

# Case Study: Southwark Council Community Gardening team & Allotment Expansion Guarantee



Credit: Ruth Arnott

<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>21 Capital Growth gardens across Southwark, London</p> <p><a href="https://allotmentexpansionguarantee.commonplace.is/about">https://allotmentexpansionguarantee.commonplace.is/about</a></p>
<p><b>Background to group</b></p>	<p>In 2020 Southwark Council employed a Community Gardening Coordinator. This is a job share between 2 people, 3 days a week each. In post since June 2020.</p> <p>The Allotment Expansion Guarantee was set up the Community Gardening team in April 21 to increase the number of food-growing plots available in the borough, by establishing a process and support for residents to create new food-growing spaces on housing land. This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to new enquiries</li> <li>• Developing new growing projects</li> <li>• Supporting new gardening groups through the process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim of group</b></p>	<p>The initiative enables local residents to get together, identify land and grow food and garden together, with support, guidance and resources from the council.</p> <p>The Community Gardening Coordinator role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main point of contact within council for existing community growers and new enquiries about community gardening and food growing</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the network of growers via e-newsletter, informal introductions, linking to existing networks and mapping</li> <li>• Organising networking events, development of a working group</li> <li>• Increase food growing opportunities on estates, focus on building resilient and sustainable groups and projects, and give advice to others in the borough</li> <li>• Community engagement link for other related projects such as reduced mowing trials and composting</li> <li>• Strategic development promoting community gardening and food growing within the council – working with Public Health, Ecologist, Planning, New Homes, Grounds Maintenance, Resident Services, Climate Change, Housing teams</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who grows the food and who does the garden serve?</b></p>	<p>The community sites comprise at least five local residents living on the estates. The groups are supported by the council’s Community Gardening Coordinator from setting up the site, creating the mini-plots and support and guidance to maintain the sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 new gardens with 239 plots currently</li> <li>• Residents can find out more and register their interest via a dedicated website: <a href="https://allotmentexpansionguarantee.commonplace.is/about">https://allotmentexpansionguarantee.commonplace.is/about</a></li> <li>• New groups are encouraged to join Southwark’s map of community gardening and food-growing sites and to benefit from being part of this network (<a href="http://www.goodtogrowuk.org/map/southwark">www.goodtogrowuk.org/map/southwark</a>)</li> </ul>