

Community
Food
Growers
Network

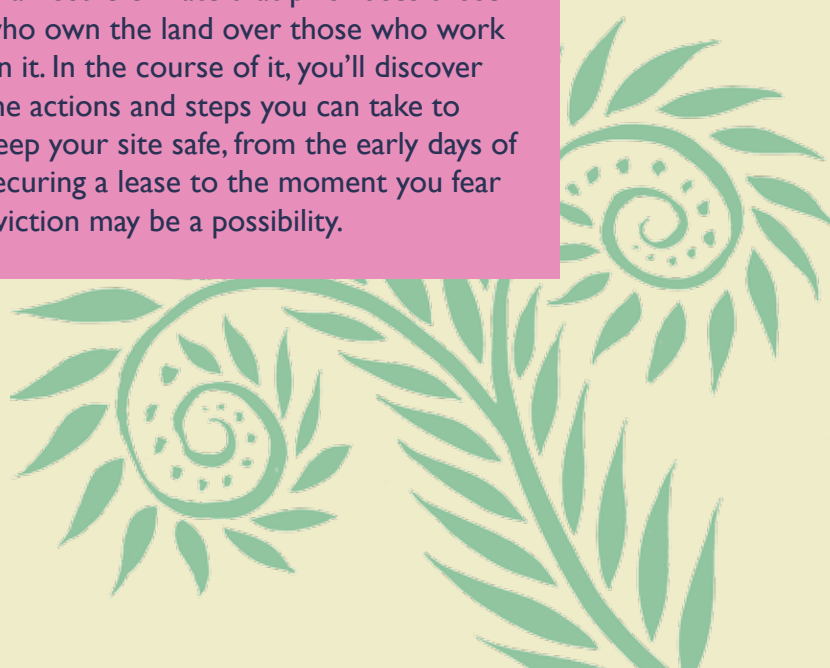
GUIDE TO
EVICTIION
RESISTANCE



Who is this toolkit for?


This document aims to be useful for all food growing sites, especially those based in London. With land being such a lucrative commodity in the city, protecting your patch will often be a battle that starts as soon as the seeds hit the soil. Whether you're merely questioning the sturdiness of your lease, unsure of how to proceed with your relationship with your landowner or being threatened with imminent removal, there is a lot that can be done to make your position more secure.

This document looks into how exactly community food growing sites can survive in a hostile climate that prioritises those who own the land over those who work on it. In the course of it, you'll discover the actions and steps you can take to keep your site safe, from the early days of securing a lease to the moment you fear eviction may be a possibility.





Contents



We've written this toolkit to be as clear as possible, with a thorough reference list and resources section and step-by-step guides to help you plan your eviction resistance strategy. If you'd like a hand or some extra support, contact **info@cfn.org.uk**

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Early Intervention:

Getting to Grips with Who Governs You

National land laws, taxes and subsidies which usually favour major landowners and the aristocracy may make it feel as if the law is not on your side as a small scale food grower. However, whilst the law can sometimes make life difficult for you it can also protect you. This section identifies three mechanisms you can use, specifically in the early stages of your garden to keep your site safe.

The Lease

The Community Land Advisory Service (1) or CLAS are a great resource for understanding land law and how it will affect you. If you haven't yet engaged with the landowners whose land you are on, CLAS' leases flow chart (2) outlines the different kind of leases that are suitable to different kinds of projects. This is a great guide to figuring out what you should be asking for. The Heads of Terms (3) and lease templates, drafted by lawyers and CLAS staff can further support this process. A lease will of course not guarantee indefinite security

and what it offers very much depends on the nature of it and the terms initially agreed.

Hannah, a grower from Kynaston Growing Communities Patchwork Farm (4) which was closed down in the early months of 2017, described the 'meanwhile' lease that they'd been given as "not really worth the paper it's written on". Offered the space for free by a business who were renting from the building owners, they unfortunately didn't have any legal protection written into their lease. When the building owners decided to kick everyone out and build luxury flats, Kynaston



Patchwork Farm was forced to leave too.

Seeking legal advice will benefit your site both before signing the lease (or occupying the space), and if ever you feel your site is under threat, no matter how slight or severe the threat feels. A list of pro bono law firms (who won't charge) can be found in the Further Resources section.

Shared Assets(5) and Locality(6) also provide information and advice on land laws and the local policies which can help you to access it. The more you understand your own lease and

the laws that surround them, the easier you may find engaging with lawyers. Have a read of FAQs or online breakdowns of the laws that will affect you, such as Agricultural Tenancies (7), Allotments Law (8), the Landlord and Tenant Act (9) and even the Human Rights Act (10). Further information on squatters' rights can also be found in the Further Resources section.

The Landowner

As well as the law itself, the will of your landowner will inevitably have an impact on you, the food grower. A thorough understanding



of who they are, why they've given you this lease, and what their projects and plans are is all great information to help you understand where you fit into the big picture. This can also give you an idea of what your future looks like and what might threaten it and when.

Although you may never meet them, try and figure out from as early as possible who exactly is

responsible for what and identify where power is located in the company or government body that is responsible for your land. Direct access and open lines of communication with a key decision-maker will be indispensable whenever there are queries or issues that arise.

In the case of private landowners this may well be very difficult. Property developers are

notoriously faceless, and knowing who owns the land can be almost impossible (11), but this shouldn't stop you from doing your research. Companies House (12) is always a good place to start and from there you can begin digging deep: the more information you have, the more power you are building at the ground level.

It's important to stress however that getting to grips with who your landowner is and what makes them tick isn't just about knowing what you're up against. Building a positive relationship with your landowner early on can really help you down the line. If your landowner likes you and supports what you're doing they will probably be more inclined to make life easier for you.

If your landowner is dependent on a public profile, use social media and local events to really encourage them to take pride in your presence. Offer regular updates of the work you're doing on their land and build up local support for your project simultaneously.

Whilst celebrating these kind of companies may not be the

priority for a community centred food growing project, building this kind of profile and publicly linking it to the company enables you have some influence over their marketing and PR. Simply, the better you make them look when they're on your side, the worse you'll make them look when they're not.

The Local Authority

The relationship between a food growing site and a private landowner will be different from the relationship you can expect to have with a local council. For a more in-depth guide to working with your local council, and getting to grips with the responsibilities and intentions of your local authority, take a look at CFGN's Working with your Council toolkit which offers a deeper reflection on the local and city-wide strategies (13), plans (14) and food policies (15) you can engage with.

If you formally solicited land from the council you will have most likely made a case for why your project fits into their strategic aims and objectives. You are also probably providing a service to

the community that costs them nothing. As you continue in your work, keep highlighting this and reminding them of how useful you are to them as a group. Invite local councillors to your events, tag them on social media and send them regular newsletters or literature. Make sure the council, the public and the community always know who you are and what you're doing.

Having a constant contact in your local council can be useful although challenging at times if there is regular rotation of staff. Try to always have direct contact with an officer who is aware of who you are and what you do. If accessing them is difficult, find local councillors who know and like the project. Visit their surgeries (16) or attend council meetings (17) so that the faces of your project are familiar to the council.

Private landowners may be waiting for planning permission to develop the land before they take steps to evict you. That considered, the better relationship you have with the local authority, the more familiar you are with their staff and offices

and the more you know their strategic objectives and action plans, the better placed you'll be to meet any challenges should they arise.

Keep an eye out for opportunities to intervene in the planning system (18) where possible. The more familiar you are with the council and the processes, even if they don't immediately impact you, the better equipped you are to engage.

There is always support available if you plan on attending consultations or meetings or submitting an objection to a planning application. Use resources and staff from CFGN, Just Space (19) (who support community groups to navigate the planning system) and Sustain (20), who have two online toolkits which act as a guide to these processes and who have staff on board who can assist you in writing an objection. At CFGN we can attend meetings with you and Just Space can offer advice on what the most appropriate borough strategy, plan or policy to refer to is.



Case Study I

Royal Hill Garden, West Greenwich

Who are Royal Hill?

Royal Hill Garden was set up in the Autumn of 2015 by a group of locals who lived and/or worked in the area. The space had existed for three years as an abandoned plot of land having formerly functioned as a car park for the local police station. Wishing to create something that converted the space into a community hub where people who couldn't access the allotments could garden, they gathered donated tools, seeds, plants and furniture and got to work on it.

What's their status?

Royal Hill obtained no formal permission from the council to begin growing. Although the council is aware that they are using the land, they have no lease or agreement with the council. The council recently put in their second planning application to build luxury homes on the site, the first was put in while the site was still disused. Royal Hill Garden submitted an objection to the application and eventually

reigned triumphant as the planning application was denied.

What's the story?

Members of Royal Hill claim that for some time after having been set up nothing happened. Following a random visit from someone who they later realised was a council officer, a planning application was put in to build four homes with parking spaces in the area where the garden was situated. Royal Hill immediately

sought to intervene in the planning process and engage with the council in a number of ways to ensure their survival. Whilst they still have no lease, they did survive a planning application and built a sturdy profile for the garden in the process.

What worked for Royal Hill?

Media and profile

Although Royal Hill had not been around very long before it

came under threat, they reacted quickly to whip up support and profile to fight their corner. They reached out to local and regional newspapers being featured in the Evening Standard as well as in Greenwich's local news.

Local support

Having converted an abandoned patch of land into something productive that could be enjoyed by neighbours who come and spend time in the garden or others who wanted access to somewhere they could garden,

Royal Hill had the support of the locals. Making trips to councillors' surgeries they also managed to win over two out of three of their local councillors. Beyond this Royal Hill reached out to broader communities, engaged with CFGN for advice and developed other networks that would be actively supportive or passively sympathetic to the cause.

A few council slip-ups

The first planning application on the patch of land that Royal Hill Garden occupies had been unanimously rejected by the council two and a half years before they began growing on it. Legitimate concerns over the road safety of the parking spaces so close to a main road and neighbours' concerns that the new flats would have made the area too cramped and be aesthetically displeasing had not been addressed. In the two and a half year gap between planning applications, questions as to how they could defend removing seven sycamore trees or guarantee the safety of local children walking around the area had not been answered and the council ran into these same arguments and couldn't beat them.

A well connected community

Royal Hill Garden were in many ways incredibly lucky. Having in their midst a former journalist who had connections to the Evening Standard and a lawyer who could offer them advice and support hugely benefitted them. Nonetheless, for those communities without such privilege there are still other avenues that can gain access to media and legal support and the case of Royal Hill points to the importance of such things.

What next?

Prior to the planning consultation Royal Hill sat down with the council to discuss what kind of lease they would need to make the project work. Since then, the council has failed to follow up or make any formal offer and just days after the consultation they received a notice stating that they were trespassing and would need to vacate the property. Getting their hands on a fixed lease will be another battle for Royal Hill and another, better planning application could put them at real risk.

Lessons from Royal Hill

Know your site and its locality:

Royal Hill were able to make great objections because they knew the site incredibly well, from the number of trees to the earth beneath the concrete. Their knowledge of the site's history and therefore understanding of what materials, or chemicals, could have been beneath the surface also helped to build their argument. As community food growing sites, you'll naturally know the site and its surroundings but door knocking, speaking to local business owners and residents all helps to build a sense of overall will of the local community.

Know the council and the system:

Royal Hill were meticulous in covering all possible entry points and recourses to power. Demanding Freedom of Information Requests(21) on the use of Corporate Interest Levy money and booking meetings with community developers they allowed no room for the council to breathe and no

chance for them to have an easy ride. Following the planning consultation process to a T, nothing could have slipped through the net in this case.

Make a fuss fast:

From the moment Royal Hill saw the laminated white papers strapped around lampposts they began to act. Research, media, designing their objection: they didn't hesitate and managed to achieve a great amount in a short space of time.

The Fight Back

Sadly, even with the clearest lease, most productive garden and boundless community support and engagement, there is still a chance that your land is just too lucrative and your being on there is a barrier to property development. But it's not over.

At the first sight of danger, don't panic but do act and act fast. A stellar campaign can make a huge difference in the outcome of the decision that will impact on your garden, delaying and avoiding a response will always be a risk. Even if the letter or visit that's causing you concern might "turn out to be nothing", do reach out

to organisations who can support you just in case.

A campaign doesn't have to be an aggressive war between you and your landowner. There are many ways to make your point and it's worth spending real time thinking about the wiliest, most diplomatic way to respond. If a public shaming of the landowner could ruin long term relations, think about a way to frame your campaign that takes that edge away. Although there is no one way to run a campaign there are a few key steps that you should always consider.

1. Strategise

How you frame your campaign will determine what your strategy is. Start by looking at the strengths and capacity of your garden. What is unique about it that is worth saving and how might that best be demonstrated? How many hands do you really have on deck and how much time; what then can realistically be achieved? Think about how many people you can mobilise, what kind of activity they'd be likely to engage in, what key message you want your campaign to transmit and what outcome or decision you want it to achieve.

Before you launch make sure you know: what your argument is, how you will get it out there and what the desired result of making your argument is, and build a campaign that represents who you are and why you should stay.

2. Events

How you will get your message out there is largely shaped by the kind of events that you decide to do and your media strategy. Events can include direct action such as protests, lock-ons(22) etc. which can be very effective in attracting media and show a clear disapproval of the proposed changes to the use of the land. Public community events with local guest speakers such as a campaign launch in a community centre are a great way of whipping up local support and can often get coverage in local media outlets whilst building sympathy for the project more broadly. If you can't set one up yourself, speak at the events of other organisations where you can continue raising the profile.

Even less controversial events which are just a celebration of the garden's achievements, for example a birthday party for



the site or big planting day, are really helpful in highlighting the community benefit of a garden and can be used as examples when making your case whether to the council or the landowner.

If capacity is low events can exist solely online. Online petitions tend to whip up a lot of support and put your campaign on the radar for people who might be interested. These can be created with very little work on websites such as change.org(23). They also provide an easily shareable link that details exactly what you're doing, why, how and what people can do about it. Twitter 'Thunderclaps' can also be

impactful, where one scheduled tweet is sent by as many different accounts as possible. If these are all targeted at one account, whether of an MP or a company, it can be a good way of getting their attention.

3. Media

Have a media strategy: Know where you want your story covered, who you need to get to and how you're going to get to them. Use your events to build a profile, send press releases to local papers or smaller publications(24) who are politically aligned with you. Journalists at smaller publications may be well-connected and

able to help you access other journalists at bigger publications or offer useful advice on engaging with the media more broadly.

You can find your local press contacts at www.nsdatabase.co.uk or use journalisted.com to find out which journalists have covered similar issues and events to yours. Journalisted will provide their contact details or the basic email structure of their organisation (e.g. firstname@company.com).

Don't be intimidated by the prospect of contacting media outlets, search online 'how to write a press release' and go for it!

As well as reaching out to outlets you can be making your own media to share online.

Social media is a great way to get your message out there so make sure you are using it regularly, tagging people who are relevant to your story and sharing interesting content about your campaign. The content might be your petition or a basic video of someone in the garden explaining who you are and what

you're doing. This can be shot on most webcams or smartphones. Every event is a photo/video opportunity so document your campaign relentlessly and use your own media to continue to promote it.

4. Know Your Allies

Your strategy, your events and your media output will all be much more amplified by a solid, well-established support base.

This can take a number of different shapes. As a community food growing project your first base of support is likely to be your community. Keep them up to date with everything you do, these will be the people who



will show up to your events, sign your petitions and share your information online. However your project defines its community: they are your greatest weapon. Whether through engagement with marginalised people or by providing nutritious, affordable meals in what would otherwise be a food desert, often the most powerful argument a garden can make is that it is indispensable to local people.

But, your allies can extend well beyond this. Seeking advice from the organisations mentioned in this guide can help create strong relationships beyond your geographic community and wedge you into a network of experienced and sympathetic individuals and organisations. Endorsements from well-known organisations are always a positive thing and this can also be useful if ever you are called upon to speak at their events or if they share news and information on your campaign to their audiences.

There are likely to be other campaigns, locally or regionally, that are fighting for the same things you are. Building solidarity with these campaigns and

organisation can provide much needed mutual support when things are difficult, whether in the shape of an email, a phone call or a formal meeting.

5. Use the system

It is important not to develop your strategy in a vacuum. Engage with the processes available to you and the structures in place. Use the law to put your landlord on trial for an unlawful eviction, if relevant, ask for a Freedom and Information request(21) if you think there's an absence of transparency from your council. Interrupting the planning system is always an excellent way in: attend meetings, submit objections and visit councillor surgeries to get them on board (18). Intervene at every possible turn and show the council you mean business along the way.



Case Study 2

Granville Community Kitchen (GCK), South Kilburn

Who are GCK?

Granville Community Kitchen is a community led initiative to develop a food hub that would enable the South Kilburn community to access healthy, affordable and sustainable food through a variety of food related activities including free community meals, cooking lessons and growing training in their community garden.

What's their status?

Granville's community garden was set up in 2012 and the community kitchen in 2014. Members have been involved in the community and community centre for much longer 20 years or so due to involvement with the Otherwise Club which also runs out of Granville Community Centre. When established, GCK didn't pay any rent to remain in the building as their lease was under the Otherwise Club. They have now established their own, rolling lease which they pay for

and as the management of their building changes hands, they'll be renegotiating their lease with the South Kilburn trust in the last months of 2017.

What's the story?

Despite twenty years of activity in their community, rumours have always floated that Brent council want the building back so that they can use the property in other ways. As the only active group in the building, GCK has always been active in ensuring that demolishing the building would

be a hard task. In July 2016 GCK were served notice and asked to leave by the council. Occupying the building and refusing to leave, the 'Save Granville' campaign was launched and mobilised dozens, if not hundreds of people, to resist the council's will and ensure GCK was protected. Just months after the campaign was launched, Brent council postponed the decision that had been previously made.

What worked? Events and activities

A petition which had almost 700 signatures was circulated online and promoted via their own social media and by other groups who supported them. Reaching out to their contacts and networks they were able to host a high profile event with author Zadie Smith and a number of other artists and speakers who were able to spread the word on the campaign.

A local support network

Having been on site for decades, GCK had long built the links and

connections that formed a base of support once they'd launched their campaign. They had support from the children's centre in the adjoined Carlton Community Centre, the save the library campaign in Ladbroke Grove and had a number of local councillors who were long-term supporters of the project.

Media coverage

Between the petition and the event GCK garnered a lot of attention with their campaign. Active local journalists, online media platforms and social media were all talking about Save Granville. This resulted in a constantly increasing profile achieved through active social media and prominent figures

from the project speaking out wherever possible. A good relationship with local newspapers or a local journalist really paid off.

Using the system

The local councillors who were supportive of GCK told them about a Scrutiny Committee(25) that the council were holding. Dee Woods of GCK later described their attendance at which as "probably the most powerful thing". They did their research, attended the committee and highlighted all the inconsistencies they could find between the council's decision and the policy and plans the council had outlined in public documents.



What next?

Although the Save Granville campaign was hugely effective, GCK are under no illusion that the fight is over. Continuing to attend council meetings they are able to get regular updates on what plans there are for the site and who knows what within the council. They are also constantly expanding the activity that takes place in the centre from evening classes to research projects making themselves exponentially indispensable to the community. Whilst remaining outspoken about their political views and consistently holding the council to account, Dee describes their approach as "more diplomatic" than before.

Lessons from Granville Community Kitchen

Ask for help:

Granville would not have been able to do a fraction of what it has without having contacted or worked collaboratively with other organisations. Locality(6), JustSpace(19) and its local support network mentioned above. Use everything and everyone you can access.

Act early and think forward:

Granville had registered as an asset of community value(6) with Brent Council and sought advice on listing the building(26), long before July 2016, in response to rumours. When things became more difficult they had the advantage of knowing that there was only so much Brent could do with the site as long as it remained as a listed building. Having gone through Brent council itself to register as a community asset this made it difficult for the council to contest that.

Name and shame:

With a public profile and some coverage, GCK put Brent in a difficult position by naming and shaming people within the council who weren't supportive of the campaign. At a time where a positive community asset was under threat, those who were against it essentially appeared as enemies to the local community at large, and no elected representative needs or wants that kind of press.

But Where to Begin?

How CFGN Can Help...

Community Food Growers Network doesn't employ lawyers, planners or publicists but we do have staff and experienced growers in our network who can support you in planning the strategy or response that would best suit your garden.

Three Key Things We Can Do For You

1. Listen and Think

If you simply want to make sense of what's going on and talk to someone about your insecurity on the land, get in contact with CFGN. We'll be happy to speak via email or over the phone through any of the initial thoughts and ideas that you may be considering regardless of how severe or not the threat may seem. We can also offer some support on logistics and more practical stuff, whether it's talking to the

media, strategising or booking venues for your campaign events, you don't have to do it alone.

2. Boost Your Profile and Help You Connect

Using social media you can share the details of your campaign with us and we can pass it on to our followers. If you send us updates or events, we can include them in our monthly newsletter and if you want to write

something chunkier we could even feature your story in our quarterly magazine, *The Plot*.

If you want to reach out to any of the groups/people either mentioned in this document or other speakers, activists, journalists etc.: where we can connect you, we will. Always ask and even if we can't help ourselves we may be able to direct you to someone who can!

3. Show Up For You

The capacity of CFGN is minimal and may fluctuate, but having a notetaker or simply a friendly face in a council meeting or consultation is always helpful and where possible we will endeavour to do that. We will always do everything possible to mobilise support, reaching out to our networks and encourage people to come to events, demos or hearings to support your cause.



Case Study 3

Grow Heathrow, West Drayton

Who are Grow Heathrow?

Grow Heathrow is a site of almost four acres that was set up in 2010 by climate activists who wanted to establish a local base to protest the proposed third runway at Heathrow Airport. After over seven years of developing the site it is today a constantly occupied community hub which grows food in abundance existing entirely off grid, with its own energy supply and sewage compost system.

What's their status?

Grow Heathrow is a squatted site which occupies two sections of land owned by separate private landowners. One is a local businessman, Imran Malik, and the other a company registered in Guernsey called Lewdown Holdings Limited. At the time of writing they were awaiting a verdict after receiving a court summons in August 2014 which was delayed and postponed until April 2017. They remain in the same 'legal limbo' that they have been in for years.

What's the story?

In 2014 Malik took Grow Heathrow to court, won a possession order and tried to reclaim the land, bringing five bailiffs and one policeman to the site. Met with over a hundred protestors, people clambering to treehouses to stop them being cut down, locking themselves to the site, Malik was swiftly informed by the police that he'd need more than five bailiffs to remove them and hasn't reappeared since. Before court proceedings with Lewdown

began, they also tried to bulldoze the land after discovering it was occupied but stopped at the sign of human presence.

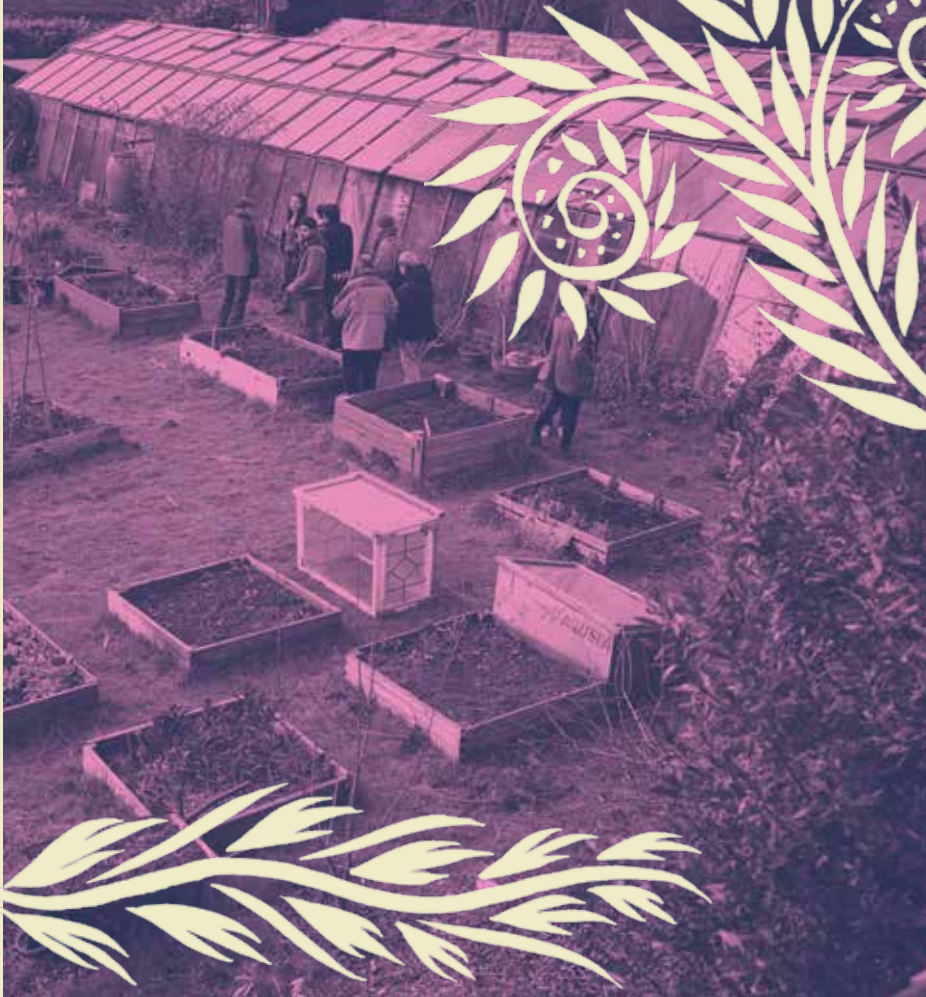
What worked for Grow Heathrow? Lawyers

Grow Heathrow have been working with Leigh Day Solicitors for years and they've defended them pro bono throughout. Having a legal working group on site is an added bonus as there are both members of the group

who are well informed and legal professionals who can support them as well.

Strategy

Grow Heathrow's strategy for resisting eviction has been built into their growth as a site, from the beginning. In terms of physical infrastructure they have lock-on tubes⁽²²⁾ in place across the site, treehouses, people occupying the land 24/7 as well as a huge tunnel they've dug and alarm bells installed across the site. The ability to lock themselves to the



site, mobilise quickly and position themselves at the top of twenty foot trees makes removing them seem far less appealing and pretty expensive. Building tunnels also makes it all the more expensive to work on the land if a landowner was successful in evicting them. Given that no

planning permission has been given to the landowners, Grow Heathrow has made evicting them seem like more hassle than it's worth to potential developers.

With a 'phone-tree' that alerts people as soon as bailiffs arrive or eviction is a risk, those based at

Grow Heathrow are able to act immediately at any sign of danger. They also use their website and social media to push the message out for solidarity demos at court cases or bailiff arrivals. Once word is out that bailiffs are coming locals and supporters can mobilise and arrive quickly. The more supporters there are, the less likely bailiffs are to succeed.

Local Activity and Support

John McDonnell, the local MP for Grow Heathrow, has long been a supporter of the site and against airport expansion along with the majority of his constituents. Responding to the general dissatisfaction with the idea of airport expansion and working with the local community, this engagement and support has been paramount to their protection. Having people on site constantly also allows Grow Heathrow to be active in the community, host events and celebrations from harvest festivals to workshops on climate change and migration.

Lessons from Grow Heathrow

Strategise, Collaborate and Use The Law:

Grow Heathrow's resilience, although in some ways strangely lucky, is a testimony to the difference taking action can make. Building their eviction resistance strategy into their very infrastructure and working with lawyers, local MPs and the local community to stake their claim in the land has seen them still standing almost eight years since they first began squatting. Acting fast, using their networks and finding strong and consistent legal support, this site has remained a real beacon of possibility.



Reference List

The numbers on this list correlate to the number in brackets next to organisations, terms or concepts that are mentioned in this document. They are listed in the order they appear in the text.

1. Community Land Advisory Service (CLAS)

CLAS has a number of useful resources on making land more available for food growing and how to get set up with a lease. Although the England branch of CLAS is no longer funded, the resources are still available at communitylandadvice.org.uk. CLAS has sized down to focus on Wales but can offer limited support on an ad hoc basis. For more info, contact lucie@communitylandadvice.org.uk.

2. Leases Flow Chart

This flowchart of lease type is designed to outline which legal agreement between grower and

landowner best suits different types of growers. It is also available at communitylandadvice.org.uk under CLAS England/ Hot Topics/ Leases: Flow Chart for lease type.

3. Heads of Terms

Lease requirements are known as 'heads of terms', they are an essential outline of the agreements and decisions made before the lease comes into action. CLAS also offer templates of these on their website under CLAS England; Hot Topics; Leases: Heads of Terms Template (England and Wales)

4. Growing Communities Patchwork Farm: Kynaston, Stoke Newington

Kynaston was a patchwork farm that closed down in early 2017. After receiving a letter indicating that they'd have to leave in October 2016, various attempts to solicit more information were fruitless until eventually they



were given two weeks notice to vacate the premises. The full story is available at cfn.org.uk under Resources/ The Plot/ Issue 7 Spring/Summer 2017 (p5).

5. Shared Assets

Shared Assets work with landowners and communities who want to use land in a productive way. They were heavily influential in setting up a Land Justice Network that is campaigning on fairer land distribution. To pick their brains

about the ins and outs of land rights, land value and land use email hello@sharedassets.co.uk, visit sharedassets.org.uk or call 07542 063 083.

6. Locality

Locality is a network of community-led organisations which supports its members to be as sustainable and impactful as possible. Many of its members run community assets (land and buildings owned or managed by community organisations which

Reference List

aim to bring long-term social, economic and environmental improvements to their local neighbourhoods) and they are experienced in supporting such groups. Visit locality.org.uk or mycommunity.org.uk/help-centre for more info. Contact info@locality.org.uk

locality.org.uk or call 0345 458 8336 or 0300 020 1864.

7. Agricultural Tenancies

Agricultural tenancies dictate how farm business tenants and landlords can claim compensation for improvements, terminate

a tenancy and ask for a rent review. Good resources for understanding them can be sought through the National Farmers' Union (nfu.org) or national government (gov.uk/guidance/agricultural-tenancies). Search online 'solicitors agricultural tenancies act' also to get more perspectives.

8. Allotments Law

Many individual plots of land may fall under law on allotments and council given plots are likely to be bound by these laws. The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens released a factsheet which broadly explains this piece of legislation. It can be found at farmgarden.org.uk/resources.

9. Landlord and Tenant Business Tenancies

The Landlord and Tenant Act governs the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants of premises which are occupied for business purposes. The full version

of this law is available at gov.uk/government/publications if you search the title but conveniently there are also summaries widely available across the internet. Search 'guide landlord and tenant act' or 'solicitors landlord and tenant act'.

10. Human Rights Act

At Grow Heathrow, the squatted site in West Drayton, the Human Rights Act put into question the legitimacy of an eviction order to people who had made a home for themselves on the land. This and other housing legislation, can work in the favour of the trespassers over the landowner. The Human Rights Act can be found at legislation.gov.uk.

11. Who Owns England?

whoownsengland.org is a blog by Guy Shrubsole which depicts just how difficult it is to find out who owns what in England but has some great resources on how to figure it out.



Reference List

12. Companies House

Companies House is a public searchable database of all registered companies in the UK providing company names, who they're run by and where they're registered to. If you need more information about a property developer or landlord, this is a great place to start. Also try opencorporates.com for companies outside of the UK.

13. London's Seven Strategies

The Mayor of London must develop seven strategies to outline their intentions for London. These include a strategy for culture, health, transport, housing, environment, economic development and the London Plan (more below). The Greater London Assembly's ability to hold the Mayor to account is based upon these strategies and the extent to which the Mayor's actions deviate from their intentions. In the local council

these strategies can still be used to hold the council to account as can further strategic objectives outlined by the local council. Contact Just Space for more info.

14. The London Plan, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans

These plans outline how land and buildings are supposed to be used in the area, borough and city. Neighbourhood plans are a product of the Localism Act and can be drawn up by any self-organising group. Having a clear commitment to food growing in these plans can be another way to hold councils to account. For more info look at CFGN's Working with your Council toolkit and Sustain's work on Planning Food Cities (20).

15. London and Local Food Policies

Most local authorities will have a local food policy or a Sustainable Community Strategy outlining the areas for improvement in

this particular area. This is a good tool in both gaining and retaining leases. If your work is in line with the intentions of the food policy you can use this to build an argument. Sustain's resources section (sustainweb.org/publications) has a wealth of information on these, including the annual Good Food for London report.

16. Councillor Surgeries

Most if not all local councillors should have regular hours in which you can go and visit them to make your case for support. These are called surgeries. Use your local authority website to find your councillor and pull up the details of their availability and make a visit accordingly.

17. Council Meetings

Council meetings are another way to intervene in local decision making and are often open to the public. Look up your local council meeting calendar and see which meetings might be most relevant.

18. The Planning System

In order for building works to take place landowners must gain planning permission. Once their proposal has been put forward members of the public can make objections, of 1000 characters online, and when their objections are heeded they'll be invited to a consultation where their voices will be further amplified. This is a very brief summary and for further information on how to intervene in the planning system contact Just Space.

19. Just Space

Just Space is a London wide network of voluntary and community groups working together to influence planning policy at the regional, borough and neighbourhood levels. For over a decade they have been supporting community groups to intervene in planning policy and lobbied councils and the mayor's office on the plans and strategies that impact communities. Contact

Reference List

co-ordinator Richard Lee on richardlee50@gmail.com and treasurer Robin Brown on hayescanal@hotmail.co.uk. Find out more at justspace.org.uk.

20. Sustain

Sustain is an alliance for better food and farming who also run Capital Growth, a London-based network of food growers. Sustain have developed a number of resources on planning and food including guides specifically on objections as well as advice on preemptive action. Look at sustainweb.org/planning/ and sustainweb.org/planning/making_it_happen for the specifics of objections. For further information contact gillian@sustainweb.org.

21. Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs)

The Freedom of Information Act came into play in 2000 and today means that anybody can put in a

request for information from a local authority and the authority then has 20 working days to make the information public or explain why it won't do so. In the tools and resources section of the Who Owns England? blog there is an in depth presentation on how to demand an FOI and further resources.

22. Lock-ons

Lock-ons are a construct that makes it difficult for authorities to move protesters from their place of protest. Whether through chains, bike locks or concrete tubes these can be effective in buying time once people are locked on to the site.

23. Change.org

Change.org just like sumofus.org and 38degrees.org.uk hosts hundreds if not thousands of petitions about different causes. It is simple to set up a profile and start a campaign on these sites and often they will publicise your cause for you.

24. Smaller Publications and Media Platforms

Often described as 'low-hanging fruit' it is often a good idea to contact smaller publications first. This will usually be your local news outlets first, but in addition it is useful to reach out to politically aligned online platforms such as Red Pepper, the New Internationalist, OpenDemocracy etc. to try and boost online reach and deepen analysis of the issues you're facing.

25. Overview and Scrutiny

The scrutiny process enables councillors to hold the Mayor and cabinet to account, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, investigate issues of local concern and to consider whether service improvements can be put in place. The scrutiny committee provide a direct recourse to decision making. If a project works with councillors who can then hold the council officers to account

decisions which affect them can be impacted and potentially overturned.

26. Listed Buildings and the National Heritage List for England

Historic England can approve buildings to be listed between Grade I and 3, which automatically puts them on the National Heritage List. Listed buildings are more difficult to knock down. Find out more about getting your building listed at historicengland.org.uk.



Further Resources

This is a list of all the resources ordered by the topic they pertain to. There may be duplicates between here and the reference list.

Organisations Specialising in Working with Food Growers

*Community Food Growers
Network*
cfgn.org.uk
info@cfgn.org.uk

Sustain
sustainweb.org
sustain@sustainweb.org

Capital Growth
capitalgrowth.org
capitalgrowth@sustainweb.org

*Federation for City Farms and
Community Gardens*
farmgarden.co.uk
amber@farmgarden.org.uk or
london@farmgarden.org.uk

Organisations Specialising in Land and Building Management

Locality
locality.org.uk
info@locality.org.uk
0345 458 8336

Shared Assets
sharedassets.org.uk
hello@sharedassets.org.uk

Community Land Advisory Service
communitylandadvice.org.uk
lucie@communitylandadvice.org.uk

Pro Bono Law Organisations

Law Works
a charity connecting volunteer
lawyers with not-for-profits
lawworks.org.uk

The Solicitors Pro Bono Group
www.probonogroup.org.uk
solicitors@probonogroup.org.uk

Individual Firms Taking on Pro Bono Work

Please note many of these firms work
primarily with large charities rather
than grassroots groups so results may
vary

Allen & Overy LLP
www.allenoverly.com
020 7330 3000

Baker & McKenzie
www.bakernet.com
020 7919 1000

Clifford Chance LLP
www.cliffordchance.com
020 7006 1000

Covington & Burling
www.covington.com
020 7067 2000

Dechert LLP
www.dechert.com
020 7583 5353

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
www.freshfields.com
020 7936 4000

Leigh Day
www.leighday.co.uk
020 7650 1200

Linklaters
www.linklaters.com
020 7456 2000

Macfarlanes
www.macfarlanes.com
020 7831 9222


Morrison & Foerster MNP
www.mofo.com
020 7815 1150

S J Berwin
www.sjberwin.com
020 7533 2222

Resources for Squatters

squat.net
evictionresistance.squat.net
info@evictionresistance.org.uk / @
EResistance

*Advisory Service for Squatters
(ASS) / squatter.org.uk /*



The Community Food Growers Network supports, connects and campaigns for grassroots local food projects in London. We meet quarterly, hold events, and give support to projects at risk of losing land or funding. It is free to join - check out our manifesto on our website and get in touch to find out more.

cfgn.org.uk