



Presentation 2

How Hull got food growing in their local plan

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Where is Hull / Kingston upon Hull

Hull is a city on the east coast of England, on the north bank of the Humber Estuary. The city is roughly semi-circular 7 kilometres across. The city is compact and highly urbanised: with a population of 257,700.

The city is the third most deprived local authority area. Residents typically suffer from poorer health and lower levels of educational attainment than the national averages.

Hull is UK City of Culture 2017.

Interest in food growing in Hull

Hull has got one of the biggest areas devoted to allotments in the UK many church growing and cooking projects (live better for less. The council are very open to ideas on growing and have made available a contract for any group that wants to grow veg/fruit on a piece of council land that is unused.

Food4Hull has been part of an active network of the community and voluntary sector for 4 years. We now even have a CVS city strategy!

Especially important growing links with

- Friends of the Earth
- Transition and Permaculture Hull
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
- The Growers' Network

Also

- Groundwork
- Hull and Humber Timebank
- EMS (Environment Management Services)
- Rooted in Hull city farm (of 3)
- William Jackson Food Group tree planting agenda

Hull's Landscape

- ▶ Land is cheap and plentiful (largest no allotment sites in the UK)
- ▶ Undeveloped for many years so there is lots of space (although mapping is important and would be useful)
- ▶ Council never were hostile to the idea of planting

- ▶ Good relationship with the relevant parks and gardens people in the Council office and many other contacts in the council (eg the partnership development and engagement lead)
- ▶ Availability of 3 page 'contract' for any responsible community group who wanted to use council land to grow on
- ▶ Increasing numbers of community 'growing groups'
- ▶ Commissioning of Food4Life partnership in 2016 for 3 years

So what did we do? Remember nothing happens quickly.....

Getting involved in plan making needs a lot of patience, you will not see results for some time. Its been 3 years so far.

Our involvement in the emerging plan has enabled us to raise local food growing at an early stage of plan making to ensure it would be featured in the detail of the plan over coming months.

This is the story of our involvement

- ▶ Attended the 'health and well-being strategy' consultation in **Spring 2014** (articulating the link between exercise, green space, mental health & local food access)
- ▶ Attended the local city plan consultation **June 2014** morning public consultation. Not much chance to speak as discussion mostly about housing needs
- ▶ Filled in the online consultation which took best part of the day and seemed to be repetitive but made the point about green spaces and corridors, mental health and well-being (there is a vague link here to the Council "Health and Well-being Strategy 2014-2020" Healthier, Happier Longer lives <http://ow.ly/hQjv30bwuAb> p16)
- ▶ There were some comments from other organisations (most of who I knew) on these submissions but no real objections
- ▶ **Autumn 2015** – previous work rewarded by status recognition of topic of 'promoting healthy communities' (good) but where was food?

After some correspondence the council then summarised Food4Hull preferred option consultation responses:

- "it is difficult to see any mention of food in the current document. This includes access to healthy food, inclusion of green space and strategic guidance for major housing developments and support and encouragement for edible planting and other species to increase biodiversity value"
- Resulting in a ***new policy that was added to support using land for local food growing*** (supported in different ways by Hull FoE, Rooted in Hull city farm & Sport England)
- **July-Sept 2016** on publication of the Hull Local Plan consultation document, the new section on Local food growing and Policy no 46 can be seen. (2 more respondents supported this policy)
- **Submission of the Local plan to the Planning inspectorate** (now currently under inspection).

Our new policy

Local Plan Policy 46 (not yet adopted)

Local food growing

1. The use of land and buildings as new allotments, orchards and for local food growing spaces and production will be supported, including the temporary use of vacant or derelict land or buildings and the use of amenity greenspace on housing estates and other open space areas, where this does not conflict with other policy objectives or land use priorities.
2. The incorporation of community gardens, allotments, orchards and innovative spaces for growing food, including green roofs, will be encouraged and supported in new developments where possible and appropriate, particularly where there is demand for food growing space in the vicinity of the application site.

The inclusion of productive trees and plants in landscaping schemes will be encouraged where appropriate.

Evaluation

- ▶ Be persistent and attend consultations in person if you can
- ▶ Be aware of the various other levers of policy – health and well-being, exercise and diet, biodiversity, amenities, green infrastructure
- ▶ You don't have to be involved in all the growing projects and allotment groups and green happenings in the city but it really helps to know about them hence the value of being part of an established network
- ▶ Producing the new policy was possible because it didn't require anything from anyone, simply "encouraging" schemes for local food growing.
- ▶ Keeping up the pressure and interest is vital and eternal vigilance needed.

History of the food growing policy

May/June 2014 Issues & Options

The Issues and Options document published for consultation was a series of questions including a specific question on community food growing.

Where do you think land could be best used for a community growing scheme?

Food4Hull thought this was taking a very narrow view of food growing. The relationship of growing food & health is not just the eating of the food but the contribution of community greenspace projects to mental health & wellbeing - this seems to be missing.

Food4Hull submitted a detailed response to the consultation looking at the wider benefits of growing food and in particular how the Council was missing an opportunity to address health inequalities. Promotion of local food could also address the council's climate change priorities (reducing food miles, reducing urban heat island, increasing permeability of urban land).

Food 4 Hull suggested all new developments should have well-designed, usable open spaces that connect to the wider network of green infrastructure and provide space for residents to grow food close to where they live – this is not necessarily dedicated land for allotments but to design in spaces for community gardens embedded into the design of new communities.

Open space deficiency - the focus on allotments (areas where individual grow food with the main purpose of food growing) missed the point about community food growing spaces which have multiple benefits to physical & mental health, sustainability, social cohesion. This means that the council will prioritise open space provision in areas of deficiency rather than ensuring locally accessible open spaces as part of the amenity provision within new housing developments.

October - Nov 2015 Hull Preferred Options

This consultation gave us our first sight of proposed policies.

The topic “Promoting healthy communities” had been given its own chapter raising its status as a topic to be addressed in planning.

A paragraph covered access to affordable fresh food as an important consideration for planning was included but well meaning aspirations were not followed through into policy. No policies specifically mentioned food growing.

We then went through all the policies chapter by chapter pointing out relevance of community food growing.

We even wrote a draft policy so the Council would understand. This policy would have required new development to provide space suitable for food growing, encouraged temporary spaces and would protect existing spaces.

July – Sept 2016 Publication Consultation Document (Hull Local Plan)

The Council added a new section on Local Food Growing and Policy 46 which supports space for local food growing as part of the design for new development.

Also, the section on green infrastructure says **all development proposals should consider how they can incorporate green features within their design and this includes allotments/communitygrowing projects.**

Unfortunately, the section on health was edited down, losing the references to food poverty.

December 2016 The Submission Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate

No further changes of relevance to food were made and there were no challenges to the local food growing policy

However, KFC are objecting to the policy to restrict more fast food near schools.