

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL

LOCAL FOOD GROWING STRATEGY (June 2020)

INTRODUCTION

This draft Inverclyde Local Food Growing Strategy (June 2020) sets out Inverclyde Council's position in respect of its requirements in relation to the publication of a local food growing strategy.

Guidance from The Scottish Government document '*Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015- Allotments- Guidance for Local Authorities Section 119 duty to prepare food-growing strategy*' includes a suggested template for the food growing strategy which can be accessed via

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/part-9-community-empowerment-scotland-act-2015-allotments-guidance-local-authorities-section-119-duty-prepare-food-growing-strategy/pages/3/>

This document is set out in the style of that template in advance of a formal finished document to be completed during 2020. Information in respect of the local food growing strategy can be access via www.inverclyde.gov.uk/foodgrowing

Due to the ongoing situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic this document is intended as a draft document which sets out Inverclyde Council's requirements in relation to food growing. This document will be replaced by a final document during 2020.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 119 OF COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015

Section 119 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) 2015 sets out the legislative requirements local authorities must set out in its food growing strategy how it will meet the requirements of the Act. The food growing strategy must achieve the following:

- a) identify land in its area that the authority considers may be used as allotment sites (as defined by the Act),
- b) identify other areas of land in its area that could be used by a community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers,
- c) describe how, where the authority is required to take reasonable steps under section 112(1) of the Act, the authority intends to increase the provision in its area of; (i) allotments, or (ii) other areas of land for use by a community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers, and
- d) when describing the matters required in paragraph (c), describe whether and how the authority intends to increase the provision of land in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage.

VISION

The Act places a duty upon Councils but Inverclyde Council is aware that community growing also supports a wide range of issues including health and social inclusion and will therefore develop a strategy that maximises the benefits that community brings to Council services as well as to communities.

The Inverclyde Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017-2022 sets out the outcomes that community planning partners will seek to improve in relation to the wellbeing and quality of life of residents of Inverclyde, with a particular focus on reducing inequality and poverty. The Inverclyde Alliance (Community Planning Board) has identified three strategic priorities it will focus on, in respect of community food growing particularly will focus on:

Environment, Culture and Heritage- Inverclyde's environment, culture and heritage will be protected and enhanced to create a better place for all Inverclyde residents and an attractive place in which to live, work and visit.

The Environment Partnership is tasked by the Inverclyde Alliance with delivering the environment aspect of this priority and they have identified three key drivers that will help them to do this. These drivers are:

- *Connectivity – it is currently difficult for Inverclyde residents to engage in active travel with gaps in provision and poor infrastructure.*
- *Healthier Lifestyles – the majority of individuals living and working in Inverclyde are not physically active enough to benefit their health.*
- *Land use and management – Inverclyde has a high percentage of derelict land and we want to improve the built environment so that all communities in Inverclyde can enjoy both a quality local environment and a healthy and active lifestyle.*

Within Inverclyde there is an increasing interest in community food growing and growing demand from a number of community organisations who have a real passion and knowledge for community food growing. This strategy in addition to the strategic priority within the LOIP and a demand and interest in food growing should ensure that there is development within this strategy.

RELEVANT BACKGROUND

The Strategy will highlight that Inverclyde Council also considers the following key policy drivers compliments community food growing in Inverclyde:

Inverclyde Local Child Poverty Action Report

Food for life Scotland

Health and wellbeing activities within education establishments across Inverclyde

Financial support through the 'Grants to Voluntary Organisation' Fund

Social prescribing

Unpaid work

LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSIBILITIES: PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

As noted previously the Inverclyde Local Food Growing Strategy is supported by the work of Inverclyde's community planning process.

The Inverclyde Council Local Development Plan through a main issues report identified land opportunities for food growing and allotment use.

GOALS

The action plan for the Inverclyde local food growing strategy will be developed in consultation with the Environment Partnership to ensure partner support.

IMPACTS AND BENEFITS TO BE REALISED

The local food growing strategy is linked to other policy documents such as the Inverclyde local child poverty action report and Inverclyde HSCP Strategic Plan 2019-22.

IDENTIFICATION OF LAND

The Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out Inverclyde Council's strategy, policies and proposals for the use of land and buildings within Inverclyde, and, together with the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan, is the document the Council uses to determine planning applications and provide advice on development proposals. The current Local Development Plan was adopted 26 August 2019.

In preparation for the LDP a document 'Allotments and Community Growing Background Report' was published. The document highlights:

It is understood that there is interest from across the Council area for additional 'growing spaces' either in the form of allotments or less formal community spaces. Given the many positive aspects of allotments and community growing spaces, it would be beneficial to identify potential areas for the creation of more spaces which people can use within their local neighbourhoods. In anticipation of increased requests for allotments and community growing spaces, an exercise has been undertaken for the Main Issues Report to identify potential sites where these requests could be met.

Allotments and community growing areas need to be accessible and convenient for their users, and therefore tend to be located in built-up areas and close to residential areas where users can either get to on foot or by a short car/bus ride. They also have to be located where there is demand otherwise they won't be used.

As well as permanent sites, allotments and community growing can take place on vacant and derelict land on a temporary basis, with an agreement that the site will revert back to development use at some time in the future. It is also possible for parts of public owned land such as school and hospital grounds to be turned into allotments and community growing spaces.

Nine possible new sites for consideration for allotments or community growing

spaces have been identified either from suggestions submitted to the Council or through the Council's Property Assets Manager. The plan below shows the general location of these sites along with those that already exist. There is then a detailed location plan for each of the suggested sites.

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/5987/Allotments-and-Community-Growing-Background-Report.pdf>

Additional work is also being undertaken to identify other pieces of land that could be considered for community food growing.

Not all land identified will be currently owned by Inverclyde Council and a directory of other landowners will be included in the final strategy.

OUTCOME OF THE LAND AUDIT

This work will highlight land availability for food growing opportunities across Inverclyde. This work will also be underpinned by the Inverclyde Alliance's commitment to locality planning as set out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY GROWING GROUPS

Inverclyde Council operates a 'Grants to Voluntary Organisation' Fund for local community groups to apply for funding. Any community food growing groups would also be encouraged to seek support from the third sector interface (CVS Inverclyde) who support, promote and represent Inverclyde's third sector organisations, community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises.

OTHER INFORMATION

There is a duty to maintain an allotments waiting list. At present Wellington Allotments manage allotments on behalf of Inverclyde Council. Currently, a waiting list is maintained by Wellington Allotments on behalf of Inverclyde Council and will be (as per the legislation dictates) updated on an annual basis.

REVIEW DATE

There is a requirement to review the food growing strategy every 5 years. In order to ensure that the food growing strategy and its actions are relevant this will be reviewed through the community planning process on an annual basis.