



Federation of
City Farms
& Community
Gardens

Chillies and roses

Inspiring multi-ethnic
involvement at community
gardens and farms



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Please Note: 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities' has been used as a summarising phrase in this publication. However, we recognise and respect the fact that opinion varies widely on the use of this phrase and some may object to it. We are also aware that it might become dated or a consensus may be reached in the future that different terminology is more appropriate. FCFCG always strives to use the most appropriate wording possible and does canvas opinion before making decisions on sensitive issues.

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Foreword



City farms and community gardens offer local and intimate ways of connecting to vital areas of our lives.

For those bound by their urban environment, city farms can provide a link to the powerful - but no longer obvious - knowledge of where our food comes from. And community gardens give many people their only chance to enjoy the quiet satisfaction of growing vegetables or tending flower beds.

These opportunities are enjoyed by many members of ethnic minority communities and there is a growing acknowledgement of the benefits and meaning contained within the range of stimulating activities available at city farms and community gardens.

In a safe and welcoming environment, these activities can have a profound impact on the quality of life of members of ethnic minority communities and helps put them in touch with our most urgent environmental issues.

The sharing of good practice contained within this publication meets the contemporary challenge for the integration of social, cultural and environmental themes. Fuelling the opening up of all community gardens and farms to ethnic communities will be instrumental in releasing a formidable contribution to this agenda.

I look forward to more.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Ling Wong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Ling Wong OBE
Director, Black Environment Network

Introduction

City farms and community gardens are unique environments that provide a wealth of stimulating activities and opportunities for local people. Ensuring these benefits are accessible to all, including people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, is a challenge that requires a thoughtful, innovative approach.



More than 70 per cent of BAME communities live in many of the most deprived urban areas in the country. As a result, the local community garden or city farm is often one of the few areas of green space available, placing it in a unique position to actively engage with diverse ethnic groups.

Many of the hundreds of city farms and community gardens in the UK do this successfully. They present a safe and welcoming environment where people from BAME communities can try a range of activities, such as ethnic food-growing projects, arts initiatives and events based on tasting and sharing food from different cultures. Individuals from BAME communities are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities not just as visitors, but also as club members, volunteers, staff or board members.

These farms and gardens have also discovered that the benefits flow both ways. The involvement of BAME communities can enrich a community-managed project, adding diversity and increased scope to the work done on-site.

However, some projects may be struggling to fulfil their potential in this area. They may need to tackle the challenge from scratch; they may want practical guidance to improve on current work or they may simply require some fresh ideas to invigorate their work.

This document reflects on the experiences of FCFCG members who are finding inspiring ways of engaging with BAME communities. It aims to promote good practice, and inspire other community farms and gardens by providing a range of useful information. By sharing knowledge in this way, the whole movement can help achieve one of its key aims – the creation of healthier, better connected communities.



1 Reaching out to communities

There could be a number of reasons why people from BAME communities are not involved with your project or initiative. Recognising and eliminating barriers will help create a welcoming place for everyone.

Raising your profile

Ensuring that people know you exist, and that you provide activities of interest to them, is essential. Ideas include:

- Holding social events that involve food. This can be very successful simply because many cultures value food as an important social ingredient. Barbecues and picnics are popular. Organise events that encourage people to bring along and share food from their own culture.
- Taking part in local events. Plan activities/stalls on high streets and have a presence at community festivals, carnivals, melas (Indian festivals) and during environmental awareness events.
- Placing articles in newsletters produced by ethnic communities themselves (or organisations working with those communities).
- Using ethnically diverse images in posters, leaflets and information.
- Using alternative media outlets. Get details of your farm or garden into papers, magazines and on radio stations designed for ethnic communities.
- Using the premises of community groups for meetings and gatherings. This will help to raise your profile and also contributes towards their costs.

Remember to speak to as many people as possible. Don't assume that by talking to one person you have reached the whole community.

- Nurture 'community champions'. These are people from different communities who can encourage other people to join in by word of mouth.
- Ask leaders or members of your local BAME communities for suggestions on reaching people.
- Attracting children, through schools and toddler clubs, is extremely important. This is often the key to engaging parents and grandparents.



"We spread the word among friends and family and gradually more people came to see what was going on. People brought back seeds after visiting family in Pakistan and Bangladesh and felt involved that way too."

**Rana Mutakin,
Burnley Food Links**



“There is a nursery school next to our allotment and children from there regularly come along to look, explore and harvest vegetables for snacks. The children’s interest helps to get parents and grandparents involved.”

**Elsbeth McKenzie,
Burnley Food Links**

Highlight the benefits of visiting or volunteering. To do this effectively, you need to stress those areas which are relevant to peoples’ lives.

What areas can you emphasise?

- Exercise – helps to combat diabetes/heart problems
- Dietary benefits – access to fresh, seasonal vegetables
- Opportunity to grow culturally specific food that is hard to buy locally or is expensive
- Learn about healthy eating
- Observe wildlife
- Care for animals
- Learn about recycling and composting
- Confidence building
- Skills training, including gardening and learning English
- Involvement in arts projects
- Reducing isolation, making new friends and increasing involvement in the local community
- Work skills – volunteering is great for references and a useful addition to a CV
- Gain community development skills
- Can help improve mental health
- Free and low cost activities
- Activities for children and families.

Getting the message out

Let people know about your organisation by using existing networks:

- Your local Council for Voluntary Services will have a list of local BAME community organisations
- Schools and community colleges
- Community centres
- Faith centres and places of worship
- Tenants and residents associations
- Neighbourhood renewal teams
- BAME regional networks
- Racial equality councils
- Refugee and asylum seeker support organisations
- Health organisations – including primary care trusts.



If your profile is not an issue, there may be other reasons preventing people from BAME communities from getting involved. Activities may be unfamiliar or unsuitable, and people may not have the confidence to access what you have to offer.

Take this test to see if you are doing enough to make people welcome.

Ideas for increasing access to your project. Are you:	Yes No
Organising open days and tours which create opportunities for people to come along and get a taste of what you offer.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Asking people what they would like to do, and offering options for them to get involved in different ways.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ensuring a friendly reception by staff and volunteers at your project. Is there a need for diversity training across your whole organisation?	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Helping to make new visitors feel more comfortable. If people are not sure of what to do in an unfamiliar environment they may leave quickly. A simple measure like providing seating helps to make people feel more relaxed.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Finding ways of making your surroundings reflective of different cultures. Use artwork, familiar plants, community languages and diverse images of people on your publicity.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Finding ways of introducing people to your project, perhaps by going to visit a school, community centre or place of worship.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

If you answered NO to any of the suggestions then you've uncovered a way you can increase your accessibility to BAME communities.

Reaching out

Riverside Community Garden Project, Cardiff

Riverside Community Garden Project sprang to life in 2005 as a result of funding secured by Cardiff's Riverside Market - a thriving community market providing a point of sale for local, Welsh and organic produce.

Sited on the Pontcanna Allotment site, the community garden encourages people from the surrounding area (many living in high rise accommodation and bed-sits with no access to gardens) to grow healthy food and lead more active lives. Involving the local ethnic communities was a priority - a lively allotment community already existed on the site, but was not reflective of the diverse communities living in the local area.

Letting people know the garden exists and highlighting the benefits of being involved has been the greatest challenge. The outreach worker for the community garden visited women's centres, pensioners' lunch clubs, training centres, places of worship and asylum seeker support organisations to give informal talks which highlighted the advantages of growing and eating healthy food.

Activities included a cooking challenge, which encouraged women who had not used the Riverside Market to create a dish using food bought from there. Social events were also organised, including Halal barbeques and picnics. Individuals and community

groups attended the events as the result of the good relationships created through outreach work. These 'ice-breakers' encouraged people to visit the allotment for fun, and many of them returned to get involved in food growing, ecology work and to brush up on their spoken English skills.

Contracts with probation services, volunteer agencies and the careers service have also been important in transforming an overgrown and neglected space into a welcoming and productive garden.

Managing relationships with the established site users has also been vital. Initially it was a shock for existing plot holders to have nearly 80 new people visiting the site, but making sure that plot holders were invited to events and kept informed of plans - as well as ensuring the whole site benefited from the installation of a compost toilet, wildlife area and seating - has resulted in plenty of good will.

As a result of this integration effort, a number of people from local BAME communities now have their own allotment plots. One of them is Alka Burbidge, who was born in

Mumbai, India, and has lived and worked in Cardiff for some time. She joined the garden as a volunteer and quickly became the friendly and welcoming face of the group after volunteering to work alongside the outreach worker.



"My main reason for coming to the garden is to get out of the city and the stress of modern life," said Alka.

"This is my first go at gardening and I've really got a thirst for planting and planning. It's hard work in all sorts of weather but definitely worth it, I really feel part of nature and it keeps me feeling good and happy."

Engaging communities

Arkwright Meadows Community Garden, Nottingham

Many local organisations and residents of the ethnically diverse Meadows area of Nottingham were involved in the transformation of a disused school playing field into this thriving community garden.

The overwhelming response to a community consultation was for the space to be more attractive, useful and safe for children. Ideas for the garden reflected the needs of the local communities and came from churches, community centres, schools and the community college, whose multi-lingual Asian outreach worker was well placed to spread the word.



Further consultation with local communities continued as on-site work began. Various activities gave people the opportunity to be part of the

garden 'coming to life'. These included a live local radio "Gardener's Question Time" with many people bringing in ailing plants to be diagnosed. Children from local schools also worked with a community artist, using clay, paints and collage to produce work which was incorporated into the final garden design.

A multi-ethnic garden committee was formed and visited a number of established community gardens and city farms to help them with their planning and development. They joined the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens at an early stage and still see it as a valuable developmental aid.

The garden opened in 2004 and provides a wide range of activities. Visitors are encouraged to pick their own vegetables from the organically grown produce on site, which helps people to engage with the workers and volunteers as well as the produce. The garden has increased its range of culturally appropriate produce, for example in response to requests from South Asian communities for space to

grow more exotic vegetables. Informal workshops in hanging baskets, container growing and general horticulture are popular and the International Club provides children from refugee and asylum seeker families with an opportunity to enjoy the space at weekends.



"The garden has done a lot for the neighbourhood – we employ local people and buy locally. Many people come here to pick cheap, organic veg from the garden," said Jane Jeffrey, the community garden's chairperson.

Keeping in touch with what local residents want is crucial. A recent 'Visioning Day' gave people the chance to highlight what they enjoyed about the garden last year, and to make suggestions about activities for the coming year. Information collected at the event has been used to plan the work, activities and developments at the garden.

Resources

Riverside Community Garden Project

www.riversidemarket.org.uk/communitygardenproject.htm

South Riverside Community Development Centre, Brunel Street,
Riverside, Cardiff CF11 6ES

Tel: 0292 019 0036 **Email:** garden@riversidemarket.org.uk

Riverside Market Association

www.riversidemarket.org.uk

Tel: 0292 019 0036

Arkwright Meadows Community Garden

Kirkby Gardens, The Meadows, Nottingham NG2 2DF

Tel: 0115 986 7777

Black Environment Network

www.ben-network.org.uk

60 High Street, Llanberis LL55 4EU

Tel: 01286 870 715 **Email:** ukoffice@ben-network.org.uk

BEN reaches out to ethnic communities in order to stimulate participation. It also helps mainstream organisations gain the necessary awareness and skills to work effectively with ethnic communities. The website gives access to resources including a guide to grants, good practice papers and details of training available. *Ethnic communities and green spaces – Guidance for green space managers* is a very useful publication produced by BEN.

Faith Based Regeneration Network

www.fbrn.org.uk

Set up by regeneration practitioners who identify with faith traditions or who work with faith community organisations. Resources include details of training and seminar events, regular newsletter and funding information.

Capacity Global

www.capacity.org.uk

Capacity works to provide access to environmental information, participation and decision-making for excluded communities and groups. It also carries out research and organises workshops and training.

Office National Statistics

www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Useful website for finding the ethnic breakdown of a neighbourhood.

2 Cultural awareness

Working with people from different cultures always involves elements of learning and exchange. It is important to acknowledge that ethnic and faith communities are extremely diverse and do not exist as one single group. Different backgrounds, cultural experiences and beliefs will influence people's needs and relationships with farms and gardens.

It is always better to ask if you are unsure of cultural considerations; avoid making assumptions about people based on their ethnicity or faith. People differ from generation to generation and culture to culture.

Members of the Federation of City Farm and Community Gardens have found the following points useful to consider:

- The associations that people have with gardening and working with their hands varies in different cultures. Farming and horticulture may be seen by some as low status work.
- Female toilets and a separate prayer area are very popular with the women from the Coriander Club at Spitalfields City Farm – but limited space and facilities may make this difficult.
- Women-only sessions/groups are important for Muslim women – it is not always acceptable for women to be in a group with men. This includes having a female member of staff on-hand.
- It is important to remember that fulfilling family and community commitments will always be the top priorities for women from some cultures. This may affect their commitment to outside activities.
- When organising events and activities, avoid times that are dedicated to prayer, fasting and major holidays.
- If in doubt about something which requires a degree of cultural awareness, then ask local communities for advice.



“Initially some women were put off attending the work days as it wasn’t appropriate for them to work in a mixed group, so a women-only work time was started, which has been very successful.”

**Rana Mutakin,
Burnley Food Links**

"I grow all sorts of vegetables on my allotment – I love it. In the summer I'm up there from nine in the morning till 10 at night. I grow spinach, methi (fenugreek), dhanyia (coriander), potatoes and tomatoes. I like growing flowers too – I had 120 roses!"

Mrs Patel, Leicester



"Sharing skills benefits everyone. Volunteers have shown us how to use the azadar or doria which are similar to trenching hoes widely used in Asia and Africa."

Ann Bateman, Riverside Community Garden Project, Cardiff

Cultural awareness: plants and animals

- The opportunity to grow and pick vegetables used for specific cultural dishes is a big attraction at some community gardens (see Food Plants to Grow for examples). These are often expensive or hard to obtain in some areas.
- Be aware that there may be an interest in growing a wider variety of plants, including flowers, and not just vegetables.
- Initial dislike of pigs (considered unclean by Muslims and Jews) gradually changed over time for some visitors to Gloucester City Farm, as they became used to seeing them on the farm. However, this may not always be the case.
- Dogs are seen as unclean by some cultures. Making sure that dogs are on leads and not allowed to foul in public areas is a positive move for all.
- Gardening 'wear' such as overalls, heavy boots and gloves may be unfamiliar to some people, as may some tools.





Helping people feel at home

Creating surroundings that reflect different cultures can give a sense of belonging to people who may feel 'out of place'. It also encourages interest in learning about other cultures, which is particularly important in areas where prejudice barriers need to be broken down.

- Reflect different cultures through artwork. A group of young people at Windmill Hill City Farm in Bristol learned about the customs of Native Americans through carving and decorating a totem pole.
- At The Hidden Gardens in Glasgow, all the plants are either Asian or indigenous British species. Plants such as magnolia, black bamboo, Chinese plum and Ginko were chosen for their links to various ethnic cultures. The Muslim community asked for fruiting trees such as apple and fig; Hindus wanted to see herbs such as basil and tulsi.
- Provide information about where plants come from and their links to different cultures. The Coriander Club at Spitalfields City Farm has signs with information about the plants grown by the group, along with the women's memories and favourite uses for the plants.
- Do not ignore the history and culture of white communities. Bankside Open Spaces Trust commemorates contributions made by local Victorian gardening heroes in a mosaic designed by children. It also celebrates the history of the local parks.
- Consider providing some information in other languages (see Language and Translation section).

"Our project works with Asian women from inner city Birmingham and supports local people with tools, materials and practical advice. In the case of many Asian women, who come from a rural background, it is the emotional support rather than the gardening knowledge that is needed."

**Irena Iwegbu,
Concrete to Coriander**

Members of the group Concrete to Coriander, during a BEN focus group session, said:

“We would like organisations to give information in plain straightforward English. We can almost always find someone in our group to translate for us.”

“We would like telephone numbers, dates and addresses in English because that is the form that helps us most when we need to use it or to find places.”

“Pictures, images or symbols should be used instead of words for signage where possible.”



Language and translation

These following points, taken from Black Environment Network’s paper on translation (see Resources), will help you consider what and how much to translate.

- No organisation can translate everything. The cost would be prohibitive and sometimes other ways of communicating are preferable
- Using images to get a message across is very effective
- Think carefully what the purpose of the information is, and what the needs of the target groups are
- Some ethnic minority groups may specifically request the translation of a particular item because they feel that it is of great relevance to them. It is important that such requests are carefully considered
- Translated words can be a symbolic gesture of the recognition of cultural presence, even for groups which do not need translation. For example, a leaflet on planting trees may incorporate the word “tree” in many languages in its design, while the main information is solely in English.

Cultural relevance

Reading International Solidarity Centre

Reading International Solidarity Centre created a resource out of a problem when they turned a leaky roof into a culturally educational roof top garden.

Using permaculture principles (creating sustainable human habitats by following nature's patterns) the 32m x 6m roof garden copies the layers of a natural forest and is home to 140 trees, climbers, ground cover plants and root crops.

Every plant is edible, medicinal or has some practical use, and all tell a story about the diversity of

climates and cultures around the world and their fragile state of interdependence. Plants and food are excellent mediums to explore how actions taken in the UK can affect the livelihoods of people elsewhere.

Consultation with ethnic minority community groups, schools, artists and environmental organisations

took place during the design stage. Developing the garden also provided an opportunity to twin with partner groups in countries such as Nepal, Cuba, the Philippines and Zimbabwe.

Plants from around the world are used to educate visitors both about biodiversity and the way different cultures use plants. Culturally significant plants have been selected to relate to some of the groups using the garden, including Turkish rocket, a peppery salad plant; Chilean myrtle, which bears the delicious 'ugni' berries and maize, the staple food crop of much of Latin America and Africa. There is also Emmer wheat, a 4,000 year old variety originally grown in ancient Egypt.

Each plant has its own information label – giving its Latin and common name and showing a picture of it in flower/leaf, details of its uses and where it is from.

A series of laminated sheets are on display at the site, explaining the philosophy behind the roof garden and helping to make it relevant to peoples own gardens with ideas for recycling, water collecting, vegetable growing and composting.



Resources

Reading International Solidarity Centre Roof Garden

www.risc.org.uk

Reading International Solidarity Centre
35 – 39 London Street
Reading RG1 4PS

Tel: 0118 958 6692

Email: admin@risc.org.uk

Jungle Seeds

www.junglegardens.co.uk

Seeds for many unusual plants

Black Environment Network

www.ben-network.org.uk

60 High Street
Llanberis LL55 4EU

Tel: 01286 870 715

Email: ukoffice@ben-network.org.uk

Concrete to Coriander

Concrete to Coriander successfully promotes the benefits of allotment gardening to Asian women, a previously under-represented group. The project was developed by CSV in 1999 with a grant from the National Lottery.

Tel: 0121 327 6054

Email: irena@csvgenvironment.org.uk

3 Healthy lifestyles and food growing

City farms and community gardens are ideally placed to provide healthy living, food growing, cooking and exercise opportunities. With high levels of diabetes, heart problems and social isolation existing in some BAME communities, these issues are particularly important to address.

Healthy living

A number of gardens and farms are finding different ways of engaging people in healthy lifestyles:

Introducing idea of healthy food growing	A Walking For Health group stops by at Riverside Community Allotment in Cardiff on their weekly ramble – promoting the idea of healthier diet.
Cooking food from a range of places	During the winter at Scotswood Natural Community Garden in Newcastle, regular volunteers from an asylum seeker and refugee organisation prepare and cook food from a wide range of places including the Congo, Iran and Bosnia.
Events to highlight the impact of food from other cultures on the UK	The Changing Taste of Food Project is organised by Birmingham City Council's Allotment Officer every October as part of Black History Month. Run in conjunction with Birmingham College of Food, the event focusses on food and recipes from different cultures. Cooking displays and a chance to learn about different ingredients and spices are popular. The project aims to highlight the impact of ethnic groups on food eaten in the UK.
Recipe collection	Making a collection of popular recipes is a great way of passing on healthy cooking information. Women from Spitalfields City Farm's Coriander Club are creating healthy recipe booklets aimed at the Bangladeshi community.
PYO scheme	Arkwright Meadows Community Garden's pick-your-own scheme is popular – cheap prices attract local residents who can pick fresh organic vegetable and salad plants direct from the garden.
Café	Burnley Food Links runs a community café where healthy food is served in a social environment.
Developing plans for a co-operative	With the support of the Riverside Market Association in Cardiff, local people are developing plans for a food co-op. Some of the fresh produce will eventually come from the Riverside Community Garden. A travelling 'veg van' will help to take produce to areas that have little access to cheap, healthy food.

"I know how to grow coriander and tulsi – what I want to find out is how to grow cabbage and potatoes."

Mr Singh, Liverpool

Tips from FCFCG members:

- It is important to value the expertise people already have in growing food.
- For volunteers, being able to take some produce away from a visit to the garden is an important part of the exchange. Volunteers at Riverside Community Garden always leave the garden with a selection of whatever produce is in season.
- Don't underestimate the interest in growing traditional British food plants.
- Growing plants in containers is a great way for non-gardeners to start. It is achievable even for people who don't have access to a garden. A container with tomatoes, peas and chillies can easily be grown on a windowsill.
- Some aspects of food growing may be very different from what people have been used to, such as colder weather or use of organic methods. Offer practical support where it is needed.

"I helped with growing things like lime trees, papaya and cactus as a child growing up in Aruba – the Caribbean island I am from. But it is a very rocky place, with only one season – hot. In the UK you have to learn how to grow different things in different weather."

**Jane Jeffrey, Chair,
Arkwright Meadows
Community Garden**



Food plants to grow in the UK

Many city farms and community gardens already grow a range of food plants with connections to different cultures, though some adapt to the UK climate better than others. With access to a polytunnel or green house the possibilities are even greater.

Popular plants include:

Callaloo (West Indian spinach)

Similar to spinach. The mildly-flavoured leaves are used in many African Caribbean dishes.

Sow seeds in late spring. Germination is usually rapid if the soil is warm with a slight drop in temperature overnight. Cuttings of growing plants root easily. Callaloo prefers a well-drained fertile soil in a sunny position. The plant requires a hot sheltered position to do well – it cannot grow in the shade.

Aubergine

Extremely versatile and used in many Asian and Caribbean dishes. Both purple and white varieties are available.

Sow late February indoors in small pots. Germination takes up to 21 days. Harden off the plants and move outdoors once all danger of frost has passed.

When the plants have a good root system, pot up in growbags in pairs, then place in a hot, sheltered, sunny position. Pinch out growing tips when plants reach 30cm/12 inches. Stake the plants and water regularly, but do not keep the compost too wet. Fine spraying of plants with water helps encourage fruit to set. Limit to five or six fruits per plant. Once the fruit starts to swell, feed with tomato food each time you water. Cut fruit as needed when they reach a good size and colour, but before the shine disappears from the skin.



Okra

The seedpods are picked before they mature and can be used as a cooked vegetable or as a thickener in soups and stews. They are particularly tasty in a curried dish with rice.

Growing a metre or more tall, Okra needs lots of warmth if it is to crop well. It is best sown in February or March to benefit from the summer sun. Place in a sunny position, but ensure it gets lots of moisture. A daily sprinkling with water or perhaps a very weak liquid feed will keep it happy and increase fruit set. Yellow flowers are produced for much of the summer, followed by the large seedpods.

Red leaf amaranth

The leaves of this attractive plant are used in Asian recipes.

Half-hardy annual. Sow in pots from April-May and transfer outside after frosts, or direct sow under protection from late May to late June. Germination is usually rapid if the soil is warm. Amaranth prefers rich soil and needs lots of watering during the hottest part of the year. Cuttings of growing plants root easily.



Bottle gourds

The bottle gourd is widely cultivated for its edible mature fruit which can be cooked and used as an equivalent to summer squashes. The plant can be boiled, steamed, fried, used in curries or made into fritters, while the hard shells can be used as ornaments or musical instruments.

Sow seed inside in March. The seed germinates best at 25°C and soaking the seeds for 12 hours in warm water prior to sowing can hasten germination. Grow on fast and plant out as soon as possible after the last expected frosts, giving some protection until the plants are established. The plants are frost-tender annuals, they grow very rapidly and their stems can reach a length of nine metres in the summer, so growing up a sheltered, sunny wall or trellis is ideal. A warm summer is required for good production of the fruit.

Lemon grass

Used in Thai, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Caribbean and Asian dishes. It adds a lemon tang to stir fries, soups and many Chinese culinary delights. Also acts as an insect deterrent.

This is a tropical zone plant which will not withstand temperatures below 10 degrees, so it is best grown indoors - particularly during winter months - in a conservatory, greenhouse or on a kitchen windowsill. It can be grown on the patio during the summer months. Germination can be slow and erratic. It is best grown in moist, fertile, well-drained soil in full sun, though it can tolerate some shade.

Orach (Middle Eastern spinach)

The leaves are used like spinach. They turn a deep green when cooked.

Orach is easily grown in a variety of well-drained soils but rich, moisture-retentive soils give the quick growth that is necessary for the production of tender leaves. The plants thrive in any temperate climate, and are extremely drought resistant. Some forms of this species have bronze or deep red leaves and are occasionally grown as ornamental plants, but their leaves taste the same as the green-leafed forms. Plants are fast-growing and usually self-sow quite freely if the surrounding soil is disturbed by hoeing. They tolerate hot weather well, but soon go to seed, so successive sowings at four-weekly intervals are required during the growing season if a continuous supply is required. Leaves can be harvested 40-60 days after sowing. Plants require a position in full sun.

Indian mustard

An extremely versatile plant. The peppery flavoured leaves are highly prized in Asian cooking and can be used in both salads and stir fries.

Leaves and flowers can be used raw or cooked. The seeds are used whole in pickles and curries, while sprouted seeds are also used in salads. Indian mustard is a hardy annual which is sown in trays in March. When established, plant out a foot apart. Sow in shallow drills from April to autumn in succession to provide a continuous crop. To prevent bolting, delay sowing until June. Plants sown in late summer will get a good start in the spring.

Sweet potatoes

Very popular African and Caribbean vegetable.

Sweet potatoes don't sprout in the same way as normal potatoes and need quite intense heat. Sweet potatoes from supermarkets are often treated with an anti-sprouting agent, so it is necessary to scrub and rinse well before planting. Place in moist sand and when the sprouts reach two or three inches tall bring them out into the light, detach from the tuber, put them into ordinary compost and grow in a propagator. Once they are growing strongly, pot them up and keep in a greenhouse. They will need to be trained up strings in order to give them more light and stop them rooting unnecessarily. They need plenty of water, but don't need a rich soil. Take cuttings in late summer, root them and keep indoors on a sunny windowsill through the winter for the next season.

Fenugreek (Methi)

The leaves and seeds are used in Asian cooking. When ground into a powder the seed is a key ingredient in curries and mango chutney.

Hardy annual. Pre-soak the seed for 12 hours in warm water and then sow in spring. Fenugreek succeeds in ordinary garden soil in a warm sheltered position, but prefers a well-drained loamy soil in full sun. Plants are hardy to about -15°C. The seed is ripened intermittently over a period of some weeks, making harvesting more complicated. Generally, plants take about 20 weeks to mature. When removing plant remains at the end of the growing season, it is best to only remove the aerial parts of the plant, leaving the roots in the ground to decay and release their nitrogen.

Bangladeshi harvest

Coriander Club, Spitalfields City Farm, London

Growing up in Bangladesh, Lutfun Hussain learned how to grow rice and many different vegetables on her father's land. In 1969 she moved to Tower Hamlets, London and, while raising her family, experimented with growing Bangladeshi produce in her back garden.

Lutfun became involved with Spitalfields City Farm as a volunteer Bengali speaker in 1999, an important role in encouraging the involvement of the local community. When the farm gained funding for a Healthy Living Project (growing vegetables and holding healthy cooking classes), she was employed to run the project. The Coriander Club, renowned for growing Bangladeshi vegetables, evolved from this.



"I started volunteering at the farm in 1999 and that's when the club was formed in order to grow herbs, fruit and vegetables – especially Bangladeshi produce which is expensive to buy," she said.

The club gives Bangladeshi women, many of them older housewives, the chance not only to grow vegetables, but also to get out of the house and meet other people. For many this is their only social activity outside of the home. The group meets three times a week during the summer for healthy cooking classes and gardening sessions.

The women are very keen that the garden is secluded and out of sight of the general public, as they feel uncomfortable about men and teenagers peering in while they work. It is also crucial that the worker for the group is a woman – this makes the women feel more comfortable and is more acceptable to their husbands. For most of the women, English is not their first language and having a worker who is able to help overcome language barriers is important.

The opportunity to grow traditional Bengali vegetables, including mustard, aubergines, Bengali bottle gourds and coriander is particularly appealing. Growing

vegetables that can be used in cooking is very popular as they are generally expensive to buy, and not very fresh due to being imported from the subcontinent. Having a polytunnel has greatly increased the amount and variety of produce that can be grown.



Lutfun said the reputation of the club keeps growing: "People come from far and wide for some of our vegetables. Even some of the Bangladeshi restaurants in the borough come calling, but on the limited amount of land we have at the farm we cannot produce enough for everyone."

Culture kitchen

Women's Environmental Network

Culture Kitchen events bring together local women's groups and individuals who are interested in growing their own food. Organised by the Women's Environmental Network, the events began in Tower Hamlets, East London, where many women's groups grow food, and are now spreading throughout the country.

These events offer opportunities for people to share knowledge about food growing and cooking in other cultures. They are hosted by a different local group each time, giving those attending the chance to explore a new garden or allotment.

Workshops such as composting, seed exchanges and container

growing are included in the day's schedule.

A very important part of each event is the preparation of a freshly cooked lunch. Part of the morning involves picking fresh produce, chopping it up and adding spices, activities which give people from varying cultures and generations a chance to discuss culinary tastes.

After lunch, a range of workshops and events provide opportunities to have a go at new things. At one event, a beautiful sun was created using Rangoli, the traditional Indian art of decorating walls and houses using rice, lentils and spices. Exploring cultural and traditional uses of herbs in a basic kitchen pharmacy is always popular and 'fruity beauty' workshops provide both light entertainment and some interesting ideas.



Tips for holding your own Culture Kitchen:

- Leave plenty of time for people to get together and chat
- Plan some structured workshops around different aspects of growing and food
- Have some hands on sessions which people can join in with at any point, such as weaving, Rangoli or planting up containers.



Resources

The Coriander Club

www.spitalfieldscityfarm.org

Spitalfields City Farm
Tower Hamlets
London E1 5HJ

Tel: 0207 247 8762

Email: moo@spitalfieldscityfarm.org

Women's Environmental Network

www.wen.org.uk

PO Box 30626
London E1 1TZ

Tel: 020 7481 9004

Email: food@wen.org.uk

Scotswood Natural Community Garden

www.sncg.org.uk

Scotswood Natural Community Garden
John Marley Centre
Whickham View
Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 6TT

Tel: 0845 458 1653

Email: office@sncg.org.uk

Nicky's Nursery

www.nickys-nursery.co.uk

A good range of vegetable seeds including amaranth
and Indian mustard

4 Skills learning

The relaxed and inspiring atmosphere of many community farms and gardens make them ideal environments for people from BAME communities to learn new skills, ranging from gardening to spoken English.

Horticulture training

Many gardens and farms can provide both informal and formal horticultural training. Gaining a qualification of any kind is a positive experience. It helps build confidence and can lead to more learning opportunities.

- Arkwright Meadows Community Garden holds informal, activity-based workshops in making hanging baskets, growing in small spaces, container growing and general horticulture. In the future, local residents will have the opportunity to gain formal qualifications in horticultural skills.
- Volunteers at the Riverside Community Garden Project have the opportunity to work towards Accredited Open College Network Training levels 1 to 3.
- Many of the women from Spitalfields City Farm's Coriander Club are completing National Proficiency Test Council certificates in Horticulture.
- Food for All is a scheme run by Garden Organic. It provides support and training for people who want to learn more about growing organically and then share their skills with the local community.



“For people who have just come to the city, getting out and about and having somewhere to take their families is really important. Taking the time to talk slowly and clearly is helpful. Sometimes people who visit return as volunteers to the garden.”

William Mortada, Scotswood Natural Community Garden

“This is much better than sitting in a classroom. The women inadvertently pick up words such as garden, herb, spices, chop, stir, mix and measure as they cook and tend to their plants.”

**Lutfun Hussain,
Spitalfields City Farm
Coriander Club**

English language skills

Plants and wildlife appeal to people on many levels and this enthusiasm can be conveyed with very little common language. People who want to improve their English gain confidence from the fact that they are in a safe, non-judgemental environment.

- Scotswood Natural Community Garden is regularly visited by pupils from Newcastle College’s ESOL (English as a Second Language) classes, many of whom are refugees and asylum seekers.
- Improving the English language skills of Bangladeshi women in the Coriander Club occurs through cooking sessions.

Information technology

Focusing on a subject that is interesting to an individual, such as plants and food, is a great way to help them learn about computers and the internet. It makes the learning process less intimidating and more relevant to their lives.



Women from the Sho Nirbhor (Gardening for Health) programme, supported by Bradford Community Environment Project, were involved in contributing stories about plants and food to Kew Gardens’ Plant Cultures website. This brought many of the women in contact with computers and the internet for the first time. They took pride in sharing their new knowledge and contributions to the website with their families.

Anybody can contribute their stories to the Plant Cultures website by going online and using the contribution page, an ideal task for people learning computer and internet skills (see Resources).

Community video

Burnley Food Links

Burnley Food Links (BFL) developed from the success of local food and health awareness projects in Burnley and involves, among others, the Bangladeshi Welfare Association and Sure Start. BFL's main aims are the improvement of local food security, health education and community cohesion.

With five unpaid directors, all women and three from ethnic minority groups, BFL is well placed to communicate with, and respond to, local communities. A central part of the initiative is the management of three large allotments, used for

educational purposes and community involvement.

An adjacent terraced house is a community base for the project, providing somewhere for people to have tea, keep harvested vegetables and escape from the rain.

The development of the project has been gradual and illustrates a point often overlooked in community projects - don't expect everyone to have the same vision of it, especially in the early days or wintertime when there is not much to see.

Often it is only when there are vegetables to pick or flowers to admire that some people

will show an interest.

Rana Mutakin, Director of BFL, said the hard work pays off for people who do get involved: "Sometimes the digging and weeding puts people off because it is tough work, but when they come to harvest at the end of the year they are so impressed it makes all the hard work worthwhile!"

A women's group who garden regularly on the allotment were invited to take part in a project with the National Computing Centre - to equip them with the skills and confidence to use video to record and document their activities. Six women took part in workshops and learnt about using a digital video camera. A trip to the Eden Project in Cornwall enthused and inspired members. The end result was a video about healthy food in Burnley, which was shown at the launch of a community café and was an enormously proud moment for those involved.

The women started the project with little computer knowledge and were very sceptical about what they would be able to achieve. The process of learning and being able to put their skills into practice was a very positive experience for those involved, helping to build their confidence and providing them with a way of showing others what their project meant to them.



Resources

Burnley Food Links

Tel: 01282 657 395

Email: burnleyfoodlinks@yahoo.co.uk

Bradford Community Environment Project

www.bcep.org.uk

Unit 13 BCEP Carlisle Business Centre

60 Carlisle Road

Bradford BD8 8BD

Tel: 01274 223 236

Email: info@bcep.org.uk

Our Video

<http://ourvideo.org/>

Resources and information for groups and individuals interested in community video.

Food for All

www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Scheme run by Garden Organic for people who are interested in learning organic gardening skills and then passing them to others in the community.

Plant Cultures

www.plantcultures.org.uk

Kew Garden's website with information and resources relating to 25 South Asian plants, includes recipes, how to grow plants and fabulous images. Add your story/recipe to the site.

5 Events, celebrations and creativity

One of the best ways of getting people to come along to your community project or initiative is to put on a social event. Breaking the ice and making people feel welcome will encourage them to return. In many cultures, food and music are significant draws to getting involved.



Shared knowledge from FCFCG members:

- Barbecues – Ensure that you cater for everybody by including several vegetarian/halal/kosher options.
- Picnics – A great opportunity for people to bring and share food.
- International Days – Scotswood Natural Community Garden noticed there were negative attitudes towards asylum seekers locally, which went unchallenged. An International Activities Day with African drumming and storytelling proved popular and helped break down prejudices.

- Chilli or Garlic Festivals (see the Bankside Open Spaces Trust case study) – many cultures use both chilli and garlic in cooking.
- Green Days – focusing on food growing, recycling, water saving, energy efficiency.
- Tree dressing events (see Hammersmith Community Garden Association's case study).
- Garden Light Festivals – Based around Diwali, Eid and Christmas. Arkwright Meadows Community Garden hold workshops in lantern making, circus skills and music.
- Food Festivals and Culture Kitchens – Scotswood Natural Community Garden has plans for a Bread Festival. An outside clay bread oven will be used by volunteers and visitors to make bread from their home countries, including 'stotty cake', a traditional local Newcastle bread.



Avoid marginalising white community values. Respect their input, knowledge and needs too. Celebrate and include 'British' traditions – Apple Day, May Day, Harvest Festivals and similar.

Fragrant festival

The Hidden Gardens, Glasgow



Described as a 'visionary new landmark' which celebrates the diversity of nature and humanity, the Hidden Gardens are based in the Pollokshields area of South Glasgow.

A two year community consultation period guided the transformation of this former industrial site into sacred gardens. Feedback from questionnaires and interviews revealed that people wanted a safe, peaceful, beautiful garden with water features, that was both educational and family-oriented.

During the first two years, the gardens hosted culturally-specific festivals for Eid, Diwali, Channukah and

Christmas. Branded as the Festivals of Light, they proved very successful in bringing new, integrated and diverse audiences into the gardens.

General Manager Linda Macdonald said these festivals have now been developed further to move them away from being so culturally specific. The aim is to create events which are as inclusive as possible:

"We are about integration and finding common ground. While specific festivals did enable us to do this to a certain degree, they also led to people saying 'that's not for me' if they were either non-religious, or part of a different religion. By focusing on several key religions, we also left ourselves open to accusations of favouritism."

Although it is impossible to accommodate everyone, Linda said the festival organisers decided to move towards a format that was much more inclusive and which, in effect, created a new festival for everyone to share together. As a result Fragrant Glasgow was developed.

"Over the summer months we grew 40,000 flowering plants with the help of volunteers, dried the flowers and then asked members of the local communities to help weave them into a 35ft long dried

flower garland that became the symbolic centre of the festival, combining flowers from around the world."

Workshops with local schools and community centres fed into the project and resulted in a three day event with a programme of music, dance, poetry and song, presented by artists from a range of culture and faith backgrounds. In addition, hundreds of flower garlands were created, while lighting schemes and soundscapes added a new dimension to the gardens.

"The event took about a year to plan and execute," said Linda. "We attracted a different and diverse audience in to the gardens through the event and it enabled us to offer a range of workshops to schools and community groups. However, it should be made clear that this kind of event is expensive, both in terms of cash, and the strain it puts on the time and resources of the gardens."

In the future, Linda hopes that the various community groups using the gardens will become increasingly involved in organising events: "This is our hope for how festivals may develop in the future: that we simply become facilitators for groups and communities to put on their own events."

Tree dressing

Hammersmith Community Gardens Association, London

Tree dressing is a tradition rooted in many cultures. For centuries trees have been celebrated across the world. In parts of Hindu India, banyan and pipal trees are painted with vermillion and turmeric, while in Scotland trees standing beside certain wells are known as 'cloodie' trees and are hung with thousands of strips of cloth by locals and travellers.

The environmental organisation Common Ground began promoting Tree Dressing Day in 1990 on the first weekend in December. It aims to encourage the celebration of trees in both the city and country, highlighting our responsibility for looking after them and reminding us of their enormous cultural and environmental importance.

Godolphin Road Community Garden, Shepherds Bush, held their first tree dressing in 1998. An artist worked with children at a local primary school to create birds out of recycled estate agents boards, which made an excellent lightweight and flexible material.

The birds were used to a dress a large sycamore tree in Godolphin Garden. Though not thought of as a particularly attractive or



significant tree in terms of ecology, it was perfect for the occasion. The community event that accompanied the dressing involved music and roast chestnuts.

Shepherds Bush is a very diverse neighbourhood and one of the appeals of the tree dressing was the way it crossed cultural and religious boundaries to offer an alternative focus at a time of the year when the main focus is on Christmas.

The dressings have now become a tradition, with local children and artists regularly

involved. On one occasion, local Caribbean artist Carl Gabriel, who has worked on large sculptures for Notting Hill Carnival, ran a two week residency with the local school.

The principal sculpture was a Green Man, made out of a wire structure covered in tissue, paint and PVA. Three other sculptural heads, based on a clown theme, were also created.

The Green Man remained in the tree for five years, overlooking the garden and becoming a familiar and welcome local landmark.

Practical tips learned by Hammersmith Community Gardens Association include:

- There are advantages to working with students - they are full of enthusiasm and ideas. However, they can be 'precious' about their work and under-estimate time and other considerations such as health and safety. A tree surgeon asked to hang one creation was alarmed to discover the paint on it had not yet dried!
- Take account of the weather when tree decorating in winter. Don't let ceremonies drag on. Gazebo shelters and outdoor lighting (the plastic rope kind is safest) make it possible to create a colourful event quite cheaply.
- The main expense is often hiring a tree surgeon to install the work. Don't forget to budget to have the work taken down too. It is cheaper to get this kind of work carried out on a weekday.
- Remember to fully engage the local community. One year, all pupils from the local junior school came down to watch the installation of the work. Many children then brought their parents along to the main event which was held the following weekend.

Getting creative

Creative activities are great ways to get people involved.

- Willow structures – Projects that involve making structures, especially dens and tunnels for children, are very popular.
- Rangoli – A traditional Indian art using lentils, spices and flour to draw patterns. For an easy and fun activity use PVA glue to stick into place on card.
- Basket weaving – The tradition of weaving runs through many cultures. Using materials from hedgerows is a great way of learning about woodland trees and plants.
- Flower arranging/drying/pressing – Flowers have particular significance in different cultures. For example, marigolds are used as offerings and decoration for places of worship in the Hindu religion.
- Dying – Boiled then cooled water mixed with turmeric or tea can be used to dye pieces of cotton and paper.
- Wonky vegetables – Potatoes, carrots, parsnips, turnips and other vegetables can be made into amusing human and animal characters by joining them together with cocktail sticks.
- Egg blowing and painting – A bit fiddly for very small children, but with help they enjoy it a lot.
- Mosaics – To create large wall designs or simply decorations on plant pots. Broken tiles are often available from tile merchants for free.



- Drumming, music and dancing bring events to life and often include the opportunity for people to have a go. Try contacting local drumming groups, community samba groups and Asian art centres for contacts.
- Storytelling – Using myths, legends and stories from different cultures.
- Lantern making – Using glass jam jars, glass paints and tea-lights. Punching holes into tin cans makes beautiful nightlights (these are not suitable for children).
- All kinds of hanging baskets/pots can be made from recycled containers such as olive oil cans, plastic bottles and tin cans.

Creative gardening

Bankside Open Spaces Trust, London

Bankside Open Spaces Trust (BOST) is a charity supporting and inspiring local communities to improve, create and enjoy parks and open spaces in Southwark, London. It provides local residents with community gardening clubs, after-school clubs and informal horticultural training.

Events and festivals organised by BOST appeal to people from many different cultures. There are plans for a Chilli Festival which will include activities such as potting-up chilli seedlings to take home, chilli tasting, making decorations from dried chillies, plus food and music performances.

The Diversity Garden is one of several BOST-managed spaces. It is diverse in all senses of the word as people, plants and wildlife all share the garden. The bustling after-school club uses a wide range

of activities to inspire and engage children from many different cultural backgrounds - including Moroccan, Nigerian, Iraqi and Bosnian - in all aspects of gardening, wildlife and healthy food.

Adults are engaged too. BOST provides family activities at the Diversity Garden which celebrate growing and eating foods of different cultures. Through this, BOST is able

to foster a sense of active citizenship among families who often have limited spoken English and live in flats with little green space.

Examples of positive action and civic pride include improvement plans for housing estates, sharing produce and ideas, supporting open space campaigns and helping with gardening activities like bulb and tree planting.



Some favourite activities include:

- Decorating plant pots - free paint testers are good for this - then planting with quick growing flowers like nasturtiums, sunflowers or strawberries.
- Making cardboard cut-outs of vegetables, which helps children link the activity of seed planting with the final result. Colouring in the vegetable and sticking on 'wobbly eyes' gives them their own unique character! Making the vegetable into a badge (putting a safety pin on the back) or taping it on to the end of a stick are popular too.
- Making 'minibeasts' out of pipe cleaners – like spiders, caterpillars, ants and bees – are a good way of talking about their place in the garden and how important they are.
- Garden trail. Searching for hidden pictures of different fruit and vegetables in the garden (with the country of origin written on the back) helps children understand where such healthy food comes from.



Resources

The Hidden Gardens

www.thehiddengardens.org.uk

The Hidden Gardens
Via Tramway
25 Albert Drive
Glasgow G41 2PE

Tel: 0141 433 2722

Email: info@thehiddengardens.org.uk

Hammersmith Community Gardens Association

www.hcga.org.uk

59 Godolphin Road
Hammersmith
London W12 8JF

Tel: 01494 758788

Email: info@hcga.org.uk

Bankside Open Spaces Trust

www.bost.org.uk

5 King James Street
London SE1 0RU

Tel: 020 7261 1009

Email: info@bost.org.uk

Common Ground

www.commonground.org.uk

Common Ground plays a unique role in the arts and environmental fields. By linking nature with culture, projects focus upon the positive investment people can make in their own localities. Provides ideas for Apple Day, tree dressing events, the creation of parish maps and sculpture.

6 Increasing diversity throughout your organisation

Many community groups still find that numbers of BAME volunteers, staff and board members are low despite attracting plenty of visitors from diverse communities. Changing this is a very gradual process. Looking at how your organisation can support and encourage people is vital.

FCFCG network and training events feature advice and good practice information on engaging BAME communities. Details of relevant events appear in members' newsletters and on the Federation website. The Refugee Awareness Project can deliver sessions aimed at community gardens and city farms which raise awareness of issues specific to refugees and asylum seekers. The Black Environment Network offers diversity awareness training for your organization.

FCFCG members have taken their own innovative steps to increase the diversity of their boards:

- Riverside Market Association aims to support community development as well as creating opportunities to sell local food. Changing attitudes towards the market has happened gradually. Initially, local people from BAME communities were invited to sell their produce as stall holders and then encouraged to become more involved in the decisions and direction of the market. One woman, who began by selling home-made samosas on the market and now runs a catering business, has been invited to join the management committee.
- The community consultation process for Arkwright Meadows Community Garden helped generate a garden committee which reflected local diversity. Three residents living next to the garden were involved, as were key figures from Sikh, Muslim, African Caribbean and white communities. All of these were already strongly involved in churches, community centres and schools. The main criteria for being on the board was a strong commitment to the project and a willingness to learn. Members from another garden were invited to share their knowledge on the amount of time and commitment it takes to run a community garden.



"It is important that people have the necessary skills to be on the board – token positions are not positive for anyone. But supporting people to gain those skills is key to community development and we place great importance on it."

Steve Garrett, Chair of Riverside Market Association

"I live next door to the gardens. At one time it was just a dumping place and a route for dog walkers. I was involved with ideas for the piece of land from the start and so was my next door neighbour – now he is the Vice Chair."

**Jane Jeffrey – Chair,
Arkwright Meadows
Community Garden**

- Hammersmith Community Gardens Association supports a board reflective of its diverse local residents by offering shadowing opportunities, training and also the chance to co-work alongside another board member for a year. It also provide a job description for board members, making sure that the person knows how much time and commitment will be needed. When recruiting further board members, it utilises the contacts and networks that volunteers have established in the local community.
- Volunteers from the various groups which use Scotswood Natural Community Garden were invited to attend garden planning, staff and management committee meetings. Their feedback highlighted how the culture and protocol of meetings were unfamiliar to people from some ethnic communities. The meetings also seemed dull at times! The group is aiming to experiment with different ways for volunteers, including young people, to have a greater say in decision-making.
- Bradford Community Environment Project has a board that reflects the project's work with different South Asian communities in Bradford. This takes commitment and effort to achieve. It places much emphasise on making and nurturing links with other organisations and new board members often come through these links. Holding meetings at a local community centre so the manager can attend is an example of how its flexible approach results in a diverse board.





"I was on the board of a local Community Association so knew how much commitment you need to be involved on a board.

You learn a lot and meet different people – it is good to have different opinions on things.

As committee members we get involved in a lot of work, such as giving presentations about the garden or attending events and functions. I'm the type of person who is committed, who has to do their best – if I get too tired I tell the committee I need a break."

**Jane Jeffrey – Chair,
Arkwright Meadows
Community Garden**

These points were also highlighted by FCFCG members:

- One person's opinions and experience cannot reflect that of an entire community.
- People who have the time and dedication needed to take on this kind of commitment are very much in demand because there are only a small number of people with the relevant skills and experience.
- Do not recruit based purely on someone's ethnicity.
- Be prepared to offer support to people who have the skills, but not the experience, necessary for being on a management committee.
- Seek advice from other community-managed farm or garden groups. They can highlight the challenges – and the good points – of getting people from BAME communities as staff members or trustees.

Resources

Refugee Awareness Project

www.refugee-action.org.uk

The Old Fire Station
150 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8SB

Tel: 020 7654 7700

Commision for Equality and Human Rights

www.cehr.org.uk

The CEHR, established in 2007, has a stated vision of helping create a Britain at ease with all aspects of its diversity, built on fairness and respect for all.

Working alongside minority ethnic communities is an important element of the community gardens and city farms movement.

This publication showcases examples of good practice and identifies innovative ideas that will help all of our members meet the needs of, and engage with, multi-ethnic communities.

Sharing knowledge in this way can inspire community groups to help in the task of creating healthier and more connected local communities.

The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens exists to support, represent and promote community-managed farms and gardens.

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Hereford Street
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Fax: 0117 923 1900
Email: admin@farmgarden.org.uk
www.farmgarden.org.uk

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