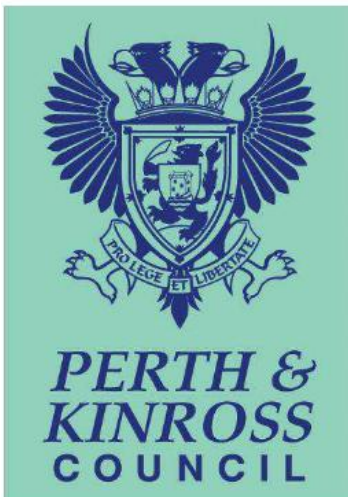

Food Growing Strategy - Appendix 1

Growing Together

Creating opportunities for people to grow their own fruit and vegetables across Perth and Kinross to promote healthy, sociable and sustainable lifestyles.



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Figure 1 Potager Garden (Kinross)

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1. Introduction

This draft strategy responds to the Government's vision to increase the health and wellbeing of Scotland's communities by encouraging more people to grow and eat fruit and vegetables. Growing food together allows people to meet and work with others in their community; develop food growing knowledge and skills and lead healthier lifestyles. Community growing also plays a role in improving biodiversity, tackling Climate Change and food poverty by improving access to high quality local produce that is grown and distributed in a sustainable manner.

Over the past months, the coronavirus crisis put the above benefits in a new perspective. Demand for allotments across the country soared, with more and more people looking for a way to access affordable, fresh food and an outdoor space to relax and exercise. Communities stepped up to support their vulnerable members and showed a collective spirit in these challenging times.

In Perth and Kinross, community groups have long been leading the way in providing opportunities for people to become involved in food growing. There are several well established allotment associations and community gardens in the area. Developing this strategy provides an opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved so far, identify problems and barriers and identify measures to improve the current situation.

The Council is well-placed to support this aim by helping to identify land for additional growing spaces and explore other types of support that would encourage more people of all ages and abilities to get involved. However, we cannot do this on our own. Local groups, businesses and individuals - some of whom are already involved with food growing – can help us find solutions suitable for their town or neighbourhood.

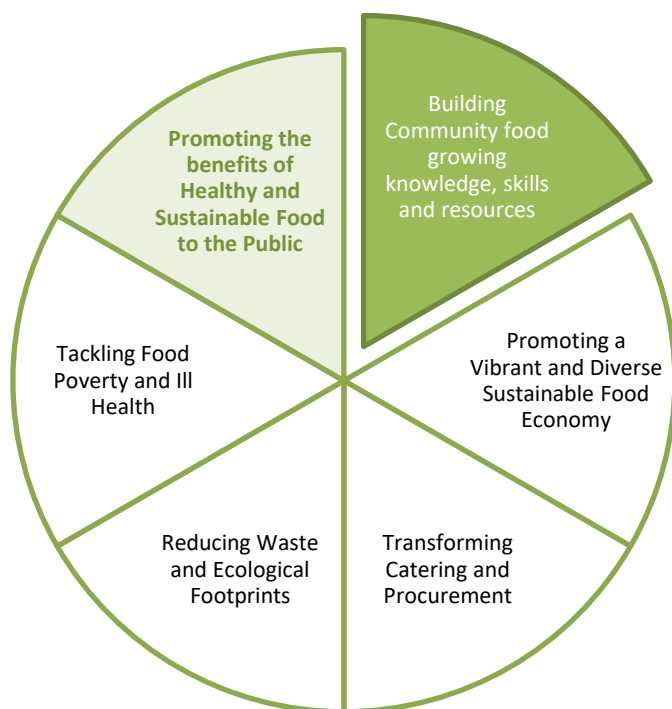


This consultative draft provides an opportunity for you to comment, get involved and help develop a food growing strategy that addresses the key issues. Whether it is sharing your enthusiasm, knowledge or championing a new growing project, we believe that everyone has something to offer!



2. Background

The Scottish Government's Good Food Nation policy tackles an incredibly complex topic and seeks to transform the food system as a whole. This strategy focuses on encouraging community growing which is a key part of this transformation. By engaging the public throughout the process, it will also contribute to promoting the benefits of healthy and sustainable food choices. The pie chart below highlights other important goals that Perth and Kinross Council and others can work towards in order to achieve the Good Food Nation vision.



[Click here to learn more about each category](#)

Figure 2: The [Sustainable Food Cities](#) approach shown above identifies six key areas that should be considered in relation to sustainable food production

The following initiatives within Perth & Kinross tie in with the Food Growing Strategy and play a part in delivering the Good Food Nation vision:

- Food Share Network initiative by Zero Waste Perth ← food waste, food poverty
- Community Cookit by NHS Tayside ← skills development, healthy food
- Climate Change Action Plan by PKC ← land use, procurement
- Westbank Nursery, Perth ← education, skills development, innovation
- LEADER programme ← rural business, funding
- Community, Third & Private Sector initiatives such as [Neighbourfood](#), [Broke not Broken](#) and [Giraffe](#) ← local produce, food poverty, distribution, training



Are you aware of or involved in any other relevant project?

3. Vision and Objectives

The main purpose of this strategy is to help ensure that more people will want to grow their own food and can do so.

Vision Statement:

“People across Perth and Kinross will have more opportunities and will be better skilled at growing their own food, thereby leading healthier, more sociable and sustainable lives”



Do you agree with the proposed vision & objectives?

A number of **key objectives** have been developed to help deliver the vision:

1. Develop a better understanding of the existing community growing provision in Perth and Kinross, including the demand for, and the barriers to, food growing.
2. Create and maintain an allotment waiting list to gauge the demand for growing space across Perth and Kinross.
3. Identify potentially suitable land for additional community growing spaces in order to improve the current provision, especially in communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.
4. Work with partners across Perth and Kinross to help overcome identified barriers including delivering new growing spaces and support activities such as training and sharing knowledge and skills.
5. Raise awareness of the benefits of food growing, encourage more people to become involved and support the establishment of new growing groups.

Delivering the Strategy's vision and objectives will result in a range of positive outcomes, including environmental, social and economic benefits.

Benefits of community growing		
Environmental	Social	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduces waste and food miles by promoting local produce• Contributes to biodiversity, green infrastructure, and mitigating/adapting to climate change• Improves soil and air quality• Promotes sustainable food production	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improves access to healthy and affordable food• Through regular exercise and contact with others, it improves physical and mental well-being• Promotes community empowerment• Develops skills, knowledge and social networks; provides opportunities for outdoor education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributes to creating a healthy and resilient communities• Helps groups raise funds by selling produce and promotes the local economy

4. Types of Community Growing

Food Growing Areas and their Definition

Allotments	<p>Allotments are defined in Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 as land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) <i>Owned or leased by a local authority, and</i>(b) <i>Leased or intended for lease by a person from the authority, and</i>(c) <i>Used or intended for use-</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) <i>Wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers and</i>(ii) <i>Otherwise than with a view to making a profit.</i> <p>Allotment plot holders are required to enter a contract for the lease of a plot and have responsibility for using and maintaining their plot, including any structures such as tool storage, compost bins or shelters.</p> <p>Note: Perth and Kinross Council does not manage any allotments but leases land to Allotment Associations. Some Allotment Associations use private land, not owned by the Authority.</p>
Community Gardens & Fields	<p>Normally created by community groups wishing to grow their own food. They are often managed and used more communally than allotments. All community garden models are different and can have many different purposes that extend further than just growing fruit and vegetables - for example, education and training, upgrading underused/vacant and derelict land or community building and recreation.</p>
Community Orchards & Woodlands	<p>Orchards and woodlands are shared resources, managed and often owned by local residents. Besides food production, they can contribute to improving and creating habitats and build resilience against urbanisation and climate change impacts. Orchards are normally identified as areas where there is a minimum of 5 fruit trees.</p>
Urban Farms	<p>Urban farms can be located within or around the edge of settlements and are similar to community gardens and fields. Urban agriculture however assumes a level of commerce where the produce is normally sold.</p>
Institutional /Organisational growing spaces	<p>Growing spaces which belong to institutions or organisation. These are not normally open for the general public and serve a specific purpose beyond growing food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools → teaching and skills building• Care homes & hospital → rehabilitation and exercise• Social enterprises/businesses → income generation
Edible hedges, Herb and vegetable boxes	<p>Community groups and individuals can seek permission from landowners to pursue less formal growing activities such as growing in civic areas and underused spaces using planters /raised beds and creating edible hedges and boundaries.</p>
Home Growing	<p>Garden share schemes are arrangements between private householders and match those with surplus space with those who need growing space. Other forms of home growing such as individual gardening and growing in window may be less social but still have many health and environmental benefits.</p>

5. Food Growing in Perth and Kinross

The following sections set out what we know about the existing food growing provision in the Council area, what issues we face and where we would like to get to by implementing this strategy. For this, we drew on our experience and past work and fact-finding meetings with growing groups as well as the results of the stakeholder survey conducted during October 2019. The survey ran for 3 weeks and received 201 responses from a wide variety of stakeholders.

5.1 Where are we now?

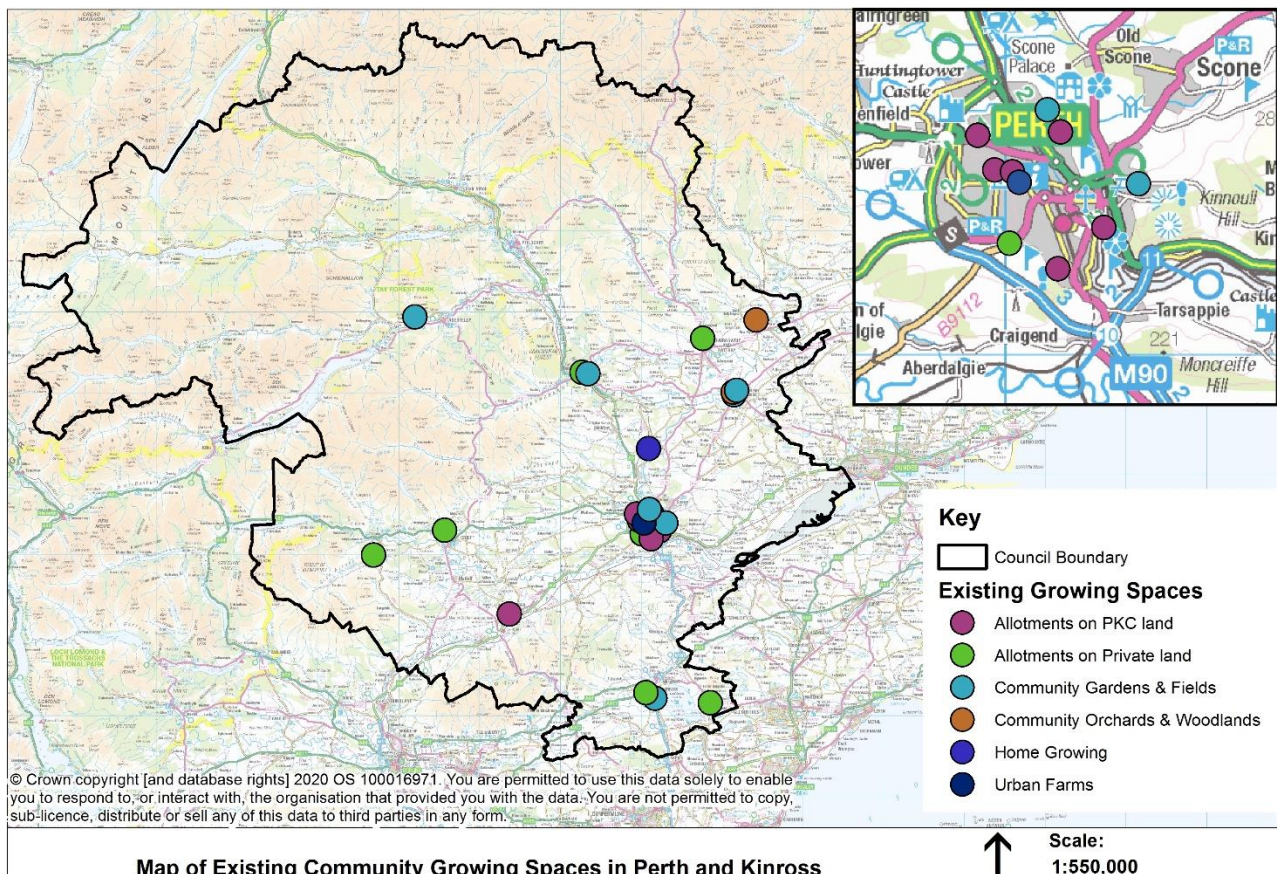
We have a record of **30 existing growing spaces across** Perth and Kinross, all managed by community groups through leases/agreements with landowners:

- 13 Allotments (6 on council land and 7 on private land)
- 8 Community Gardens & Fields
- 2 Community Orchards and Woodlands
- 1 Urban Farms
- 5 Institutional Growing Spaces
- 1 Garden Share Scheme



Do you know any other community growing space, not listed on our website?

Visit <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/growingspaces> for a detailed map of existing growing areas and information on existing growing groups.



There are several **inspirational initiatives across Perth and Kinross** that provide space, advice, opportunities for skills development and other types of support to those who would like to grow their own food and vegetables. **Some of them are...**



[Perth Community Farm](#) is a one of a kind project with the aim of feeding the city with organic produce. They are proud to be an inclusive growing space and regularly host school groups to teach children about food growing.

[Giraffe](#) helps trainees with mental health issues, learning disabilities and autism toward independence through working in a professional kitchen. They also have a growing space and often host events around zero waste and local produce.

[Neighbourfood](#) is a simple platform where even the smallest producers get the chance to sell their produce. A new pick-up point has recently opened in the Carse of Gowrie.



Moncrieffe Allotments have been providing people the opportunity to grow fruits and vegetables since 1896. Go along to their summer open day to see how they do it!



[Broke not Broken](#) in Kinross includes a foodbank, a gardening project and also offers cookery courses focusing on healthy and budget meals.



[Tombreck Farm](#) in Highland Perthshire aspires to form a community around regenerative agriculture and organic farming.

5.2 Demand – What we know so far?

76% of those who responded to the stakeholder survey already grow their own vegetables, fruit or herbs but **66%** would like to grow more than they do currently. Although the emphasis is on food growing, flowers are also grown to increase numbers of insect pollinators and, in some cases to sell cut flowers. **61** respondents suggested that they would like to join an allotment waiting list and **51** people thought that there is interest within their community to form a growing group.

Responses to the survey were received from across the Council area with almost half of the comments coming from post codes where residents are most likely to experience socio-economic challenges (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

In terms of access, a desktop mapping exercise identified that **40%** of households in Perth and Kinross live within an ideal walking distance (15 mins / 1200m) from an existing community growing space. **34%** of residents who live in flats have poor access to community growing areas. The same applies to **25%** of residents who live in areas which are most likely to experience socio-economic challenges.

Based on the accessibility of existing facilities, the known demand for growing spaces and discussions with local groups, we identified some of the **settlements and neighbourhoods where there is a need for new community growing opportunities**:

- **Pitlochry** – There are no established community growing areas in Pitlochry; Pitlochry Community Council advised that 15+ residents had previously expressed an interest in having an allotment.
- **Perth** – Largest population and percentage of residents living in flats; opportunities to join up with schools and build on existing growing initiatives
 - North Muirton – potential for a new growing space managed by PKC's REACH team
 - Letham – potential Food Share Network pilot in this area
 - Westbank (Jeanfield Road) – potential for expanding training and food growing activities by using the entire site



Figure 3 Part of the site at Westbank (Perth) is occupied by vegetable beds, polytunnels and sheds

- **Scone** – There are no established community growing areas in Scone; 7 individuals registered with the Community Council, showing interest in a potential project; Perth Community Farm is also interested to expand in this area. Finding suitable available ground has been the limiting factor to date.
- **Alyth** – Alyth Climate Café suggested that there is local demand for an additional growing area to provide alternative to the existing allotment site which is oversubscribed
- **Coupar Angus** – Opportunity to consolidate current efforts on a larger site and potentially manage it as a community farm
- **Rural Perthshire** – Several residents showed interest in the strategy from rural areas where there are no existing growing opportunities. While it may not be feasible to form an allotment in some of these places, alternatives could be explored that allow for community growing.

This list is not exhaustive, we are **keen to hear from other community groups who are interested in starting a new growing project**. Respond to the consultation and tell us about your aspirations!



Is your community not on the list? Let us know if there is demand for additional growing spaces.



Figure 4 One of the small growing sites in Coupar Angus

5.3 Allotment Waiting List

The Community Empowerment (2015) Act requires Local Authorities to maintain and manage a waiting list for allotment sites they own. The purpose of the central waiting list is to allow for an overview of the overall demand for plots and for a fair and transparent process for distributing spaces. Where the waiting list exceeds 50% of the available plots, the Council is required to take reasonable steps to increase the food growing provision.

Perth and Kinross Council own **6** allotment sites which are leased to and managed by Associations. Allotment Associations currently maintain their own waiting lists.

Allotment land	Allotment Association	Number plots/half plots	£ per plot/half	Waiting list (January 2020)
Moncrieffe Island, Perth	Perth Working Men's Garden Association	60/12	£45/£22.50 (£22.50 OAPs)	30 (Perth/Scone residents only) 3 yrs + waiting
Old Tulloch Bowling Green, Tulloch Terrace, Perth	North Perth Allotment Association	14	Unknown	Small
Kingswell Terrace, Letham	Letham Climate Challenge	5/5 3 raised beds (schools) community fruit & polytunnel	£56/£35	small
Kinloch Terrace, Letham	Letham Climate Challenge	2/2 community orchard	£40/£25	None
Glengarry Road, Perth	South Perth Community Partnership	54 + 20 raised beds	£45/£25	0-5
Behind St Margaret's Hospital, Auchterarder	Auchterarder Allotment Association	3/14 + 2 starter plots	£65/£45	Yes

It is proposed that the Council and the six Allotment Associations listed above collaborate to establish a new waiting list system which works best for all parties involved and satisfies the requirements of the Act:

- Work with Allotment Associations and explore the possibility of a new waiting list system that meets the requirements of the Act
- Ensure that those currently waiting for an allotment are transferred to any new system
- Advertise the waiting list on the Council's website
- Highlight alternative opportunities to those waiting for allotment plots e.g. joining a community garden, getting involved with garden sharing



Need more volunteers?
We can direct interest
people to your
gardening project.

5.4 Barriers & Ideas

The barriers to more people growing and ideas on how to overcome them shown below have been identified through responses from the consultative survey.

Most survey respondents requested **advice on what and how to grow; and how to harvest, preserve and store food**. This reflects the fact that most comments came from individuals with access to private gardens. **55 respondents thought that finding a suitable growing space is a barrier**. Advice on larders, distribution and funding was requested from several growing groups and organisations.

Several respondents provided examples and suggestions on how food growing could be encouraged. Besides taking steps to make land available for community growing, advice and knowledge sharing was regularly mentioned. In some cases, resources such as access to volunteers and funding were the main barriers for groups to expand their existing activities.

This is what you've asked for! Example suggestions from the food growing strategy survey.

The full report on the survey findings are available at: <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/foodgrowingstrategy>

Help with finding and accessing space for community growing

- A list of potential sites for food growing and details on ownership, contamination etc.
- Encourage garden sharing
- Repurpose leftover and underused open spaces owned by the Council

Advice & Knowledge Sharing

- Better advice on the community right to buy process and establishing community growing projects (lease, agreements etc.)
- Advice on indoor growing; powering growing spaces and sourcing materials
- Highlight good practice examples that others can learn from

Resources

- More volunteers for established groups/ schools
- Funding for various purposes (e.g. seeds, compost)

Other

- Connect farmers and landowners who are interested in developing regenerative agriculture
- Link sustainability projects together (e.g. composting and reducing waste)

5.5 Overcoming Barriers

The Council would ideally, subject to resources being available, work with communities and other partners to overcome barriers to more people being involved with growing food. We will focus on providing advice, information and hands on support wherever possible to help groups at various stages of their journey.

For **anybody who wants to start up community growing space**, the first step is to work within their community and find like-minded people. Where only a few people are interested in food growing, a garden share scheme may be the best option. Where there is considerable demand a community garden or allotment may be required. The Council can help advise on how to set up an allotment association and find potential new growing spaces.

The Council is also committed to support **groups who are already established** and help them grow, diversify and overcome challenges. This could be focused on knowledge sharing and providing advice on common issues such as funding or acquiring land. Signposting groups to each other and forming a network where experience and knowledge can be shared is also considered important.



Useful Contacts

- allotments@pkc.gov.uk (Food Growing Strategy working group) – queries about this strategy and generic enquiries
- developmentplan@pkc.gov.uk (Development Planning team) – planning permission, land opportunities
- Community Planning - advice on getting established as a community group, advice on the community right to buy process and funding
- communitygreenspace@pkc.gov.uk (Community Greenspace team) – access to Council maintained open spaces

Section 6 sets out what actions we are planning to take forward in order to improve the support available to those interested in community food growing.

5.6 Potential New Growing Spaces

Local Authorities are required to identify potentially suitable land for allotments and community growing areas where there is proven demand. The initial stakeholder survey indicated demand for additional space in Perth and Kinross (see section 5.2), Waiting lists for some existing allotments are long and some growing groups operate on land that does not meet their requirements. There are different ways for delivering additional growing spaces:

➤ **Within new developments**

The Local Development Plan states that new developments should incorporate allotments where there is a proven demand in the local area. Providing other community growing spaces through the planning process is also encouraged. By identifying areas where there is a shortfall of growing spaces and a proven public demand, the Food Growing Strategy will provide the basis for fulfilling this requirement for future development proposals. This approach is being trialled at Bertha Park which will include a larger scale community growing space.

➤ **On Council owned land**

Repurposing appropriate publicly owned amenity green spaces, parks and vacant & derelict land is another solution to providing new growing areas, the latter being supported by those who responded to the stakeholder survey. Council ground has already successfully been repurposed for allotments in Letham, Tulloch and Craigie. Local consultation would be required prior to any sites being repurposed.

The Council are intending to undertake an **Open Space Audit** that will provide a holistic overview of the provision of public and private green spaces across the Council area and highlight sites which could be repurposed for food growing. The map of Council maintained open spaces is available at: <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/18659/Map-of-maintained-open-spaces>



Get in touch if you are interested in initiating a growing project on a Council maintained open space

➤ **On private land**

Landowners may agree for their land to be used formally, or informally, as a community growing area. The temporary use of sites for community growing is supported by the Council and can allow for flexibility and/or testing project ideas. In order to guarantee the long-term security of the project however, it is recommended that arrangements are formalised with the owner (e.g. through a lease). Groups should contact the Council at the outset in order to confirm that the site is not contaminated and establish whether planning permission would be required.

➤ **Garden sharing**

Garden sharing can be initiated by anyone, whether they own a garden that they cannot maintain, or are looking for a space to grow fruits and vegetables. Your community or the Council may be able to help start garden sharing networks.

Through the survey, we received some suggestions for specific sites that could accommodate new growing spaces. In order to ensure that these are suitable for food growing and there are no significant barriers to their delivery, **the Council will assess each site** based on criteria such as land use, ownership, size and physical aspects.



**Do you know of a site
that could be suitable
for community
growing?**



Figure 5 Photo from Crieff Allotments

6. Draft Action Plan

What are we planning to do?

The table below includes examples of actions that the Council, communities and other partners could take forward in order to deliver the strategy objectives.



What other actions would you like to see?

Be a delivery partner and let us know how you can help!

Proposed Actions		Objectives	Potential Stakeholders
1.	Further consultation with existing growing groups (site visits and workshop) to explore barriers and opportunities	1	PKC, existing growing groups
2.	Establish facility(s) and opportunities for new groups to learn about food (and flower) growing, preserving & storage (e.g. mentoring programmes)	4	PKC, experienced growers, colleges, schools, community cafes
3.	Extend the learning and growing space at Westbank Nursery in Perth	3,4 & 5	PKC, Westbank Nursery & Perth Community Farm
4.	Promote available Council support for existing and new growing groups.	5	PKC
5.	Improve PKC website to act as a 'one stop shop' for community growers. Signpost users to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups looking for volunteers Training opportunities and resources on growing & using produce Planning advice Funding advice Best practice examples 	4 & 5	PKC; existing growing groups
6.	Carry out an open space audit and identify underused open spaces which could be suitable for food growing.	3	PKC (planning & community greenspace)
7.	Develop a Food Share Network and help growing groups reduce their food waste (support potential pilots in Letham & Kinloch Rannoch)	4	PKC (waste services) and pilot participants
8.	Work with residents and support the establishment of community allotment/growing groups.	5	PKC, communities
9.	Assist PKC REACH team to find a suitable growing site that allows them to extend their growing project with young people	3 & 4	PKC
10.	Help establish garden sharing schemes where required	5	PKC, communities
11.	Incorporate any potential allotment site, identified by the Food Growing Strategy, into the next revision/update of the Local Development Plan and any development brief work	4	PKC (Planning)

12.	Work with partners to investigate land opportunities and explore ways of delivering new growing spaces within areas where there is demand /shortfall.	4	PKC, land owners, growing groups
13.	Carry out an assessment of suggested sites for food growing.	4	PKC
14.	Explore opportunities for promotional work to encourage more people to grow, through media, schools and community councils	5	PKC, schools, NHS, community councils
15.	Establish and maintain an online allotment waiting list that is transparent and accessible giving everyone the same opportunity to request an allotment in Perth and Kinross	2	PKC
16.	Update the Allotment Regulations in line with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 duties and community engagement with the Allotment Association.	-	PKC
17.	Annual review of allotment provision & potential sites and size of waiting list in line with duties of the Act	monitoring	PKC

7. What happens next?

The sections above explained what the Food Growing Strategy is, what it is trying to achieve; and the draft action plan set out what we are planning to do in order to encourage food growing in Perth and Kinross. Now, it is your turn to give us feedback and let us know your views on the approach we have taken!

The engagement on the draft will run from *4th November* until *16th December*. The finalised document will be adopted by the Council.

7.1 How to comment on the draft strategy?

Fill in the questionnaire on *(link to be provided)* to answer the following:

- Are you aware of or involved in any other relevant project that the strategy should link to?
(See page 4)
- Do you agree with the proposed vision & objectives? *(See page 5)*
- We identified some settlements / neighbourhoods with a shortfall in community growing spaces. Are there other areas with demand for new growing opportunities which are missing from the list? *(See page 9-10)*
- Do you know of sites which may be suitable for food growing? *(See page 15)*
- Did we choose the right priority actions? If not, can you suggest additional key actions?
(See page 16)
- Can you be a delivery partner, or can you suggest key partners?

Come along to our online workshop!

We are organising online workshops for groups and organisation who are involved or would like to be involved in community food growing. The workshop will be an opportunity to meet like-minded people and share ideas, while feeding into the Food Growing Strategy. To register your interest, email us on allotments@pkc.gov.uk

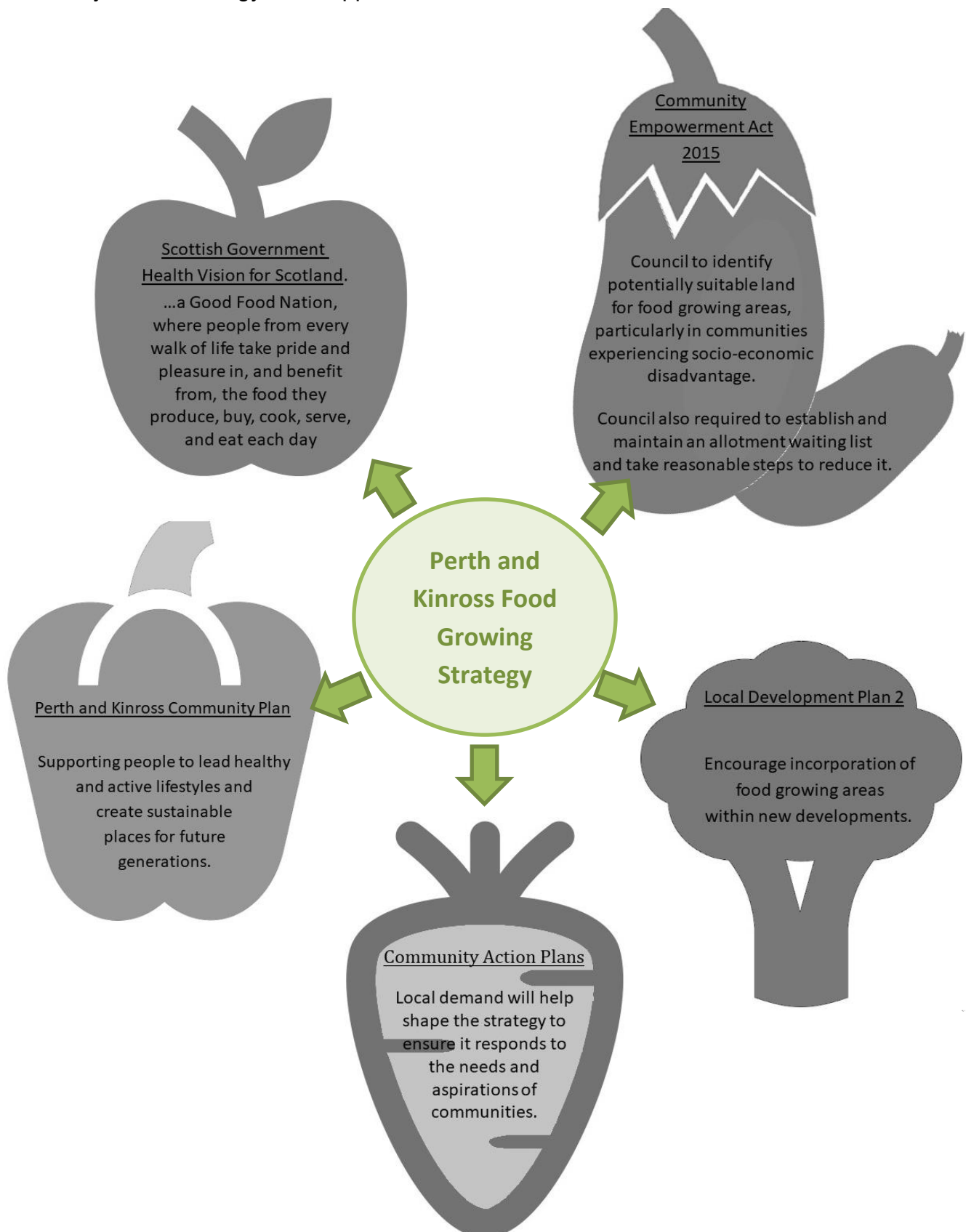
Monitoring & Review

Once adopted, the strategy will be reviewed and updated every five years. Annual monitoring of the demand for allotments will be undertaken as part of managing the allotment waiting list and updates will be provided on progress in implementing the action plan.



Appendix 1: Policy context

The Food Growing Strategy is not a standalone document, it is strongly related to other local and national level strategies, plans and legislation which seek to create healthier, greener and more sustainable places. The collaborative approach we aim to take with partners in the development and delivery of this strategy also supports the aims of the Perth & Kinross Offer.



Appendix 2: Site Assessments

Proposed methodology for site assessments (Appendix C):

<https://eastdunbarton.gov.uk/council/consultations/consultation-archive/have-your-say-our-draft-food-growing-strategy>