

The first of our events since the start of the Pandemic!

A fab day with over 60 attendees, lots of good connections and conversation.

This document collates all the information discussed at the round table discussion and all the action points which came out of the discussion.

Below are the table notes from each round table discussion. Attendees had the opportunity to contribute to the following 3 conversations at the event:

1. Community Gardens and Growing	2
2. Chefs, Cooks, and Community Meals	4
3. Food Distribution Roundtable Discussion	9
Discussions:	10
Learning	10
Priorities	11
GLASGOW CITY FOOD PLAN	12
HOW CAN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS GET INVOLVED?	13
YOUR SUGGESTIONS	14
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE US TO DO?	14
Open Space Table	15
ACTIONS	17

1. Community Gardens and Growing

What are the main learning points from the last 2 years?

1. Pandemic driven **desire to grow** :

- Spending more time outdoors
- Staying local - people becoming more aware of what's happening locally
- New enthusiasm for growing
- Funding for project work stopped
- Pivoting to new ways of engaging and communicating
- Demand and interest has increased & realisation of importance of growing food
- Shift in attitudes and more interest in food justice since pandemic
- Greater awareness and community.
- More interest in volunteer community gardening and lots of people joining up
- Use of social media to connect groups

2. New **challenges** appeared:

- Co-opted spaces reclaimed for non-growing purposes
- Increased interest from general population created a drought of spaces
- New growers needing experience
- Understanding how much can be grown in small spaces
- Lack of access and waiting lists for allotments has increased people's involvement in community gardening projects

How can we take this learning forward (and make more good stuff happen)

1. **Campaigning:** Keeping folk engaged when things start to open up
2. Folk engaged for **other reasons** than growing – mental health, loneliness
3. Language of '**building skills**' to usher folk into preparing for future food shocks
4. **Mapping and signposting:**
 - ALISS - (A Local Information System for Scotland) to provide mapping & access for community growing in Glasgow
5. '**Pandemic Archive**' to remind us of the things we cared about and put action into during lockdown
6. To **keep interest going:**
 - **Roadshows and stalls**, info on community gardens etc.. to spread awareness
 - **Community events** with free food
 - **Training** – beginners day, accessible and friendly
 - **Online resources** – hub will have online mapping and maybe a members forum
 - **Stories & Good practice** examples: AfricAlba, Growchapel, Toryglen Adopt a Plot
7. To **get people started:**
 - **Mapping and signposting** for people who want to get involved.
 - **Community funds** to get people started gardening
 - **Supporting groups** so navigate bureaucracy to access land – but also question the process!
 - Growing food in **parks** – utilising public greenspace, veg planting in council beds, lots of visibility in the city
8. **Vertical farming**, use of empty buildings

2. Chefs, Cooks, and Community Meals

Group 1

- Donna (GCFN) asked how do we make Community Meals happen in each area?
- Neil from **Glasgow Eco Trust** gave the example of where they are based in the west there are currently 5 sites that can and do offer community meals:
 - We need to coordinate to ensure that rather than competing they are supplementing each other.
 - The area could have each venue provide a free meal on a different day, ensuring that local people had access to free food 5 days a week.
 - Similarly by linking up services and involving different groups in delivery we can expand this to include takeaway options.
 - **It's all about partnership working.**
- We mentioned the example of **Blackhill's Grown homegrown pizza**, how we can create really holistic food experiences by utilising produce grown at the site as ingredients for our meals and workshops
- Participant from **FARE** talked about the community allotment she is setting up:
 - At the moment they are growing the produce but don't have the **facilities to cook on site**
 - Need **fresh water supply** for cleaning/hygiene to even use outdoor stoves, etc.
 - Need to get **funding** for this but it's not often prioritised in funding streams
- Participant mentioned that **Outdoor cooking spaces** had been developed greatly during the pandemic and brought a lot of good to the workshops, although obviously are weather dependent.
- Participant mentioned their project of setting up a **community pantry and bakery** hoping to run workshops engaging local young people giving them the cooking **skills** to bake and use certain items. Also how they would like to link this in with growing food.
- We agreed more should be done throughout the city to **link Growing Spaces with Cooking facilities.**

- Similarly the need for both **indoor (polytunnel) and outdoor growing spaces** to get the range of produce needed to run exciting cooking workshops – i.e. not just the classic Scottish veg, but tomatoes, peppers, etc.
- The group discussed **online workshops** during the pandemic and had mixed successes:
 - Good relationships with the community can make online easier but there needs to be the infrastructure to support it. People need access to wifi, laptops, etc.
 - Some organisations got funding to give these out which helped.
 - Similarly there is a cultural difference in **online accessibility** in different areas and generations. At St Paul's Youth Forum we had lots of success with online cooking activities for young people during lockdown, but far less when running it with older people and working families.
- Donna asked if there were enough **community chef's** in Glasgow to allow for the upskilling of community meals and cooking workshops. This sparked a discussion around what makes a community chef:
 - what are the skill sets needed?
 - how do they differentiate between standard kitchen chef's?
 - Is chef even the right word or is it's connotations too 'top down' is Community Cook a more accessible phrase? We spoke about how a lot of the culture of professional kitchens is completely opposed to the type of environment we are trying to create in a community setting. It's often very top-down almost military style, with high stress environments.
 - To run cooking workshops in a community setting we need **not just the cooking skills** but also the **facilitation skills**, and "people person" patience and attitude.

2. Chefs, Cooks, and Community Meals

Group 2

- We started the discussion by asking **what makes a good community meal?** What differentiates it from a normal eating setting.
 - Firstly we discussed the cost – community meals should be free for all it was argued. Others said pay what you can/feel is a more dignified and self-sustaining approach, but all agreed **cost shouldn't be a barrier**.
 - We also argued it should go beyond price, there should be a **shared responsibility**, participants should be encouraged (although not expected!) to get involved in the cooking and cleaning of the meal. This process should also **facilitate shared learning**, so participants are also gaining skills and confidence.
 - We all agreed that the **community setting** was incredibly important. There shouldn't be private tables like in a restaurants but larger shared seating where meeting people outside of your immediate circle is encouraged.
 - It should also breakdown the hierarchical structure of a normal restaurant setting. **Participants should get a say** in the menu and what is created, how the events are run, etc.
 - It should involve **accessing new knowledge**. Participants should be encouraged to taste new things, learn new skills and experiment with different recipes.
- We then discussed what we felt was need in a good **community chef/cook**?
 - They needed to be a **people person**, needed a **diverse skill set**, not just cooking skills but also **facilitation, great communication, adaptability** (so they can respond to different participants needs and strengths).
 - Finally we needed to ensure that we have an **inclusive programme**. Chef's should represent diversity in Glasgow and the **incredible diverse range of foods and cooking cultures** in the city. **Soul Food Sisters** where given as a successful example.
- We discussed how to facilitate more community cooking (com meals and cooking workshops)
 - Better partnership working was raised, the importance of **improving links** between chef's and community groups.

- Similarly linking facilities with the **people with skills**. There are far too many community spaces with fantastic kitchens that are only used once every month or two. More skill sharing is needed and **food is a fantastic way to share**.
 - The importance of linking in with growing spaces to give as **holistic approach** as possible to community cooking.
 - It was raised that more **community mapping** could facilitate this, as could technology, David Williams suggested the idea of a 'dating app' for third sector orgs to link up and work together on projects.
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- We discussed the importance of **sourcing our ingredients** in a way that is **dignified** and also **beneficial** to the community and society as a whole
 - For example is purchasing food from big supermarkets for community meals not just destroying with the left hand what the right hand builds.
 - We are trying to address issues of food insecurity and food deserts but are at the same time propping up low-wage structures which actively promote depopulating local areas of food.

2. Chefs, Cooks, and Community Meals

Group 3

- One participant raised how fantastic a resource food was for **building community**. They mentioned the **universality of food**, how it's accessible and brings people together in a unique way.
- They suggested (coming from a community health backgrounds) that we should be using Community Meals as a way to **engage with those harder to reach individuals** and signpost them and link them to services – Income Maximisation, health services, mental health and addiction, etc.
- We discussed what makes something “community led” meals and workshops – why do we put this word in front of it instead of just meals and cooking workshops?
 - It should be a **user-led space with the focus on inclusion and connection** not on productivity.
 - One participant mentioned how **successful** they had been running a series of **user led skill sharing cooking workshops** in their community. Online during COVID, this was a fantastic way of bringing a diverse group of busy women together during a difficult time.
 - One participant mentioned that whilst it was important we offered opportunities to get more involved in community meals outside of simply consuming them that shouldn't be expected. Lots of individuals on low-incomes are **time poor and stressed so an expectation to engage could be a barrier**.
- We talked about the importance of **long-term funding** to build up community. It takes months if not years to make a service truly embedded in the community and to build up a social environment that is cherished by the community, rather than just somewhere people attend to address a lack of income.

3. Food Distribution Roundtable Discussion

Background

In our feasibility study prior to the formation of GCFN (2017), one of our network's central asks from community food providers, growers and social enterprises was to look at food distribution and bulk buying of staple, local fresh food. Through Sustainable Food Places we have seen similar community food distribution networks setup across the UK to meet these same needs.

As part of GCFN's Covid19 Response project we setup a **Food for Good (FFG) Coalition** lead by Community Transport (CTG) with electric vans, GCFN looking at supply and supported by Slow Food Glasgow and the University of Glasgow. This project provided a staple supply of fresh local veg organic veg from social enterprise Locavore and local growers in Glasgow.

We purchased dried and tinned food from ethical suppliers Greencity Wholefoods and sourced directly from some local producers. After making calculations we, FFG were able to balance competitive prices when considering organic vs ethical vs local, non organic food but culturally appropriate.

FFG joined Interfaith Food Justice networks' food sharing WhatsApp group and worked with the Scottish pantry Network providing transport for shoppers. FGG supported over 40 community food providers directly and several more with Fareshare pickups for almost 2 years.

Although the project has winded down mostly. CTG are continuing some services dependent on funding. More recently, food distribution has been raised as a key priority in two themes of the Glasgow City Food Plan.

Discussions: Learning

Several pantries in development are looking at ways to coordinate supply of local fresh fruit and veg and connect to best suppliers raised by Ingrid (LINKS practitioner) at Knightswood Pantry food group and Jamie at DRC Youth Project in Yoker.

It was discussed how can we share costs, transport and tap into supplies of food such as 'wonky' veg.

The supply of affordable food is key but if local organic and non-organic ethical is considered, with the value for money calculated then this information should be shared across community food providers to support local food economies.

Neil at Eco Trust said there are 5 community food providers in their area and they are wanting to look at ways they can coordinate transportation, storage and bulk buying of food supplies platform

Several people raised that it would be useful to have a food supplier/sharing platform where producers could also post or be contacted directly.

There is a need for a better supply of culturally appropriate food for organisations who work with refugee, asylum seekers and those from a diverse range of ethnicities.

Organisations need support as they scale-up in the different types of food whether fresh needing refrigeration or storage or the certification/training needed.

Robert from GCVS when considering transport and energy wanted to know how we could 'green' up our supply chains.

It was noted how GCVS and Glasgow Helps supported coordination of food distribution to those in need during the pandemic. GCFN also fed information into this via the Urban Roots free food map.

A need for more citywide coordination was discussed here and mentioned previously in working groups during the pandemic.

It was mentioned GCC recent Transport Strategy does not commit enough to supporting communities with the infrastructure they need whether free transport to those living in food deserts or hubs/transport for food distribution.

Marie from Senscot mentioned successful models she had heard from with community food providers in other Scottish Cities such as Edinburgh Community Food, CFINE in Aberdeen and North Lanarkshire Community Food Initiative.

Priorities

A study looking at what assets and gaps in food distribution there are across Glasgow was welcomed by all participants.

Some key organisations should be engaged to see who can offer what and who can lead in coordination whether citywide or local:

- GCVS and their previous work,
- The Scottish pantry Network,
- Third Sector organisations with vehicles such as:
 - Community Transport Glasgow,
 - Golden Generation,
 - NATA...
- and local community food providers

An example of support offered was from Kamgan from AfricAlba who said their premises at Stirling Road could be used as a distribution hub for food pickups.

CTG and GCFN have been in talks to look at a feasibility study to answer what assets are available for food distribution across Glasgow and what organisations could be involved in coordinating/leading this across the city.

Next steps are CTG and GCFN to set up a meeting looking at the scope of a study.

- **UBI, Universal Basic Income – Cash First Campaign key discussion points:**
 - S.G. Pilot –advisory group- minimum income guarantee
 - Conditionality – Universal Credit
 - Does Conditionality result in further issues? – i.e. misses people
 - Same issues as Univ.Credit
 - Minimum Income Assessment - £500 per week – UNI/JRF
 - UBI vs Universal Basic Services
 - Right to Food – Basic Human Right – Good Food Nation Bill
 - People should have enough cash to avoid going to foodbanks.
 - Food banks and Other Support – e.g. debt advice
 - Stigma
 - Fuel
 - Universal Basic Services
 - Glasgow Community Food Map
 - Healthy Cooking Classes
 - Community Connections.

GLASGOW CITY FOOD PLAN

Riikka from Glasgow Food Policy Partnership (GFPPP) gave a short overview of the [Glasgow City Food Plan](#) (GCFP). The plan was developed over 2 years after the food plan team (GFPP, GCFN, GCPH, GCC, NHSGGC and Glasgow HSCP) engaged with a wide range of people and involved around 80 organisations who helped develop actions under 6 different themes of the plan. The plan was launched in June 2021 after which the 6 working groups have been working to progress on the plan's 76 actions.

MAIN GOALS OF GCFP:

- Improve **Land access & Access to markets**
- Better access to **Training/skills/knowledge sharing/apprenticeships**
- Increase the amount of **locally/sustainably produced** food in the city region (**agroecological methods**)
- Higher proportion of locally sourced and low carbon produced food used in **public sector catering**
- More food businesses to adopt **circular economy** principles
- Co-ordinated response to supporting those in **food poverty** (cash first principles)
- Review **high quality food redistribution** in Glasgow
- Improved **access to healthy, affordable food** in local communities
- Improved **food education** in all settings learning about sustainable food systems (including food waste campaigns) in the education curriculum in schools and colleges
- Promote the **uptake of school meals** (including implementing revised nutritional guidance for early years)
- Improve **Out-of-Home Food Environment**
- Work towards **awards and accreditations**



HOW CAN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS GET INVOLVED?

- Sign up for our **newsletter** to keep up to date and circulate to your groups (email Riikka.Gonzalez@Glasgow.ac.uk)
- Sign the [**GFPP charter**](#) (to be updated soon)/circulate the message about importance of good food
- **Get involved with city-wide food campaigns/projects** (Food & Climate Action, Good Food Movement, Plate Up for Glasgow, Chef's Challenge, [Sustainable Food Directory](#) (you can nominate places to include), Chef's Challenge,...)
- Support the new '**Good Food Movement**' campaign to be launched soon; can you support/organise or volunteer at a local event (eg city-wide competitions/theme months) or make a '**good food pledge**'. [Follow GFPP on Twitter](#) to get information on the latest campaign news/events
- **Get involved with a working group.** If you are interested joining one of the working groups listed above, email Riikka.Gonzalez@Glasgow.ac.uk
- GCFP team has received some **funding** for specific projects (Food & Climate Action/Thrive Under Five), but more funding might be available for the city if GCFP

team apply collectively. Can you maybe provide evidence base/case studies for funders?

YOUR SUGGESTIONS

We asked the people joining the table discussion if there were enough ways for people to get involved with/to find out about the plan. The 10-year plan will evolve in its lifetime and our aim is to engage more with harder to reach groups in person (faith /ethnic /LHBTQ /young & older people for example). The participants said:

- **GSVS, Citizen's Assembly** were suggested as good ways to engage with new groups of people eg. BME and other hard to reach groups
- **Volunteer Glasgow** has a database of 15,000 people including refugees and asylum seekers, who can help with engaging with different groups (via their Engagement and Inclusion Team), marketing and organisation of events
- **ALISS** by the Health and Social Care Alliance is helping GCFN to build an online community food hub
- **NW Community Pantry** has good links to young people
- **Asylum House** would be a good point of call for engaging with asylum seekers
- **Mears Housing Association** has experience in working with many different cultures and can provide **translators** in Kurdish, Arabic and Vietnamese. They work closely with the **Ruchazie Pantry**.
- **CWIN** provides culturally appropriate food for refugees and asylum seekers and has allotments at **Lambhill Stables**

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE US TO DO?

- Make information about the food plan more accessible
- Address language barriers when engaging with people
- Publicise seed libraries better
- Learn from other cities eg. Union Community Garden in London
- Reach to more deprived schools ('Bridging the gap') to make a connection between school canteens and locally grown food.
- Make a point for financial and environmental savings associated with sustainable food
- Increase value of local food to parents
- Organise family-based workshops
- Involve people for new projects from the very beginning
- Signpost different projects better

All this points and suggestions have been captured at the last page of the document collating specific actions as an outcome of the event.

Open Space Table

Group 1

Broad discussion about the positives GCFN can offer or the asks of GCFN as a network:

- Events like this one today are very helpful
- The opportunity to meet people is important
- Post-Covid having an open space table like this one is nice because you don't always know what you're looking for you just want to hear from other orgs
- Future opportunities:
 - Part of this is in the future is proving there is an interest
 - "getting louder as a collective voice"
 - i.e. the demand for land like GAF discussed, the need for it
 - motivation and communication
- Having a common voice and the weight of all members together is important – "we need to do more bigging ourselves up"
- Having a network with an overview, a solid overview of what's going on and who's who in the city is good, the potential to bring people together.
 - e.g. MEARs commented that knowing about St Paul's is very useful for them
- Broader discussion about how to share the info / overview – talked about the hub, "an information hub online would be really good" – discussion of the ALISS system and how MEARs service users would access information there.
- Talked about the idea of wellbeing in food and connection through food

Group 2

Focused on the topic of communication:

- Highlighted a GCVS offer:
 - Large database of groups across the city that could be shared or communicated
 - Lots of newsletters
 - Greater Glasgow Climate Hub highlighted as a space the FCA team should be interacting with or using
 - GlasgowHelps.Org was also mentioned as a good website to use
 - There was a discussion between Brenda (GCFN board) and Bob (GCVS) about sharing with Bob the information that is currently on the Urban Roots Free Food Map.
- Talked about communication and accessibility,
 - How to engage with these audiences?:

- Mental and physical accessibility,
- learning disabilities,
- under-represented groups...
- Smaller discussion about engaging with people through art and mention of the Dandelion project.
- Importance of communication being empowering rather than 'help' and the power dynamics between people and organisations.
- Discussion about the intersectional nature of the issues we are all working to address.
- Discussion about Edinburgh Community Food carers project funded by the City of Edinburgh Council. Group discussed the idea of how to structure a society that benefits your youngest and oldest – book ending your city / community / population

Group 3

Group 3 responded to some of the written points from the previous groups:

- There was talk of Volunteer Glasgow and the opportunities to advertise volunteering spaces on their site. Updated that they will be doing some communication on Earth Day. Discussed how to tap into the energy of good volunteers and share this wider, how to support people to be champions in their local community.
- Ear Hustle the podcast was recommended – linked to a discussion about a new market garden South Lanarkshire council are opening. It will be a closed unit worked on by people doing community service. Some talk about how to merge two communities of the service users working on the site and the local community so that it is integrated and local community can get the benefits / produce.
- Bigger discussion about how could GCFN help with the strong risk averse culture in funders and councils. How could GCFN support unconstituted groups to receive funding? Is that even something we could do? Talked about National Lottery in relation to this. Discussed how TCV have a support site for helping groups to become constituted.
- Suggestion that a future event could be a 'market place' with different stalls from different orgs or market gardens etc

ACTIONS

COMMUNICATION:

- Make information about the food plan more accessible: Cooms Team to develop strategy to communicate the plan in a simple easy way to wider audience
- Publicise seed libraries better: Cooms Team to post/advertise
- Address language barriers when engaging with people:
 - Mears Housing Association has experience in working with many different cultures and can provide translators in Kurdish, Arabic and Vietnamese. They work closely with the Ruchazie Pantry.
- Volunteer Glasgow has a database of 15,000 people including refugees and asylum seekers, who can help with engaging with different groups (via their Engagement and Inclusion Team), marketing and organisation of events
- Reach to minority disadvantaged groups:
 - GSVS, Citizen's Assembly were suggested as good ways to engage with new groups of people eg. BME and other hard to reach groups
 - NW Community Pantry has good links to young people
 - Asylum House would be a good point of call for engaging with asylum seekers
 - CWIN provides culturally appropriate food for refugees and asylum seekers and has allotments at Lambhill Stables

RESEARCH:

- **Food Distribution coordination:** CTG and GCFN to set up a meeting looking at the scope of a study. Feasibility study to answer what assets are available for food distribution across Glasgow and what organisations could be involved in coordinating/leading this across the city. Including:
 - GCVS and their previous work,
 - The Scottish pantry Network,
 - Third Sector organisations with vehicles
 - local community food providers - Urban Roots map
 - Community Gardens
 - Public logistic & storage spaces...
- **Online community food hub:** ALISS by the Health and Social Care Alliance is helping GCFN to build an online community food hub
- **Case Studies** - Make a point for financial and environmental savings associated with sustainable food

TRAINING & EVENTS:

- **Collaboration, discussion or events with other cities organisations:** Learn from other cities eg. Union Community Garden in London/Edinburgh / Bristol...
- Reach to more **deprived schools** ('Bridging the gap') to make a connection between school canteens and locally grown food.
- Increase value of local food to parents
- Organise family-based workshops
- Involve people for new projects from the very beginning
- Signpost different projects better
- **GCFN Networking events:** Organise more GCFN Networking events like this one.