Oronsay Avenue for local neighbour group / foster carer.
- Setup a No Dig Garden & Orchard at Youth Connections, Larkfield
- Setup a No Dig Gardens & Orchard at St Andrews & Aileymill Primary Schools in Larkfield.
- Setup a No Dig Garden & Orchard at Lady Alice Primary School

Create a section for food growing on the online learning platform Moodle.

- On the 29th August 2024, educational materials provided by Gary Rankin (West College Scotland Lecturer) were uploaded to Invergrow Moodle section.
- The Inverclyde Shed and Blooming Inverkip continue to upload educational videos of the work they do to increase capacity of growing within Inverclyde
- Branchton Community Centre and Parklea Branching Out are still continuously running a West College Scotland gardening course.

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

Why is this a priority?



Classification : Official

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.

Further develop the Food Network's map of Inverclyde to include all sites available for food growing and community assets.

- The current ICFN map is still on the ICFN website, and this is highlighted on the Invergrow webpage on the council website.
- ICFN are still continuously updating the map.

Develop a promotional campaign to promote the opportunities available within Inverclyde for growing food.

- Harvest events have been held by the network.
- Greenock Telegraph and Inverclyde council have promoted the new raised beds at John Gault House, Stewart House, and Elliott Court conducted by unpaid work and the Invergrow Project Officer.
- All ICFN events / projects are promoted through Inverclyde Council social media.
- The Invergrow Project Officer visited all localities in Inverclyde and delivered over 100+ leaflets through doors at each locality.
- The Invergrow Project Officer has assisted Larkfield Guerilla Garden with their constitution and business plan throughout 2024.
- The Invergrow Project Officer has attended the job centre volunteering event on the 23rd October 2024, promoting all growing spaces and informing attendees of the work experience available.
- The Invergrow Project Officer has attended the CVS Beacon event promoting the ICFN network and all growing spaces available.
- The Practitioners Forum was held to promote ICFN and all growing spaces within Inverclyde 21st November 2024
- The Invergrow project officer has created a Food Strategy Reporting Template in 2024, this is to collate progress of each growing space and identify areas of improvement and to share positive ideas to each member of the network. (Missing feedback from Blooming Inverkip, Branchton Community Centre, and Parklea Branching Out.

Develop and share a calendar of food events taking place across all partner organisations.

- The initial conversations have led to regular updates sent to all members within ICFN network.

Develop guidance and support for communities to help them with the asset transfer process.

- Revised guidance to be uploaded to the IC webpage along with the interactive asset map

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.

Establish 6 pop up sites and 10 new food growing sites across Inverclyde.

- Auchmountain have established a new growing space and planted new orchards with the local playscheme.
- Broomhill Gardens and Community Hub have created 8 new sleeper beds, and this will massively increase their growing capacity.
- CLD have placed 2 raised growing beds outside their office to implement a new growing space on site.
- Caddlehill Community Green Space have installed a raised bed to support Ardgowan Primary , this was installed by unpaid work and funded by Invergrow.
- St Stephen’s High School are using Invergrow funding to rejuvenate 2 large growing beds for the shared campus.
- The Invergrow project with the help of unpaid work have placed 6 new raised growing beds in River Clyde Home sheltered accommodation. There are 3 in John Gault House, 2 in Elliott Court, and 1 in Stewart House.
- Blooming Inverkip and the Inverclyde Shed using Invergrow funding have established a new growing space at Lomond View, this includes new barrel planters, a ‘no dig’ site, and new orchards.
- Blooming Inverkip and the Inverclyde shed collaborated using Invergrow funding to establish new growing sites and orchards at Inverkip Primary and Inverclyde Academy.
- Broadstone Gardens have received 4 bags of soil from Invergrow funding to continue growing fruit and other plants on site. This was purchased and delivered by the Invergrow Project Officer on the 25th July 2024.
- (In progress) rejuvenating the back of the Port Glasgow iZone, the unpaid work supervisor has visited the site on 14th Jan 25 and will be looking to clear this space for growing with the next month or two.
- Wellington Park Bowling Club have used Invergrow funding on a piece of unused wasteland at the club to clear the site and build 4 raised beds with the assistance from The Inverclyde Shed.
- The Drying Green used Invergrow funding to purchase a polytunnel to further enhance seasonal growing, this was constructed by the Invergrow Project Officer, Success Wealth Staff, and volunteers.
- Parklea Branching Out welcomed the yearly Transit Group from Port Glasgow High School. The pupils took part in planting activities and harvested potatoes and vegetables to take home.
- Kilmacolm Primary School visited Parklea to see our growing space and to select plants for the school grounds

Inverclyde Shed



Classification : Official

- Continue to successfully operate our Shore Street Community garden and Muirshiel Market Garden & Orchard with harvests going to shed members and local community.
- Setup and expanded Bee Apiary in Port Glasgow, now seven colonies and trained ten bee keepers.
- Setup large new publicly accessible growing space & orchard at The Walled Garden, Gourock involving four local schools, over 120 children visiting and engaging.
- Setup 20 new community orchards across Inverclyde at Schools, Churches and other Community groups.
- Setup an edible trail in Gourock consisting of ten sites of herbs, fruit and an apple orchard
- Setup a large new orchard of 100 tree's at St Laurence
- Built a Polycurb Greenhouse for Belville Community Garden who were supported by Invergrow
- Setup a No Dig Garden & Orchard at Wellington Bowling Club
- Setup an Aeroponics Cell at Inverclyde Shed's workshop, potential for 400 plants.
- Held various events including popup stalls, open days and social events at our various growing spaces including an annual Words Festival.
- Supported other groups with advice and practical growing help.

This activity has been supported by grants from TNLCommunity Fund, Robertson Trust, Inverclyde Community Fund, Coop Community, Tree Council, The Orchard Project, RBS Regenerate, Community Land Scotland, B&Q Foundation, Calmac Community Fund and the Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund and the work of our volunteers from all over Inverclyde.

Develop a food growing library that will provide community groups with access to tools, seeds and book/websites.

- Inverclyde's first seed library has been expanded and it includes instructions of how the system works and how to keep it running sustainably.
- There are plans to implement a seed library in Port Glasgow.
- ICFN booklets and other learning materials are on their website.
- Invergrow Moodle materials on website and are accessible for all.

Actively explore options to enable community groups to access a starter fund.

- This project with ICFN is ongoing

Investigate the possibility of local businesses providing sponsorship / in kind support.



Classification : Official

- The project at Inverclyde Academy involved employees from The Royal Bank of Scotland to assist with building the sleeper beds and other labour.
- Unpaid work and River Clyde Homes collaborated with the Invergrow Project to create new raised growing beds and place them in sheltered housing complexes within Inverclyde.

Establish links with the Council’s apprenticeship programme to investigate the possibility of apprentices providing assistance at growing sites.

- As part of Inverclyde Council apprentice program, apprentices were recruited to support various growing space such as Parklea Branching out. 12 are in year 2 and 6 in year 1.
- There was support from council apprentices at Belville Gardens and other various growing sites across Inverclyde.

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.

Actively explore the possibility of establishing a local grow your own facility in Inverclyde

- The establishment of the seed library at Southwest Library hives Inverclyde the opportunity to grow their own and give back by providing seeds to the library.
- The Invergrow Moodle page provides Inverclyde with the materials to regrow from scraps to help promote further sustainability.
- The ICFN Food Map / Food Access Map provides an overview of Inverclyde to promote the gardens that can encourage residents to grow their own.
- The ICFN website has established growing booklets to assist locals to grow their own.
- The Invergrow fund has allowed Belville Community Gardens to purchase a ‘Polycrub’ this was constructed by The Inverclyde Shed, this now provides the opportunity for Belville to grow all season long.
- The Invergrow funding has provided a positive impact to Wellington Park Bowling club as the harvest from growing was distributed to club members and they are hoping to continue doing this.

Work with schools and pre-5 establishments to create an orchard and / or growing space within each school / pre-5 establishment.

- The ICFN members have established growing spaces and orchards across numerous nurseries and schools within Inverclyde to promote growing within schools.



- The Inverclyde Shed and Belville Gardens have created growing spaces for St Andrews Primary School. ICFN will continue to engage with pr-5 establishments

Work with partners to help the Food Network distribute food that would otherwise go to waste.

- The ICFN members have established cooking classes that will make use of the surplus food that would normally be wasted. This prevents future waste. This encourages locals to grow their own and use the produce they grow for their own use.
- 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.
- The Inverclyde Pantry membership continues to and access to the Pantries is promoted by the various partners.
- Belville Community Gardens have a variety of recipes hosted on their webpage, there are also recipes available on the ICFN webpage.
- Initial conversations have taken place with HSCP unpaid work in relation to distributing surplus food, further development of this is required.

Multiply provision

- 49 learners have accessed cooking classes via the multiply project. 6 short course community based sessions have been delivered, and been attended by learners from the following partners, Jericho Male and Female houses, IFiT (Inverclyde Faith in Throughcare), Inverclyde residents, ESOL learners
- 1 community based course was offered to both native and non-native speakers of English, to give opportunity to practice language in the contextualised setting of cooking
- 2 sessions with embedded numeracy was delivered in partnership with Belville Gardens
- 2 taster sessions delivered to Women's Aid and DWP – (learners from the taster sessions opted to attend a full community based course)
- The sessions offer the opportunity to engage in practical cooking skills, look at compare and contrast for ingredients, cook once eat 4 times, and budgeting skills. To date 16 learners have successfully submitted their portfolios and achieved numeracy core skills accreditation, with a further 7 learners currently working on their portfolios.

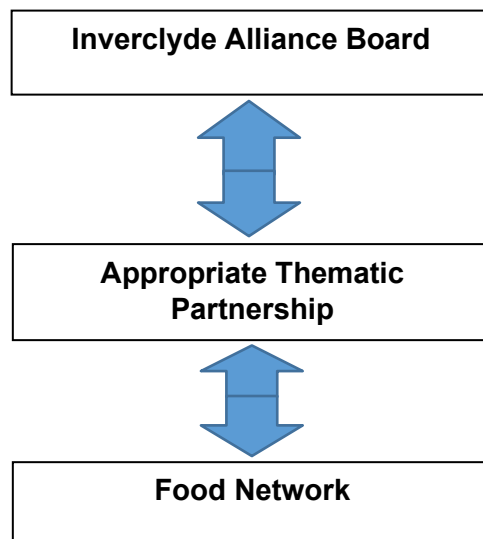
Undertake a campaign to change the rules around food "Use By" Dates.

- Branchton Community Centre are leading on this



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.