WELCOME PACK

THE RIGHT TO GROW



“Access to quality green spaces and the ability to grow food locally isn’t just good for nature, it’s vital for peoples’ health. Community gardening is a great way to experience the benefits a connection to nature provides and align with key health priorities including improving mental wellbeing, reducing social isolation, and encouraging healthier diets. We’re proud to support the Right to Grow movement in Bury, knowing it is a practical step towards building stronger, healthier communities.”

Jon Hobday (Director of Public Health, Bury)



AIM OF THIS PACK





Welcome. This pack is designed to guide you on your Right to Grow journey, helping turn your idea of transforming an unused patch of local greenspace into a thriving community garden.

Inside, you'll find everything you need to get started: guidance on what's allowed, an easy-to-follow breakdown of safety and legal essentials, practical tips on planting and creating wildlife-friendly spaces, plus useful resources like templates and funding advice.

You'll also find contact details for key organisations and people ready to support you, so you can feel confident as you bring your vision to life.







WHAT IS THE RIGHT TO GROW CAMPAIGN



The Right to Grow campaign encourages councils and landowners to support communities by providing easy and free access to suitable public land for growing food and creating improved green spaces. For more information about the campaign, you can visit:

https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk/what-we-do/right-to-grow/

RIGHT TO GROW

INCREDIBLE EDIBLE'S VISION FOR A HEALTHIER, GREENER FUTURE.



LICENSE SUMMARY

Below outlines key information included in the licence agreement. As a licence is a legal agreement, the license document has quite complexed language and is quite long therefore this short summary aims to provide a simple overview of the key points.

Having a license agreement with the landowner (in this case Bury Council) is important because a license provides legal permission to use the land, set clear responsibilities, and protect both the group and the landowners from liability. A license also gives gardeners security and stability, making it easier to invest time and resources, comply with regulations, and access funding.

1 Community License Summary

This document is a simple overview of the licence agreement for community groups using land as part of Bury's Right to Grow initiative.

2 Purpose

Use the site only for community growing.

3 Date

Duration Valid until (agreed in license) or until either party give notice.

4 Responsibilities

Keep the site clean and tidy - Use approved compost (PAS 100) - Remove all items at the end of the license.

5 Activity on the site

No digging deeper than 600mm - No fires or power tools (unless approved) - No trading or selling - No invasive species.

6 Important notes

This is not a tenancy - You are responsible for any damage - Follow all site rules and regulations.

7 Communication

All notices must be sent by post or delivered by hand with the landowners (Bury Council). Emails are not valid.



LET'S GET GROWING

Right to Grow is all about food growing, but growing on community land can mean so much more. Right to Grow is as much about people as it is about food and plants.

Humans are social beings; we thrive on connection. What that looks like can be different for everyone. Some of us love a good chat with a group of friends over a brew, others prefer a quiet catch-up with family, and some simply enjoy being part of a shared activity, like gardening alongside others, without the need for conversation. Whatever form it takes, Right to Grow can provide a space where connections flourish.

People also like to feel connected to their neighbourhood and to know what's happening locally. It's always good practice to involve your neighbours before making changes to a shared space. Even if they don't want to get hands-on with your project, they may have useful knowledge, offer advice, or find other ways to support you. Sometimes, having a neighbour pop across the road to water the tomatoes during a dry spell can mean the difference between a thriving harvest and a failed crop.

Right to Grow offers the perfect opportunity to get to know your neighbours and share the joys of growing food together.

IDEAS FOR INVOLVING YOUR COMMUNITY

There are many ways to invite your neighbours and local community to join your Right to Grow site. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

1 ARRANGE AN INFORMAL MEETING

Invite everyone to visit your proposed Right to Grow site. Share your ideas and ask for theirs — just remember to bring a pen and paper to jot down suggestions.

Top Tip: Offering brews and biscuits (or even better, organising a "Jacob's Join" where everyone brings a dish to share) is a great way to break the ice and bring people together.

2 CHAT FACE TO FACE

Knocking on doors can feel daunting, but it's one of the best ways to build positive relationships from the start. A friendly conversation can help people feel included and valued, and it's a great opportunity to invite them to your next gathering.

3 SHARE FLYERS, POSTERS, AND NOTES

These can be handed out after a face-to-face chat or distributed around the neighbourhood. Include details on how people can contact you, or when and where your next community activity will take place. (we've provided you with an example in this pack).

4 SET UP A WAY FOR PEOPLE TO CONTACT YOU

What's App groups are great. They allow you to all chat together in a group message. However, be aware, with What's App and other similar groups, it involves sharing your mobile number. Please check before adding anyone to a group message, they are happy for their mobile number to be shared. If you'd rather not share your personal phone number that's fine, consider creating a dedicated email address for your Right to Grow project — just remember to check it regularly.

It's entirely up to you how you connect with your neighbours, but in our experience, involving your community makes every growing project stronger and more rewarding.

If you'd like more support or ideas on how to engage your community, please contact Community Engagement Manager, Jenni, from The Lancashire Wildlife Trust ***jlea@lancswt.org.uk***

THE RIGHT TO GROW in Bury

In Bury, we have an opportunity to grow food in public spaces. We can plant and care for fruit, vegetables and herbs for everyone to enjoy.

An invitation to take part

We're planning to turn _____ into a food garden and we'd love it if you were involved. It will improve our area, you can share ideas and help make the dream a reality.

If you'd like to know more, please contact me:

_____

SETTING UP A FORMAL GROUP

Once you have gathered interest from local residents, you may want to formalise your group.

Having a formal structure will help you with decision making, receiving funding and will also allow you to take out insurance to cover your liabilities. Below are the things you should cover when becoming a formal group. Help is available at any stage from the Bury VCFA:

fundinganddevelopment@buryvcfa.org.uk

Tel: 0161 518 5550

1 THE COMMITEE

There is a minimum of three roles: Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Chair will co-ordinate the decisions. The Secretary will make notes of meetings, handle paperwork and correspondence. The Treasurer will manage the finances making annual accounts and keeping track of finances over time. The committee will also have joint responsibility for the bank account and approving expenditure.

2 THE GOVERNING DOCUMENT

This is a guiding document that will set the rules of how the group operates. It helps guide you all with aims and objectives, information about meetings and "what ifs" such as use of funds etc. . Once you have completed an agreed constitution, the original committee members will sign it.

3 BANK ACCOUNT AND INSURANCE

Once you have a constitution, you can open a bank account and take out insurance. Insurance is public liability if someone injures themselves on site and other aspects that will cover the group and its tools/assets.

4 LICENSE AGREEMENT

A Right to Grow site with Bury Council also requires a licence agreement. This document sets out your obligations growing food on the site, making changes to the area etc. The licence will be in the name of and signed by the Chair. If you feel you need some legal advice, The Ethical Property Foundation can provide free or low-cost legal advice: ***https://propertyhelp.org/***

5 STARTING GROWING

Once you have signed your licence agreement, you are ready to start work on your Right to Grow site. You may want to apply for funding to cover the costs of equipment or materials for raised beds, compost bins or water butts. Bury VCFA are able to search for funding and connect you with local funders and partners.



GETTING GROWING

STARTING YOUR RIGHT TO GROW GARDEN

Some people have a knack for having a vision, being able to jump straight in and get started. For others, it takes a little more time and planning. Sometimes looking at an empty piece of land and thinking how do turn this into a thriving and fruitful growing area can feel quite daunting.

A good thing to do before changing anything on your site is to spend a little bit of time getting to know your site and just observing it, for example, find out which parts of your site get the sun at what times of the day. Before starting a growing site, it's a good idea to think about a few things including:

What would I like to grow and will this grow on my site?

Different plants like different growing conditions. Things like soil health can be changed, for example, you can make soil more acidic, better drained, more nutrient rich etc. However, one thing that is more difficult to change is the light availability. Think about which parts of your site get the sunlight and for how long. Also think about how exposed is your site, does it get very windy often, perhaps you could think about adding some natural protection such as deadhedges (these are great for wildlife too). Prehaps as well as thinking about what would you like to grow, think about what would grow well at your site.

How will you water your plants?

Watering your plants, especially during the summer will be vital to help them grow well. Not many sites will have the luxury of having a water supply, so it's worth having a think about how you'll ensure your plants get enough water. You may need to work with your group/neighbours to take water to site, or you may be able to create water collection points on site. Here's a webpage that may help you to start thinking about how you could gather water safely for your site. ***https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-jobs/water-collecting-storing-and-using***

Soil is important

Soil is a fundamental part of growing. Different plants like different soil types. As mentioned above, you can always improve the quality of your soil. Here is a great webpage that can guide you on working with your soil to create the best growing conditions.
https://www.soilassociation.org/take-action/growing-at-home/allotments-and-home-growing/starting-a-nature-friendly-allotment/

Waste

Don't forget to think about what you will do with any waste. A brilliant way to deal with any of your organic waste is to compost (this will also save you money). Here is a good guide to help you on your composting journey:
https://www.rhs.org.uk/soil-composts-mulches/composting

Working with Nature

Nature is in decline—globally and here in the UK. By designing your growing space with wildlife in mind, you can help protect local species and enjoy the benefits of a thriving, biodiverse garden.
Here are some ideas to think about when planning and caring for your Right to Grow space...
Avoid Chemicals

- Skip pesticides and herbicides. They harm pollinators and disrupt natural ecosystems.
- Use organic methods like companion planting or homemade remedies.

Provide Shelter

- Add log piles, leaf litter, or a small pond to create safe spaces for hedgehogs, toads, and insects.
- Install bird boxes or bug hotels to encourage nesting.

Plant for Pollinators

- Aim for a mix of plants that bloom across seasons to support bees, hoverflies, butterflies and other pollinators year-round.

Mix it up

- Grow a variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and native plants.
- Avoid planting just one type of crop—variety keeps your garden healthy.
- Consider crop rotation.

Welcome Wildlife

- Hedgehogs, toads, and birds are natural pest controllers.
- Leave gaps in fences for hedgehogs and provide shallow water dishes for birds.

For more information about Wildlife friendly gardening ideas a good webpage to visit is ***https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/gardening***

If you'd like support to create a plan of how to get started with your growing space, you can contact experienced growers at Incredible Edible Prestwich and District who would be happy to offer advice by emailing Andrew at *iepad.volunteers@gmail.com*, or contact Jenni from the Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and N.Merseyside on *jlea@lancswt.org.uk*

DONATIONS & DISCOUNTS

RECYCLE FOR GREATER MANCHESTER – COMPOST

Recycle for Greater Manchester have a compost scheme where they donate one tonne of compost to community groups. You can apply once a year to receive one tonne of compost. Please note, that this will be delivered in one go, so make sure that you have the space to receive it.
Apply online at ***https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/compost-donation/***

TREESTATION – WOOD CHIPPINGS

Treestation offer a community benefit scheme of low cost woodchippings for community projects. Loose woodchip: approx. 1 tonne/8ft van load, £66 inc. VAT.

Contact: Patricia Spray ***patricia@treestation.co.uk*** or 0161 231 3333

SEED / PLANT SWAPS

Seeds and plants can be expensive to source. However, by becoming a Right to Grow site, you are joining one of many community growing groups active in Bury. Many of our more established groups already support each other by resource swapping where appropriate. To find out about your neighbouring growing community groups to reach out and start building connections, contact either Kathy Taylor, Volunteer support and development officer
Kathryn.taylor@Bury.gov.uk or Bury VCFA
fundinganddevelopment@buryvcfa.org.uk

For more useful links and any further information please visit
https://www.theburydirectory.co.uk/health-and-wellbeing/bury-community-growing



GOING FOR GOLD

The Right to Grow campaign has been proudly championed by the Bury Food Partnership, helping more people discover the benefits of growing their own food, connecting with nature and making the most of local green spaces.

It's a fantastic example of communities coming together to create a healthier, greener and more sustainable Bury, while supporting our ambition to achieve Gold Sustainable Food Places status.



By encouraging food growing across the borough, the campaign is helping to build stronger communities and a more resilient local food system for everyone.

To find out more about Bury's going for Gold Sustainable Food Places campaign, the work of the Bury Food Partnership, and to sign up to the Bury Good Food Charter, please visit the Bury Food Partnership page using the links below:

Bury Good Food Charter

Bury Food Partnership