



‘Growing Coventry’ - Stakeholder launch at Garden Organic, Monday 9th March 2009

1. The event

This report features outcomes from a stakeholder launch of the ‘Growing Coventry’ programme. ‘Growing Coventry’ is one of 5 key multi-stakeholder initiatives being championed by the Environmental Theme group of the Coventry Partnership under the chairmanship of Peter Woodward, who also facilitated this session.

Myles Bremner, Chief Executive of Garden Organic, outlined a vision for Growing Coventry with four milestones in 2009 to begin encouraging wider involvement:

March 9 th	Stakeholder launch
April 4 th /5 th	‘Get Set Grow’ launch
July 3 rd /5 th	Godiva Festival
Sept/October	Harvest festival/food and drink festival

2. Outcomes Report

The outcomes in the report are as recorded on the day on cards. It is primarily intended as a resource and prompt to those who were involved in the session itself.

3. Attendees

Andy Littlewood, City Council
Cathy Fitzsimons, City Council
Councillor Nigel Lee, City Council
Craig Hickin, City Council
Denise Snell, Coventry Education Business Partnership Centre
Ervin Menyhart, Transition Coventry
Gareth Davies, Garden Organic
Gary Pittaway, CVOne
Gillian McGivern, Heart of England Organic Group
Jamie Whitehouse, City Council
John Halford, City Council
Judy Steele, Action 21
June Jeffrey, CEN
Katie Martin, Groundwork Coventry and Warwickshire
Ken Lindsay, Whitefriars Housing Group
Liz Millett, CVOne
Mark Nicholls, CVOne
Maureen Harris, Allesley Park Walled Garden Group
Monika Bzowy, Ikea
Myles Bremner, Garden Organic

Phil Dickin, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
Tim Fox, English Landscapes
Tim Jacques, City Council
Jamie Perry, Herbert Museum and Art Gallery
Justin Williams, Garden Organic
James May, Transition Coventry
Len Parnell, Coventry Allotment society
Sue Mason, City Council
Rhiannon Lewis, Garden Organic
Andy Duncan, City Council
Nigel Wain, Coventry Partnership
Margi Lennartssen, Garden Organic
Charlotte Corner, Garden Organic
Peter Woodward, Quest Associates

4. Visions for 'Growing Coventry'

Delegates in table groups offered visions of how Coventry might be in 5 years time as a result of a successful Growing Coventry initiative. These have been roughly grouped as follows:

- Public space compost and recycling bins
- Community composting
- Zero percent organic waste
- Thriving kitchen gardens in lots of parks
- Growing in car parks - trees, containers
- Civic ornamental vegetable displays
- More community orchards
- Fruit and nut trees across city
- 50% of new tree/shrub plantings are edible - apples, nuts, soft fruits
- fruit and nut trees in the streets - not limes!
- Green space provision incorporates food
- Spare land is used for growing food
- Utilising existing green space for growing food public/private
- Food growing in the City Centre - make it an example
- All social housing to have productive gardens
- Social housing food growing provision
- Composting toilets in all new builds
- All new build housing to have dedicated growing areas
- Growing all around the canal area
- Promoting inclusion
- A learning environment for all e.g. young offenders, learning disabilities etc.
- Free food payment for unemployed in return for allotment work
- 60% households keep chickens/bees
- food productive land/gardens attract council tax reduction
- community groups growing, cooking and eating together - networked
- city food growing show gardens/allotments to inspire and provide information and training
- provision of growing your own courses

- tool share, seed swap, land share, crop swap
- opportunities for adult growing education
- community vegetable seed banks
- cooperative of food growers selling local food back to the supermarkets
- market gardens around city
- 100% of Coventry households engage in organic food growing
- everyone in Coventry to know how to grow something
- growing food for wildlife - compliments biodiversity
- people understand seasonality
- celebration of food growing through ethnic diversity
- everybody eating something they've grown themselves
- everyone in Coventry growing at least at a basic level
- everyone in Coventry to grow something!
- Target percentage of Coventry food locally grown
- Godiva festival is the biggest growing fest
- Harvest festival become major event in own right in events calendar
- Food crops dominate Coventry in bloom
- Regional celebration event
- Vibrant active farmers markets
- Active local shops selling local food
- Business 200 club - 200 businesses are using their land to help feed their employees
- Business parks to have dedicated growing areas
- Work place gardens, allotments - encouraging sharing of produce
- all primary school children have high food literacy
- every school to have growing area within school grounds
- getting all Coventry schools growing
- every child knows how to grow food and how to cook it
- vegetable gardens in all early years schools in the city
- every child to experience growing
- forest gardens schools, spaces
- volunteer force to promote food growing
- key visions
- community composting
- local food production is part of everybody's lifestyle and high level of food literacy
- all Coventry schools have growing areas and growing knowledge cascades through the family
- everyone in Coventry to grow something
- food benefits - all on benefits to learn how to grow and prepare healthy meals

5. Current activities within Growing Coventry theme

Delegates itemised current activities in the City that contributed to the Growing Coventry theme:

- Project that works on growing with people with learning difficulties (Judy Steele)
- Thrive Garden at GO

- GROWTH - supporting those with physical or learning difficulties june@gorganic
- Age Concern run a community growing space
- GO's organic schools programme (Colette Bond)
- Dad's allotment Childrens Education Project, moat House Childrens Centre - Tim Jacques
- Training and learning opportunities provided in food growing by GO
- Former city farm/Leigh Street allotment
- Afterschool gardening and wildlife clubs in many schools
- Existing groups with similar goals but not yet food growing eg Transition Towns
- Coventry in Bloom - could build on this for food growing/promotion
- Voluntary groups who have allotments or food growing projects
- Fair's Fair Trade Fair - Herbert (4th April)
- Wildlife photographer of the year competition
- Events/schools programme to provide community/social benefits
- Existing green café/local produce
- Coventry farmers market CV1
- Provide compost bins to sheltered blocks so tenants can compost garden waste
- GO running demonstration organic gardens and growing courses
- Existing allotment provision CCC
- Healthy eating courses - but no food growing yet!
- Sean O'Donovan runs a City Farm at Cardinal Wiseman School
- Local food directory available CCC sustainability team
- Allesley Park walled garden and Expanding 1.5 acre kitchen garden
- GO runs master compost scheme with Las
- Thriving allotment society of 59 sites - vacancies available
- Schools projects/education via CCC
- 20 schools involved with Whitefriars Garden Competition WHG has given veg seeds plants/tools
- growing with schools partnership - creation of hub schools; schools developing growing areas/some livestock; development worker providing practical help/advice
- local contact johnhirons@cardinalwisemanschool
- partners - FCFCG, Cardinal Wiseman, education Business partnership centres; Sainsbury family charity trusts
- FFLP running schools in Coventry inc Cardinal Wiseman School
- Large proportion of Coventry Schools involved in garden organic for schools/food for life partnership
- Wildlife garden scheme (from April 09) - Phil Dickin WWT
- GO events on growing - Gareth Davies
- Transition Earlsdon/Coventry - food groups - Jo Rathbone/Ervin Enyhart
- How to grow courses - GO, City College
- Forest School programme - early years - Phil Dickin
- Allotment societies - many involved

6. What's in the pipeline?

Delegates itemised activities that were being planned that might fit within the Growing Coventry theme:

- Various local food bids to Lottery - groundwork, *GO*, *Couldon*
- Food growing - demo plots, champions, deprived parts of *Coventry*, community food growing (*Groundwork*, *wildlife Trust*, *garden organic*)
- 'every action counts' programme - community groups involved - one element to grow own food, sourcing local produce
- Big Lottery Bid outdoor learning co-ordinator - *Tim Jacques*
- Garden share schemes - *Cov city centre* and *RSLs* - trial scheme 2009 - full scheme 2010
- Harvest Festival 2009 - *CVOne*
- Community picnic at *Godiva Festival* 2009
- *Coventry in Bloom* transformed to *Growing Coventry* from 2009 - *CVOne*, *Whitefriars*, *CCC*
- city centre redevelopment in planning
- west midlands regional spatial strategy - thousands of new homes on green belt and agricultural land
- war memorial park becoming allotment show garden - *Jamie Whitehouse*
- *Whitefriars* tree planting programme 2009/10
- former city farm site partner group formed - (*Phil Dunn*)
- 14-19 diploma in environmental land based studies - sept 09
- growing with schools partnership - celebration (garden, village show) at *Corpus Christi School* - 30th June
- major schools rebuilding programme taking place
- with schools opening for longer hours - opportunity for extended learning, clubs
- *Warwick university* allotment on uni land - *Owen* contact via *Judy Steele*
- allotments - selling surplus by linking demand with supply. Requires business advice (eg *Legi*) and coordination
- *Radford children's* allotment - *Joanne 07760318138*
- Potential to roll out garden organic master garden scheme in *Coventry* (vols acting as veg doctors/food growing ambassadors)
- *Coombe Abbey* - possible restore walled garden
- *Allesley garden* to persuade Council to allow expansion of walled kitchen garden
- *Garden Organic* planning to run *Master Gardener Scheme*
- *Leader Rural Development Programme* - *Community Growing around Coventry* *Gareth Davies*

7. Ideas for 4th/5th April event

Table groups made specific suggestions about the proposed launch event on 4th/5th April.

- open up police box for information *CVOne/garden organic*
- former city farm space available
- use schools as centres of info - skills
- *Herbert* - prepare for crowds!
- Empty city shops with workshops
- Get retail market buy in (and other city centre retailers)
- Transport to *Ryton Organic*

- Free bus transport for people in Coventry to come to garden organic on 5 April - The Growing bus
- Satellite - RSG events
- RSG packs to childrens centres
- Gardens Question time
- Empty shop in city centre for a seed/tool swap
- Make it accessible
- Pots 'n containers
- Wear your wellies and get in free (Get set grow)
- Fact sheets
- Cooking exhibition
- Tool swap shop
- Trade your parking/bus ticket for seeds
- Growing kits
- Collect your growing kit 'outposts'
- Big 'ol red tractor parked in Coventry city centre
- Incongruous temporary growing area in Coventry centre - radish bed!

Individual delegates then pledged how they might individually support/contribute to the 4th/5th event

Neighbourhood wardens Distribution of leaflets to wider communities	Cathy Fitzsimmons, Acting Ops Man 07956273060; N Wardens - 0247685547
Local food directories	Andy Littlewood
Promotion within community groups and stakeholders	John Holford 07931 732743 Acting community safety officer, neighbourhood management
Link to the wider Coventry partnership - transport to explore if anything could be done on transport to Ryton	Nigel Wain
Publicity materials - promoter neighbourhood element of Heart of England in Bloom and encourage community involvement	Sue Morrison CCC
Cleansing and grounds - donate surplus pots and plants. Display	Sue Morrison
CVOne web site	
Publicise on Transition town web site	James May james@rebelbase.plus.com 0776155564
CEN Info on website and events Newsletter (next deadline 16/3) Promote at CEN on 14/3	June Jeffrey
Former city farm site	Phil Dunn
War Memorial park could distribute growing kits	Ann.akerman@coventry.gov.uk

Happy to hold event to distribute growing kits	Tim.jacques@coventry.gov.uk
Possible space for display	Monika.bzowy@memo.ikea.com
Get set grow event Wear your wellies and get in free Free seed/pot/compost for every visitor to get set grow Cooks garden planner could be reprinted with funding Help and advice Newsletter/website	Rhiannon Lewis rlewis@gardenorganic.org.uk
Transition towns Can email info about the event to those on contact lists	Ervin Menyhait Ervinsmac@mac.com
CVOne Gardeners, resources - seeds, pots, compost	
Growing with Schools Partnership Workshops at one or more of our participating schools	
Cathy Fitzsimons Neighbourhood wardens Acting Operations manager	Able to reach local members of communities ie residents/businesses etc. delivery of leaflets etc and access to vehicles for transport

8. Ideas about Godiva festival

During a short session, delegates were invited to offer initial thoughts about how the Godiva festival might be enhanced:

- Connections to satellite locations for activities
- Seasonal food
- Godiva procession with growing theme
- Eating healthy pack lunch competition
- Scarecrow competition
- Speakers in a tent
- Food for free connection
- Vegetable symphony orchestra
- Extend Godiva to a week long festival
- Link to wildlife photographer of the year at the Herbert
- Picnic in the park

9. Other Stakeholders

Delegates identified other organisations and individuals who might be engaged as Growing Coventry moves forward:

- Growing with schools Partnership Forum (participating schools)
- FCFCG - Ian Egginton Metters
- Permaculture Association

- Health sector
- Agricultural colleges
- Secondary schools
- Scouts, guides, WI
- Garden centres/nurseries
- New deal for communities
- Moat House Trust need to be involved
- Mary Judge -Business in the community
- Healthy schools concord
- Jane Craig - NDC
- Marsha Culture, Leisure and libraries
- Children and young people - Sheila Bates (Children's champion)
- Involve health, probation, colleges etc
- Older people's forum
- Mental health charities
- Excluded children
- Refugee centre
- Coventry telegraph/ BBC Cov and Warwickshire
- Cardinal Wiseman School
- Councillors/parish councillors
- Neighbourhood management
- Ward forums
- Council intranet/internet
- PCT/health professionals
- Supermarkets to allocate store space for local produce

10. Final thoughts on the way forward

Delegates were invited to offer final observations

Nigel Wain	Esther Higdon is a contact in the PCT who is looking at the wider health agenda and she may be useful to contact - on secondment to council planning, transport department
Nigel in	Do we need to think about a full time to drive the agenda forward! Nigel Wain
Rhiannon Lewis GO	Lots already happening so good communication between the groups will help things move forward more quickly and produce new activity
Mark Nicholls	Communication is key to this happening
Ervin Menyhart	Emphasis of positive - fun! Excitement!
Denise Snell	Keep all interested players in the loop and ask them to pass on the message to others
Andy Duncan	Growing Coventry must engage with and benefit the poorest if it is not to be seen as middle class/irrelevant There is an opportunity to inject some business commercial

	expertise, say by galvanising the allotment associations, linking supply with demand and setting up a business/ cooperative
Tim Jacques	How will Growing Coventry involve Childrens centres? Would be more than willing to act as a link (all childrens centres have gardens - very few grow anything)
Gillian McGivern	Coventry is surrounded by Warwickshire. Are you involving the district councils and county council? Any other organisations in Warwickshire
Charlotte Corner GO	There needs to be more representation from business for this project to move forward. Many organisations involved are charities - where will the money come from to help them make growing Coventry work? What will the growing Coventry strap line be? What is the aim of this activity? A logo and a purpose need to be decided on so the Coventry people can interact with the idea
Katie Martin, Groundwork	About to embark on Local Food lottery bid with WWT and GO Would our planned work fit into overall effort - who might coordinate the whole initiative? Will there be an overall plan of action? PCT prioritising 'Physical Activity' is funding lots of initiatives which would benefit from 'Growing Food' need to make these links. Money will be held by culture and leisure team at CCC
June Jeffrey CEN	Need to ensure grass roots by in from the communities of the city
Jane Halford Acting Community Safety Officer	One of the key things that has stood out during the day has been around regeneration and how with the amount of regeneration taking place in the city (especially in priority neighbourhoods) there is not necessarily a growing element included. This potentially is a great opportunity
Sue Morrison	Group needs to establish a structured mechanism to communicate and coordinate ideas and best practice - a sustainable group. Bring on the cleaner, greener sub group
Cathy Fitzsimons Neighbourhood wardens Acting Operations manager	Able to reach local members of communities ie residents/businesses etc. delivery of leaflets etc and access to vehicles for transport
Cathy Fitzsimons Neighbourhood wardens Acting Operations manager	All things discussed can be achieved and sustained, all working together and communicating
Maureen Harris Allesley Park Garden Group	Lots of exciting initiatives - horticulture education, growing and cooking, scarecrow events, environment and wildlife, - walled garden has been running these events for 10 years - so we have experience. Please help us to harvest this experience and persuade Coventry Council to develop the whole kitchen garden for education and heritage. Exciting and stimulating morning.

Andy Littlewood	Funding - will the hub be fundraising in the future/ be fairly autonomous Public events need to be separate and not part of bigger non-connected event (longer term aim)
Gary Pittaway CVOne	Communication is the key
Ken Lindsay, Whitefriars	Communication is very important, contact list for all partners/groups
Liz Millet	Champion amongst Council members
	Put in place a framework to make Growing Coventry last into the future - become a sustainable activity
Gareth Davies Garden Organic	Engagement of 'people' Practical growing on the ground (existing and new programmes)
Myles Bremner	How to get civic lead on the understanding that growing Coventry is an overarching theme that we can all buy into, both existing and new activity
Jamie Perry The Herbert 07971869030	Needs group strategy chasing for funding beyond first year Needs to feed into rebranding of City Programmes of events need signing up Budget communication/funding in a joint project
Judy Steele	Work with children's centres on garden set up food coops at childrens centres (but open to all) To ensure this isn't a fad, make sure support continues in terms of media, council over a period of years - a garden is forever, not just one year Keep it visible Make mini plots available on allotments - easy space for gardeners to get to grips with 1.5 m x 8 m - we have some in Lillington Don't forget 2009 and beyond

11. Immediate Next steps

a small task group comprising the following people was tasked to make immediate progress on the 4th/5th and consider how to build further momentum and co-ordination of Going Coventry.

Rhiannon Lewis	Garden Organic
Peter Woodward	Coventry Partnership
June Jeffrey	Coventry Community Empowerment Network
Jamie Perry	Herbert Museum and Art Gallery
Andy Littlewood	Coventry City Council
Mark Nicholls	CVOne
Gary Pittaway	CVOne

End