

# Social Farms & Gardens



# 5 year City Bridge Foundation funded programme



## DIFFERENCES:

6300 Londoners increase involvement in their local city farms and community gardens, benefitting physical and mental wellbeing, career opportunities, and environmental skills. Staff at 300 nature-based organisations boost inclusion and community engagement skills. Organisations are more community-led and better meet neighbourhood need, enhancing their charitable aims and benefitting 44,000+ Londoners.

600+ staff, volunteers and trustees of nature-based organisations become more resilient and professional, and have fun. They feel part of a bigger picture, working in sync for shared outcomes for Londoners, partnering on community engagement, environmental and organisational development activities, professional development pathways, and on communicating multiplied impact to decision-makers.

As more Londoners connect with nature-based organisations, which in turn connect for joint impact, senior leaders will develop their capacity and opportunities to advocate and communicate value, engaging new and existing stakeholders and raising visibility of nature-based activities with the statutory, private and cultural sectors and the wider third sector.

**Delivery** – Peer to Peer model of paid training and events delivery with support from SF&G London staff

**Each year:**

6 X Networking Tours

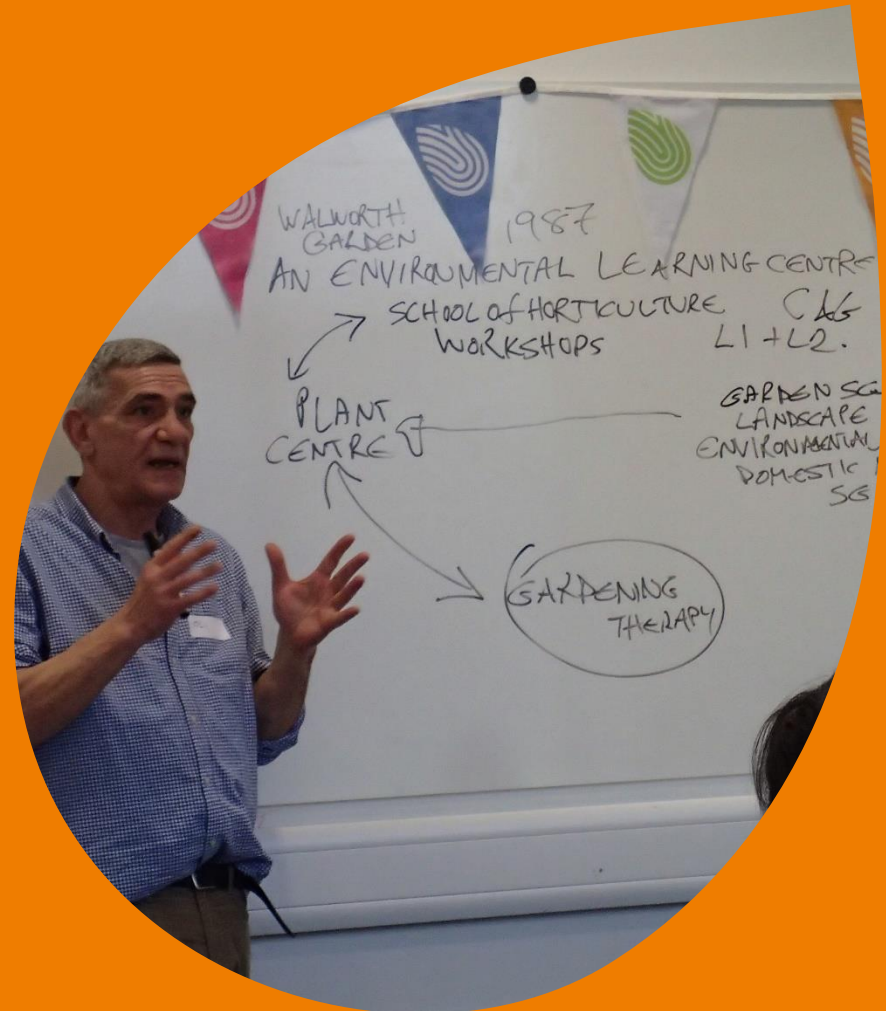
4 X Trainings on engaging representative local Londoners as participants, staff and trustees. Themes: Local History. Asset Based Community Development, Visitor Journey, Inclusive Spaces, Effective Recruitment. Governance.

4 X Trainings on Partnerships, Funding, Professional Development, Conflict Resolution.

1 X Gardeniser training and qualification "Everything about community garden management except the gardening."

Symposiums and showcase events

London Harvest Festival each September







Sufra St Raphaels Networking Tour –  
August 2024



# Delivery – examples from last year

- **Winning Support and Convincing Councils**
- **Income Diversification: Beyond the Corporate Volunteer Day**
- **Co-Designing Community Gardens**
- **Databases for People and Plants**
- **Emotional Resilience on the Ground:  
Working with Volunteers**
- **Train the Trainer:  
How to Run a Community Gardening Session for Volunteers**
- **Getting involved in community gardening on your estate**
- **Sharing day: What is our value as a community of interest and how do we  
communicate this to key stakeholders**
- **Sharing day: Forum to connect and discuss a London Community Gardens  
Showcase Event**



# Networking tours of community gardens

- Forest Gate Community Garden
- Core Landscapes
- Growing Health Garden
- Cultivate London
- Invisible Palace
- Hackney Community Tree Nursery
- Hackney Herbal
- Calthorpe Community Garden







# Gardeniser







Social Farms  
& Gardens



Average Score across all  
Training and Networking events  
= 9.3 out of 10



# Green Care Quality Mark

Demonstrates to clients, funders, and volunteers that your site is a safe and caring place to be.

Provides a clear set of minimum standards designed to keep everyone on your site - both people and animals - safe.

Gives access to resources and support from high quality green care providers.



Social Farms & Gardens  
**Green Care  
Quality Mark**

**The quality standard for green care providers in the UK**

Social Farms & Gardens is the UK wide charity supporting communities to farm, garden and grow together.  
Join our network of 3,000+ grassroots groups for free at [farmgarden.org.uk](https://farmgarden.org.uk).

# The London Association of City Farms and Community Gardens

Social Farms & Gardens London is guided by the trustees of this independent charity. All the trustees are senior staff of SF&G's membership.

The London Association is the route by which individual farms and gardens in London dovetail their work, collaborating rather than competing, to demonstrate the multiple benefits of nature based community organisations for all Londoners.

The London Association meets regularly and organises events to showcase city farms and community gardens. London staff and the London Association work closely together.

**[www.londonharvestfestival.org.uk](http://www.londonharvestfestival.org.uk)**



## **London Association Aims**

- Provide mutual support to achieve best practices in charity management
- Celebrate British agricultural heritage
- Promote environmental conservation and bio-diversity
- Raise awareness of the important social welfare work of our members
- Build a community of green space activists
- Fundraise for our members
- Produce the annual London Harvest Festival



[www.farmgarden.org.uk/your-area/london](http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/your-area/london)

[amber@FarmGarden.org.uk](mailto:amber@FarmGarden.org.uk)

Get involved as a trainee or trainer, lead a tour  
or book a Training Needs Assessment



GROWING WELL TOGETHER

Social Farms  
& Gardens



More info....



# Networking Tours Overview





## Networking Tour: Core Landscapes

A tour of the 5 growing spaces of this mental health charity to socialise and check out the rainwater harvested, solar-powered irrigation systems across.

Core Landscapes has relocated 4 times across 3 boroughs in the last 10 ten years, growing a diversity of trees, shrubs, perennials and food in containers, fine tuning sustainable irrigation techniques, with the ever changing climate, along the way.

When: Friday 6th October, 10am

Where: 1 St Barnabas Terrace, London E9 6DJ





## **Networking Tour: Seeds Saving at the Growing Health Garden**

Project facilitator, Kate Greene led a seed saving session at the Growing Health Garden in Dalston. This community garden exists to encourage those over 50 and their associates, to grow edibles and other plants with others & through doing so, a strong sense of connection to the environment, each other and better health through the gardening activities.

The garden provides a social space for activities in relation to growing food and plants, learning healthy eating through cooking and preparing food related to plants grown.

Where: rear of Queensbridge Sports Centre E8 3JB

When: Monday 16th October 2023, 3pm to 5pm



## West London Networking Tour at DIG

Hosted by Cultivate London at their new site, DIG in Hanwell. They got the keys in late 2022, started with volunteer sessions and brought in corporate groups to help tackle the site which was untended for several years.

Cultivate London work to improve employment, education, health and wellbeing outcomes of communities in London by improving the natural environment, setting a standard for engaging communities in their green spaces and providing greater access and understanding of community and environmental needs.

Where: 62 Green Lane London W7 2PB

When: Monday 23rd October 2023

**“Great opportunity to meet other local community groups & individuals”**

– Billie, Sufra NW London.





## South London Networking Tour at Invisible Palace

Sitting at the intersection of 4 London Boroughs, the site at Vicars Oak and Boundaries Gate has long been a space of encounters and connections. Now beautified with new flower beds and accessible walkways, and reinterpreted through a citizen-led history project, it is the starting point for new journeys. The tour was led by the key actors who brought this change about..

Where: The Vicar's Oak, Crystal Palace Park, SE19 1UA

When: Friday 27th October 2023

**“Love to hear the local history, and the highlight of people's agency in a community-led growing project. The introduction is rich and gives a great context of the evolution, happiness and challenges of the project. ”**

– Pearle, Vegecoopia



## Networking Tour with a Wild Fungi theme at Hackney Community Tree Nursery

For many years, Hackney Community Tree Nursery has been growing communities of people, plants, animals ... and Fungi and is now stewarded by the Tree Musketeers. Participants were invited to a tour of their site, taking in some of the exciting outgrowths of the rich mycelial network and hearing more about how the site is sustained, with lots of time to connect across our own mycelial network of community growing projects.

Where: Hackney Community Tree Nursery, Homerton Rd, E9 5PF

When: Wednesday 1st November 2023

**“So amazing for making links + connections. Very good for my study purposes. Loved it - the guide was fantastic. Nice to meet others doing similar things. Beautiful - wanted to volunteer. I will be telling anyone I know in green spaces across London”**  
– Spitalfields City Farm volunteer





## Networking Tour Forest Gate Community Garden

Tour of this neighbourhood based community garden to find out about how they involve local people and secure buy-in from local businesses and the council.

February 2024



## **Networking Tour at Hackney Herbal in partnership with Capital Growth**

Where: Hackney Herbal, Hackney Wick

When: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023

A tour of this social enterprise which engages and sustains local people through workshops, opportunities and expert support.





## **Networking Tour of Calthorpe Community Garden, Camden**

When: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 2023

A guided tour of this longstanding garden in Kings Cross, including wildlife garden, veg garden, café and indoor space, and how the sports pitch and rooms hire bring in income.



# Training and Showcase Events





## Winning Support and Convincing Councils

A training day for community green spaces looking to:

- Extend their reach and build rapport with local residents
- Resolve problem behaviours through peaceful and positive communication
- Develop productive and positive communications with the local council

Mar Palaez Munoz from Heston Action Group and Andrea Parry from Friends of Dartnell Park shared their experience of establishing community green spaces on public land, winning support from local residents and navigating the multi-departmental and sometimes contradictory world of Local Authority officers.

Where: Castlehaven Community Hub, NW1 8RU

When: Wednesday, 10th January 2024

**“I got a more comprehensive and clearer view of the council as it relates to community garden projects. I also feel very inspired to continue with gardening in spite of all the obstacles.”**



## Income Diversification: Beyond the Corporate Volunteer Day

A training day for groups looking to take on horticultural maintenance contracts, seeking to expand paid-for workshops and horticultural education. The training showed the many ways to generate unrestricted income, build organisational resilience and job security.

The training was led by Cathy Maund from HCGA and Oli Haden from Walworth Garden, who have successfully cultivated a diversity of income streams that meet their ethos and purpose whilst creating sustainable income.

Trainees left with a clear action plan to develop an income stream, inspired, enthusiastic and self-confident to embed regenerative culture in the wider economy.

Where: The Invention Rooms, Hammersmith, W12 7TA  
When: Wednesday, 31st January 2024

**“Great speakers/facilitators very knowledgeable. Extremely useful for my organisation. Would 100% recommend.”**





## Co-Designing Community Gardens

Community gardening is a process of community engagement, but how to start?

Global Generation have been embedding community in the heart of new green spaces since 2009 and support over 40 gardens in schools, estates and the public realm.

Facilitator Jack and architect Alice walked the group through co-design principles that they've used to embed community, and participants gained:

- An understanding of Vision Mission Aims and Culture statements and the process of co-creating them.
- An overview of the stages of design and construction.
- How to engage key stakeholders and integrate organisational needs and key constraints in site design.

Where: The Paper Garden, Teredo St, SE16 7LW

When: Thursday 15th February 2024

**“Holistic, concise and clear evidence.  
Interactive. Engaging.”**



## Databases for People and Plants

Good data management is a powerful asset. Records help community gardens and city farms you measure reach and impact, communicate to funders and secure grants. Used in the garden, databases help manage, diversify and interpret plant collections to engage participants.

Rachel Schwartz, HCGA and Fay Kianzad, Bankside Open Spaces Trust, talked participants through how they use their databases to keep track of their user engagement.

Lili Barras-Hargan, Plant Records Manager at Chelsea Physic Garden, demonstrated the uses of the garden's database and demystify the information they keep about the plants they grow.

And Amber from SF&G led a game that showed how databases 'think.'

Where: Chelsea Physic Garden, SW3 4HS

When: Wednesday, 21st February 2024

**“A really enjoyable day and good to compare notes with other organisations.”**

**“Informative, and loved the interactive game to explain databases.”**





**“The event in October was brilliant and people still talk about it.”**  
– Christine Hevey,  
Communities Manager London  
NorthClarion Futures



## Emotional Resilience on the Ground: Working with Volunteers

Community gardens and city farms are important in maintaining personal wellbeing for many people. However this work is emotionally taxing. With expert support from Nemone Mercer, Project Director of Core Landscapes, participants:

- Developed understanding of stress and burnout within a community growing context.
- Increased clarity about roles within a community garden.
- Deepened awareness of personal and professional boundaries
- Learned new ways to deal with challenging situations.
- Produced related actions to reduce personal and organisational risk of burn out.

Where: Core Arts Community Garden E9 6DL

When: Monday 22nd April 2024

**“Very helpful. Loved the group exercises. Very interactive.”**





## Train the Trainer: How to Run a Community Gardening Session for Volunteers

Kayode and Susannah from Permablitz London guided the group through their processes for bringing together groups of volunteers and creating a sense of community from practical gardening sessions. Participants explored:

- Designing a volunteer session to include more than a series of practical tasks.
- Planning in learning outcomes to volunteer gardening sessions.
- How to create a welcoming atmosphere where everyone can contribute.

Permablitz London is a mutual-support network which connects people with each other and the land through growing food.

Where: Kentish Town City Farm, NW5 4BN

When: Thursday 9th May 2024

**“The facilitators are very knowledgeable with varied experience and can give detailed advice.”**



# Gardeniser

**I really enjoyed the part where we were given scenarios or complicated volunteer challenges and brainstormed appropriate responses.**

- Vincent Hui

**The class work was very relevant to running a community space, and covered a lot of valuable information when it comes to maintaining a community green initiative.**

- Xuan Sinden

**I liked the speech Suzy made at the Stepney city farm about supporting people with mental health issues.**

- Steina Xijie Yang

**I hugely valued the historical, international positioning of community gardens as an active legacy of resistances 'in community'**

- Sally Laban

**I liked the activity when we were asked about a really bad volunteering experience and how to unintentionally exclude people as they both helped me critically reflect on my own practice and reconsider how our setting operates. – Phil Pritchard**

**I liked how I was able to relate the topics to my professional role and helped me assess or review current practice and maybe make some changes.**

- Catherine Graham







# Community Garden Summer Showcase

A summer party to showcase the work of London's community gardens and forge partnerships, with an invite list of funders, gardening organisations, Worshipful Companies, and responsible businesses such as developers and housing associations.







# London Harvest Festival

## Lambourne End Centre

### Organised by the London Association of City Farms and Community Gardens

The 25th London Harvest Festival was held Sept 16, 2023 at Lambourne End Centre for Outdoor Learning and included an online Digital Competition.

Although we had fewer farms participating, the increased attendance of volunteers, beneficiaries and community members resulted in a 65% increase in participants this year over 2022 – with 300 participants, of all ages, and including many learning-disabled people from London farms and gardens.

A strong team effort to engage minoritised people and refugees resulted in even more diverse group of participants, such as newly arrived Afghan refugee women and children – some of whom helped win the tug of war!

The festival features a horticultural produce show, an animal show with city farm animals, and an opportunity to take part in traditional crafts such as forging, weaving and pottery, and adventurous activities like archery, potholing and pony trap rides. Plus serene tours of the gorgeous site, and great community-cooked meals and cakes.





# London Harvest Festival



**“Seeing the volunteers and young farmers enjoying themselves, showing off their knowledge and meeting other young people. Wonderful day.”**

– Surrey Docks staff member age 31-64

**“My favourite part was seeing everyone enjoying themselves watching my child so confident in showing her animal.”**

– Wellgate parent, age 31-64

**“It's really warm hearted and celebratory”**

– Community gardener

