

# Middlesbrough Urban Farming Project

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## The Background to the Project

- Design Council and One NorthEast (The RDA)
- Appointment of Design of the Times 07
- Highest Level Endorsement from the Council
- Ensuring that delivery mechanisms in place
- The Aim: Middlesbrough to become a self sustainable town by growing its own produce





## Grow Zones – Soil to Plate

- Over 1000 people engaged in growing their own food
- Over twenty one schools taking part
- Many community and voluntary groups
- Gardening Groups and Individuals Growing at 264 Locations Across the Town
- Above All: Community Cohesion Across All Ages
- People Growing In Containers
- School Playing Fields Turned Over to Growing
- Parkland In the Town
- Land at Side of the Public Footpaths Used for Growing



Middlesbrough  
moving forward

## Kitchen Playgrounds/Local Meals

These involved the growers from across the Town bringing together at various community centres, day centres, local schools etc – the produce that they had grown over the months and experimenting with recipes and new methods of cooking to prepare their food communally.

15 of these Meals were held between May – July 07

Middlesbrough  
moving forward

## The Outcomes of the Local Meals

- Increased Knowledge About Where Food Came From
- Increased Willingness To Try New Food
- “We Can Do Bigger and Better Next Time”
- Reduction in Carbon Footprint – often to only a few yards – “Soil to Plate”



## The Town Meal

“The Country Comes To The Town”

Morris Dancers, Punch and Judy, Tug of War, Art Stalls, Farm Animals, and Farmers Market

A Town Meal – With Local Produce Harvested Over The Three Days Before 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2007

2500 People Fed and 8500 People Attended



## The Legacy of The Town Meal

Middlesbrough Meal 08 Now Being Organised

31 out of 51 Schools Now Involved

18 New Allotments Now Live inc. An ERDF Training Project

281 Growing Sites – 150 People on Allotment Waiting List



## The Legacy Continues:

- ONE NorthEast/ Middlesbrough Council Now Exploring The Following Ideas:
- Establishment of the First Food Policy Council In The UK In Middlesbrough
- The Active Exploration of “15” Style Restaurant for the NEETS Group
- Healthy Meals On Wheels
- New Food Coops Sourcing From Within 50 Miles of the Town



## The Legacy Continues:

Credit Unions - To Run In Parallel With Food Cooperatives

New Corporate Identity Being Explored as Legacy Vehicle – called “Tees Up”

Schools Now Keeping Livestock – and Sourcing Their School Kitchens with Fresh Produce and Eggs

Over 2000 People Now Involved with International Interest



## So What Can We Learn?

Middlesbrough Have Succeeded And Are Attracting National and International Interest!

Growing In London? Gardens/Schools/Parks/ The Commons/ Public Realm/Areas Next To Footpaths/Church Grounds/ Community Centres etc

“You Won’t Know Until You Grow”



## Ian Collingwood

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