

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 20 MAY 2013
REPORT ON: COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT PILOT PROJECTS
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
REPORT NO: 195-2013

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the establishment of three pilot community growing projects in areas of multiple deprivation within the city.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee approves this report and remits the Director of Environment to:

- 2.1 take forward three community allotment projects in conjunction with the City Development and Chief Executive's Departments, noting the requirements for external funding both in terms of development works and potential for funding a Project Co-ordinator to co-ordinate the strategy;
- 2.2 work in partnership with relevant organisations and constituted groups which will support the community growing project; and
- 2.3 report back to committee on progress in approximately 6 to 9 months.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Director of Corporate Services advises that external funding will be sought for the development works and the Project Co-ordinator and there may be a requirement at a later date for a financial input from the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Reference is made to the Council's Fairness Strategy and Action Plan which was approved at the Policy and Resources Committee of 25 June 2012 and where one of the Community and Neighbourhood outcomes is specified to 'introduce Community allotment initiatives in Community Regeneration areas'. Initial investigation has been carried out by Officers of the Environment Department in conjunction with City Development and the Chief Executive's Department. Community growing can provide a vehicle for delivering a range of health, community safety, regeneration, economic, environmental and social outcomes. Examples of community growing projects are appended to this report.
- 4.2 Broadly, the benefits to individuals, the community and the wider environment include:
 - To the individual – opportunity to enhance wellbeing through healthy activity, sense of achievement by 'growing your own' and 'eating your own', new skills, opportunity for social interaction and inclusion and practical barrier free entry (no need to purchase tools).
 - To the community – opportunity to build stronger community ties where individuals can work and experience their leisure time together. Also opportunities for intergenerational work.

- To the environment – opportunity to diversify the landscape areas of multiple deprivation to establish a sense of inclusion and ownership of areas of communal greenspace. Growing your own also reduces the climate change impact of ‘shop bought’ vegetables and there are opportunities for incorporating environmentally friendly features in the site including recycling of materials, composting and water collection.
 - To the local economy – anecdotal evidence from similar schemes elsewhere in Scotland describe an increase in the popularity of the area making properties more desirable.
- 4.3 Initial investigations have identified three potential community growing sites in Kirkton, Douglas and Lochee. In addition to these pilot sites there is potential to develop a programme that will establish similar community growing projects in other regeneration areas, particularly on gap sites and where there is a demand.
- 4.4 The Environment Department will work in partnership with the Chief Executive and City Development Departments to develop proposals and outline costs for consultation with appropriate community organisations.
- 4.5 In order to co-ordinate a city wide approach and to establish a support network for individual projects with additional resources, a project co-ordinator would require to be appointed. The co-ordinator would support groups to become independent ‘associations’ and ensure strong partnerships between the City Council and other organisations, following the Shettlestone model described in the appended information. It is anticipated that the up-skilling of participants will be necessary through the development of a training programme.
- 4.6 It is proposed to appoint a project co-ordinator on a fixed term contract of 18 months to take this project forward and to develop a sustainable and long term business strategy.
- 4.7 The capital and revenue costs associated with developing the above pilot sites including the appointment of a project co-ordinator requires to be developed and established. There are a number of potential sources of external funding for such projects which will be pursued, including the Climate Change Fund which was successfully used by the Shettlestone project. These sources will be investigated for the funding of the capital and revenue costs, however there may be a requirement for any balance to be met by the Council.
- 4.8 A further report will be brought back to committee to update members on progress. Future consideration will be given to how best to apply the model developed by the pilot projects, to other potential sites in the city.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. No major impacts have been identified.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Director of City Development, Director of Leisure & Communities, Director of Housing and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted on this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Greyfriars Garden – attached.
- Shettleston Community Garden Project – attached.

Ken Laing
Director of Environment

Gary Robertson
Head of Environmental Management

Date: 8th May 2013

APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ALLOTMENTS IN GLASGOW

1.0 Community Allotments at Shettleston and Greyfriars

The locations of the sites are in the centre of communities on land which has previously been derelict or formed part of a future development site. The gardens designs take account of the ground conditions by providing raised beds for participants. The benefit of such a design is two fold by providing easy access for participants to growing spaces and reducing the need to fully cultivate the ground, thereby reducing costs.

The approximate cost of the development of the Shettleston Project was £195,000. The gardens are governed by individual associations and there is strong partnership between organisations such as Glasgow City Council, Housing Associations and the community. This had a number of benefits such as land provision, design, contract and other technical support to the “Associations” as well as assistance with the submission of funding applications. Successful applications enabled the employment of staff such as a Project Co-ordinator and Training Staff for the allotments.

The “Association’s” approach to governance is such that:

- family and groups are encouraged to take up plots.
- there are communal plots where all members help and shared in the produce.
- there are also other communal facilities such as “potting shed” (where tools are provided) and there are separate facilities such as barbeque/seating area and open space garden for events etc.
- charges are levied for individual plots (noting free access to tools and facilities)
- the rules of the Allotments are strictly enforced, however, families and children are encouraged and actively engage in the tending of the gardens.

The local communities were consulted on proposals and a vast majority of the plot holders were from the immediate vicinity.

2.0 Community Garden, Govan

The Community Garden at Govan works on the principle of produce going to those in need within the Community. The project operates on the basis of an open door policy where individuals could contribute their free time in developing and maintaining the gardens. The more informal approach, in addition to the lack of formal governance and partnership with the Council etc. provided challenges to the small but active groups trying to meet the project objectives.

COMMUNITY GARDEN DESIGN – SHETTLESTON AND GREYFRIARS, GLASGOW

The design concept of the Community Gardens include for the following items:-

GREYFRIARS GARDEN

Do you want the opportunity to grow your own fresh fruit and vegetables in the Merchant City, meet your neighbours and take part in a green space project to improve your area?



Glasgow City Council, the Merchant City Initiative, Scottish Enterprise, the Merchant City Community Council and local residents and businesses are working together to transform a currently derelict site into a community garden with raised beds, greenhouses and a wildflower meadow with bee hive! There will be access to tools, seeds and mentoring support from local growers for all plot holders.

The site which bounds Shuttle Street and High Street is open to any member of the Merchant City community on a first come first served basis .

For more information or to register your interest in taking on a growing space in the garden please e.mail:

**info@glasgowmerchantcity.net
or
info@sowandgroweverywhere.org**





SHETTLESTON COMMUNITY GROWING PROJECT

The Shettleston Community Growing Project is an initiative by residents and representatives from various organisations in the Shettleston and Tollcross area who came together towards the end of 2009 with the shared purpose of developing a derelict area of ground as a community allotment site.

The SCGP site comprises two adjacent areas, one of which is owned by Shettleston Housing Association and the other by Glasgow City Council, and which together total 2,071 square metres. The 1,225 square metre section owned by Shettleston Housing Association could not be developed for housing due to adverse ground conditions and was contained within the register of vacant/derelict sites in Glasgow.

In March 2010, the SCGP was awarded over £172,000 from the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund to establish the project. Glasgow City Council contributed a further £18,700. Construction works commenced at the end of August and were completed at the end of December.

The SCGP is unlike a traditional allotment since it offers users raised beds, which the group has named 'growing spaces'. This system is ideal for urban areas where ground contamination prevents direct digging into the soil. It is also well suited to gardening novices, people with disabilities and children, all of whom might find the

conventional allotment plot too daunting.

The SCGP site has 50 growing spaces for individual and group use, communal fruit beds, seven hot houses, a wildflower meadow and a communal area for workshops and open days. The beds have been constructed using top quality, sustainable Scottish larch, which has an estimated lifespan of over 20 years. Elsewhere, recycled timber has been used for the shelter area, which also has a green roof that collects rainwater, transferring it into recycled whisky barrels where 8000 litres can be utilised for irrigating the beds. The site even has a composting toilet!

The Climate Challenge Fund award has also paid for a part-time project officer to provide users with practical assistance and advice on food growing and also on wider carbon reduction issues and energy saving measures they can adopt in their own lives and homes. It is estimated that the carbon savings for the project through food growing, composting and through the promotion of carbon reduction lifestyles will amount to 1.286 tonnes per year and so play a part in the global effort to tackle climate change.



A new Food Miles Resource Pack, also funded through the Climate Challenge Fund, has been created in collaboration with the two local primary schools – Wellshot Primary and St. Paul's Primary – who have

been involved in the project from the start. The pack, which links directly to the Curriculum for Excellence, teaches children about the environmental cost of transporting food and the importance of growing, eating or buying local, seasonal produce. It is now available to schools throughout Glasgow.

Two clients of Glasgow City Council's Accord Centre, who have mild learning disabilities, worked on the site part-time learning new skills in hard and soft landscaping and grounds maintenance (thanks to Scott Morran and Daniel Darroch for their hard work). The Accord Centre is also providing ongoing maintenance to the site.



The SCGP is grateful to the Climate Challenge Fund and to its development staff at Keep Scotland Beautiful for the assistance they have provided over the past 12 months. We also acknowledge the substantial contribution of staff from Shettleston Housing Association and Glasgow City Council's Development and Regeneration Services.

For the Food Miles Pack we are indebted to teaching staff from Wellshot and St. Mark's Primary Schools whose hard work and vision have made this resource now available to 146 primary schools in Glasgow.



Lead Consultant:	ERZ Landscape Architects
Quantity Survey:	Armour Construction Consultants
Contractor:	Caley Construction
Funding:	Climate Challenge Fund: £172,769 Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration: £12,000 Glasgow City Council Shettleston Area Budget: £6,700

