Urban Food:
The role of planning and green infrastructure

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**LUC – who we are and what we do**

- UK’s first multi-disciplinary environment consultancy
- 100 staff in London, Bristol, Glasgow and Edinburgh
  - Environmental Planning
  - Ecology
  - Landscape Design
  - Landscape Planning and Management
- Advise public and private sector clients on these subjects
- Emma and Andrew specialise in green infrastructure planning and delivery
Why Local Food?

• Climate change – reduce food miles
• Independence – from international food networks
• Environment – pollution and waste associated with food
• Health – increased nutrition and increased exercise

• Climate Change Act – Emissions in 2050 must be 80% lower than the 1990 baseline
• Localism Bill – Decentralisation and community empowerment – communities can manage their own local food production
What is ‘green infrastructure’?
Green Infrastructure in Hertfordshire
Barriers to community food in cities

- Space and competing land uses
- Access and convenience
- Funding and management
- Quality of land
- Perception
- Land values and ownership

What can planning and green infrastructure contribute...?
Space and competing land uses

- Allocate growing space in the Core Strategy
- Identify capacity and demand – food mapping
- Develop policy on provision of local food space
- Innovation – walls, roofs and courtyards
Green infrastructure and urban food

**Initial proposals**

- **Window areas**: Wildflower meadows could be established on large grass areas.

- **Food growing area**: A food growing area could be created within the estate if appropriate space can be found.

- **Small trees and green walls**: Support wildlife with country oak and elder at Holmbrook. Plant small trees and shrubs in multi-storey walls.

- **Bird and bat boxes**: Bird and bat boxes could be installed on mature trees.

**Window boxes**: Replace window boxes damaged due to the harsh winter.

**Water harvesting**: Capture water from community centre roof.
Access and convenience

Green infrastructure planning – the “green print”
Identify green network first, and fit development around this
Negotiate with developers to incorporate growing space
Growing food within local parks
Bramford Community Garden

Information Sheet: GARDEN PLAN

A shared community garden, which aims to provide benefits to local residents, schools and wildlife by creating an attractive, productive and ecologically rich garden, and thereby enhancing the amenity of the wider public space.

This plan identifies the key features we hope to achieve on site:

- **Flowering Meadow**: A meadow composed of a mix of annual and perennial species will be introduced to provide vibrant colour and wildlife interest.
- **Mixed Borders**: The borders are composed of ornamental shrubs, bulbs and perennials, together with attractive herbs and vegetables.
- **Raised beds**: These provide a focus for the space and opportunity for communal herbs and vegetable plots.
- **Woodland Garden**: Shade loving planting, including fruit bushes, will be planted beneath the existing trees.

Mixed borders

Woodland garden, amongst existing trees

Flowering meadow

Woodland Garden

Mixed borders with raised beds

Raised beds provide a focus for the space and opportunity for communal herbs and vegetable plots.

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Funding and management

- Developer contribution to maintenance
- Partner organisations with skills and resources
- Promote funding schemes
- Meanwhile Leases: temporary use of land for growing
- Localism – community groups take on management
Detroit Urban agriculture

- Looking at multi functional approaches to reclamation
- Productive land uses as part of urban regeneration
- Legacy of the ‘Motor City’ – large scale urban decline
- Poverty and deprivation issues
- Areas of opportunity

Abandoned Packard Motor Plant (image: Albert Duce)
Chicago, Kansas and Birmingham, Alabama

Grant Park

Cultivate Kansas
Skills and maintenance

- Engage residents and community groups
- Skills sharing – planners and park managers working together
- Community trusts to maintain in long term
Quality of land and land values

**Saltram Park** – Liaising with landowners on productive land and food production
Green infrastructure and urban food
Green infrastructure and urban food
Perception

- Exemplar projects – food can be attractive
- Planting schemes for parks and gardens – incorporate edible herbs and fruit trees
- Restoring historic landscape character – orchards and apiaries

Examples:
Islington’s Edible Street Trees
Saltram Park – community orchards
Grant Park Potager, Chicago
Floriade, Haarlem, 2002
Food heritage and response to place

- Maintaining and re-creating this commercial growing can enhance cultural heritage, and also help to achieve better local food security and sustainability...
The future of food in cities

- Opportunities for planning to influence more innovative food growing in cities…

- Using urban heat sources to heat greenhouses for producing fruit and vegetable crops
Urban polytunnels, and temporary use of redundant space and buildings for food growing
Planting biofuels in cities to remediate land
Explore hydroponic farming, now used widely in the Netherlands...

... Or pioneer vertical farming!