

# Community Gardening

Be inspired



neighbourhoods **green**

IMPROVING THE GREEN SPACES FOR SOCIAL HOUSING



Community gardens are proven to reduce neighbourhood crime. They provide safe recreational spaces in urban areas where there is little or no green space, and for those without a garden they are a great place to get outside and enjoy the weather.

Community gardens can also be fantastic places to meet your neighbours.

A community garden is just that, a garden for the whole community. It's a communal space where people can come together, chat, relax, plant flowers, enjoy the wildlife, read a book or have a picnic.

All you need to start your community garden is an appropriate space and a few motivated neighbours. Exactly what it contains and how it's used is down to you; it's your space! Make sure that you've got prior agreement from the land-owner, just to make sure they are happy for you to proceed; they may be able to assist.

Some community gardens have vegetable patches where people can grow their own food (see our 'Be Inspired : Guide to growing your own' for more information.) Others have quiet relaxation areas with seating where people can kick back and forget about the stresses and strains of every day life. Some reflect the unique history and character of an area, whilst others contain specially commissioned art works.

Your community garden can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. There are many organisations who can help you with everything from initial planning and fundraising, through to actually creating the garden.

What matters is that the garden is suitable for your community. You'll never please everyone but that doesn't mean you can't create a space that makes a real impact on your estate, brings people together, and improves your quality of life.

So start making a difference today. Talk to your neighbours and see who's interested. Turn that vacant, under-used bit of space into a productive, garden you all can use, and soon you'll be reaping the benefits of your brand new community garden.

**Inspired? Read the 'Guide to applying for funding', 'Guide to setting-up a community gardening club' or the 'Guide to community food growing' to find out more about how your estate could get it's own community garden.**

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

Natural Estates is a partnership project of Neighbourhoods Green: Broomlegh Housing Association, Circle 33 (with London & Quadrant), CityWest Homes, Gallions Housing Association, Hackney Homes, Homes for Harlingey, Peabody, Places for People, and Southern Foundation, with Groundwork London, London Wildlife Trust and Natural England