

# Towards a Resilient Food System for London

## Policy directions and proposals



## Policy Proposals

### Strategic

- A.** Land will be available and protected to support community food growing and food production enterprises in order to meet the longer term goal of achieving a resilient food system and providing fresh, nutritious food for Londoners. This will contribute to enterprise, job-creation, training schemes, and London's efforts to address climate change.

There will be an increasing amount of sustainable and locally produced food consumed in and around London, through development of strategic partnerships between land owners, and urban, peri-urban and rural food growing projects.<sup>1</sup>

Food growing and production and distribution are closely related to housing, health, the economy and the environment. It is essential to adopt an approach that is intersectional, participatory and inclusive for consumers, producers and distributors. Food production provides employment and training and contributes to sustainable economic development.

- B.** The amount of land in use for growing food will be increased in all urban communities in both inner and outer London, via:

—Integration of food growing space as a requirement in all new housing developments with utilisation of green roof methods and potential for training and enterprise opportunities.

—Partnership between the GLA, Sustain, Local Authorities and established food production enterprises to identify food production sites on GLA and local authority-owned land for new entrants in the sector. This will use best practice models between local authorities and food growing enterprises.

—Career-long agricultural tenureships offered by local authorities and GLA for food production sites, to provide sufficient time to develop financial viability, benefits of bio-diversity and community development, and soil replenishment through organic food production.

- C.** Local Authorities to foster a new generation of London food producers to work in a globally innovative urban food system by funding and supporting:

—Accredited training in organic food production.

—Paid work placements — apprenticeships and shorter-term placements (e.g. 6 months) that support (young) people to further develop skills in the work environment and provide sustainable employment opportunities.

—Associated “next steps” training — e.g. enterprise training, community development training.

- D.** The Mayor will promote and enhance the London Food Strategy. This will be implemented through the London Food Board, which will include representatives from London's community food growing and sustainable food production sector.

### Local Plans

- A.** GLA and borough councils to integrate food production into strategic assessments, funding streams and new developments in recognition of

#### REFERENCES:

1. Urban, peri-urban and rural food growing are characterised by the areas in the city, between the city and the countryside, and the countryside, respectively.

2. The city of Almere (Netherlands) is an example that demonstrates how urban agriculture can become a driver for regeneration. The Dutch University in Wageningen designed a virtual rural-urban city district called "Agromere". In this virtual district, agriculture and urban living merge with each other taking into account the need of all parties involved. This project inspired the city of Almere to implement urban agriculture in its development plans. The draft structural vision "Almere 2.0" allocates land for 15000 new homes with urban agriculture as a main element of the green infrastructure.

3. "Since food policies are closely related to many other challenges and policies, such as poverty, health and social protection, hygiene and sanitation, land use planning, transport, energy, education, and disaster preparedness, it is essential to adopt an approach that is comprehensive, interdisciplinary and inter-institutional". Taken from the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (2015) which was signed up to by the Mayor in 2015 and its points are to be incorporated into the enhanced London Food Strategy.

4. Around 15 per cent of the capital's total area is agricultural land mostly in the Green Belt — less than 10% is actively farmed. (Cultivating the Capital, food growing and the planning system in London. January 2010 London Assembly)

5. Agriculture is one of the few land uses permitted in the Green Belt through National Planning Policy Framework (para 89) but it is often given a lower priority.

See p31 and Appendix 6 — *Cultivating the Capital: food growing and the planning system in London*, 2010, London Assembly.

the various benefits of the sector and positive land use activity including; access to green space, mental health, enterprise generation, training, personal development, community well-being, access to fresh and healthy food, reduction of carbon footprint in food industry

- B.** Local Authorities must identify and safeguard land and Infrastructure for commercial food production and community gardening, including allotments, parks, orchards, schools and large commercial small scale glass houses. Local Authorities to make accessible a public register of available land e.g. park land, housing estates, brownfield sites or temporarily available sites and to administer a list of interested parties looking for land for production and marketing of food for London.<sup>2</sup>
- C.** Food growing and food production should be considered as a priority use for public land that is underused or vacant, particularly where not suitable for housing, on a long term basis under the Community Right to Reclaim Land, (Localism Act 2011), or where not possible then temporarily (meanwhile use).
- D.** Food production enterprises and community gardens to partner Councils in local forums to implement the 'London Food Strategy' (2006), 'Cultivating the Capital' (2010) and the 'Milan Urban Food Policy Pact' (2015).<sup>3</sup>
- E.** Agriculture land uses should be prioritised in Urban Fringe & Green Belt areas.<sup>4</sup> Boroughs in the urban fringe of London to provide land through National Planning Policy Guidance for development of farm enterprises and farm-to-table housing communities.<sup>5</sup>
- F.** Local Authorities will support food producers by investment through Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy, specifically to support food growing activities to take place in lands held or acquired by private bodies for 'development'. Examples include the establishment of mini-allotments in housing estates, Community Asset Transfer, and rent reduction for initial set period.
- G.** GLA and Local Authorities to independently purchase at least 15% of their total supply of foodstuffs from small-scale, non-chemical producers located in and around London by 2020, 25% by 2030 and 30% by 2036 — to increase demand for short supply chain and build sustainable local economies.

## Planning Decisions

- A.** Development that increases or enhances land for food production for community use will be supported. Consideration should be given to growing space that will be suitable for communities needs, water requirements, grey-water recycling for irrigation, considering sunlight and access needs. Growing space could be part of the soft landscaping strategy or part of the green space provision, or use more innovative solutions such as roof gardens.
- B.** Support should be provided to planning applications related to food growing for vital infrastructure such as large scale glass houses, cold-stores, containers, packing areas. Moreover planning should consider local distribution of produce, providing suitable office space and creating local distribution hubs. Local authority planning should draw upon the knowledge of successful food growing enterprises and be part of wider strategically zoned planning that includes Urban, Peri-urban and Rural food growing sites working together to provide food for the city.



# Community Food Growing and Food Production

These policy proposals were developed by a working group of the Community Food Growers Network (CFGN), Just Space, Women's Environmental Network (WEN) and Capital Growth over 18 months contributing to the document 'Towards a Community-Led Plan for London'.

The policy proposals offer a framework for moving towards a resilient food system in the capital as London signed up to the Milan Urban Food Pact in October 2015 which asserted that *'cities which host over half the world population have a strategic role to play in developing sustainable food systems and promoting healthy diets.'*

Community food growing projects across the capital have fed into the policy proposals and the first draft of the document was edited based on feedback at the 'Future of London's food system' event at City Hall in February 2016.

The proposals are aimed to support and expand the multiple benefits of the community food sector which can help to meet GLA and borough council strategic outputs such as:

<b>mental and physical health</b>	<b>access to green space</b>
<b>access to nutritious food</b>	<b>training opportunities</b>
<b>low environmental impact</b>	<b>resilient local economies</b>
<b>job creation</b>	<b>community space</b>

To find out more about the Milan Urban Food Pact see [www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org](http://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org)

Read the full Community-Led Plan for London at:

[www.justspace.org.uk](http://www.justspace.org.uk)

and learn about the other organisations at:

[www.cfgn.org.uk](http://www.cfgn.org.uk)

[www.wen.org.uk](http://www.wen.org.uk)

[www.capitalgrowth.org](http://www.capitalgrowth.org)

