

Urban Food Justice

A social platform on urban agriculture in the Leeds City Region

Workshop 5

Gardening, health and wellbeing.

Rethinking communities in the 'gardens'

Urban Food Justice – Workshop 5

Workshop 1 – Feed Leeds and Urban food Justice launch

Workshop 2 – Land access

Workshop 3 – Urban metabolism and soil rehabilitation

Workshop 4 – Food for free. Edible landscapes

Workshop 5 – Social cohesion and wellbeing

Workshop 6 – Economic sustainability

Workshop 7 – Food justice and Sustainable food planning

Workshop 8 – Leeds city region growing fair and concluding event

Today's programme

1.30-1.45	Chiara Tornaghi (University of Leeds): Welcome and Introduction to part 1
1.45-2.00	Rebecca Meers (Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside Events Bookings and Licensing team)
2.00-2.30	Practical workshop 1: Conviviality and social cohesion. Planning a gardening-related event
2.30-2.45	Chiara Tornaghi: Introduction to part 2.
2.45-3.00	Roxana Summers: Back to front updates
3.00-3.30	Ellen Robottom (Hyde Park neighbourhood food growing project): Reconnecting the community.
3.30-3.45	Coffee break & announcements
3.45-4.25	Practical workshop 2: Gardening as learning and a healing opportunity. A seasonal calendar
4.25-4.30	Conclusions

Urban food growing: inside and outside the garden

- Food growing: doesn't only happen in private gardens or fenced allotments
- A multitude of gardens and spaces: landshare, community food growing projects, schools yards...
- Intrinsic “need” of sharing the surprise of life growing in your hands: talking and sharing about it
- Food growing is pretty much about what happens outside the garden: ethical approaches to food and environment, reconnecting the community, sharing food, ...



Produce, food and *conviviality*

- From sharing produce to sharing food: conviviality
- Conviviality=convivium: Living and eating with
- Celebrate harvest, sowing, winemaking....: food and seasonal celebration are cross-cultural traditions
- Which we have lost with the commodification of food



Conviviality and social cohesion

- How do we assess if a community is healthy?
- Social cohesion is about how strong are the ties between individuals, groups, associations, institutions within a community
- Cooking, eating, sharing food, making things together, are all opportunities to strengthen the cohesion of a community
- ...especially when these are open to anyone to join in, for example when they happen in public space, widely accessible

Public space: exposed and in between

- A space in between private spaces: a space that can connect or divide
- Exposed to what is different and unpredictable.
An opportunity for finding without searching
- An opportunity for learning





Planning a convivial event

- Active citizenship
- Mobilise knowledge and resources in the community
- Activate relationships: create opportunities

But...

- Social control
- Alienation of public life
- Lack of time resources or knowledge to deal with permissions

Next speaker:
Rebecca Meers

Practical activity 1:

Let's plan a gardening and food event for Feed Leeds

- Work in groups
- Imagine you are part of a small gardening group,
- But take into account the possibility of linking your project to a wider network of small events (Feed Leeds)
- Think first at what activities you want to do and where, to promote food growing and conviviality
- Then think at the rest: when, resources, who is doing what.
- Ask for advise to Rebecca Meers (LCC)

Part 2: Healing and wellbeing

- Gardening can be a healing practice:
 - Growing food is practice that relieve stress, bring joy and contribute to mental health and wellbeing
 - Physical health: walking, digging, bending, being outdoor
- Gardening can also, less directly, be as source of good diets: eating more veg, a varied choice of vegetables, more fresh and organic food
- Healing food and plants: growing veg can also bring knowledge about healing properties of plants

Walled gardens/gardens behind the walls

- Many social and health services have hidden gardens:
- Hospital gardens
- Community centres gardens
- Protected accommodations (for women/homeless/single mothers/street drinkers...)
- Many of these projects happen in isolation

Gated gardens, open gates, shared gardens

- These projects would benefit from an interaction with the community (i.e. volunteers in their projects/going out to community gardens)
- New community ties built around a very practical activity
- Exchange of resources in the community (time, energy, cultures...)

Two projects

- A very well known and a little known:
 - Back to Front
 - Hyde Park Neighbourhood Food Growing Project

Back to Front

- Happening in a neighbourhood with very little green or cultivable space
- High multiple social deprivation index
- A pioneering gardening project in the community
- Increasing use of private gardens with the support of mentors
- A practical outcome: BackToFront Manual

Hyde park neighbourhood food growing project

- Why this is special: a different type of community gardening. Starting by chance, discovering the community on the way
- Gardening in the community: the challenge of reconnecting the community
- Educational aspects
- A different food culture
- Develop an awareness of neighbourhood life and its problems
- An inspiration for the calendar

Next speakers:
Roxana Summers
Ellen Robottom

Activity 2 – A calendar of opportunities

- Use the forms provided on the tables
- If you are a member/organiser of a community garden, explain: day, location, type of skills required (if any), contact person, name of organisation, use of the produce
- If you are looking for an opportunity for gardening, leave your personal details, or the details of your project, when you would be available, if you have special requirements, and if you are a social worker, please tell if you will be supporting staff for the people you are encouraging to do gardening

Pictures credits

Slide 2 - Photo mushrooms:

<http://www.yumsugar.com/Foraging-Food-20102292>

Slides 5,7,10 and 11 – Author's own pictures from the Edible public space project, Leeds