



The Avant Gardeners

Food Poverty Alliance Aberdeen, May 2021

Building local food resilience in Aberdeen

To help build local food resilience in Aberdeen, we delivered a range of workshops to support care-experienced young adults to develop their own community garden as a means of developing skills and confidence. These workshops offered examples of creative and physical activities focused around the areas of food growing and plant care to promote positive mental wellbeing and personal development.

The project aims to help build local food resilience through linking our participants to opportunities where they can connect with the food system and develop a space to grow food. The project was developed based on results of a survey of the local community which showed a strong interest in food growing.



Staff members from Peacock Visual Arts, and independent creative practitioner, Yvette Bathgate, delivered the workshops. Topics included natural dying, flower pressing, seed bomb making and printing with plants. The participants identified an area for their own community garden, and planters were installed and planted with herbs and vegetables.

Challenges and learning

Attendance at workshops has been lower than we had planned for which is likely due to the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions in place.

It was good to experience outdoor activities from a creative perspective, and we learned that this was a useful platform to engage participants with the outdoors, the food they eat, and what they wanted to grow in their own community garden.

Next steps

The Avant Gardener project will contribute, long-term, to the accessibility of community growing, the growth of food confidence, and the increased accessibility of healthy food in regeneration areas. This is being achieved through empowering the participants to pursue their interest in growing and the creation of their community garden, and to contribute and share their work within additional communities.

The project's outcomes feed into the local Sustainable Food Places Partnership, under the commitment to '*public awareness and good food movement*'. The outcomes tie into the core aims of the local Food Growing Strategy Implementation group - a group working with the local authority to identify support required - and we will discuss future potential such as repeating the project in a different area.

“ Really good to meet up like this, outside together.”
Hannah, Avant Gardener

Outcomes

- Involved 5 young people in a series of 5 creative gardening workshops
- Identified and commenced a new food growing community garden