

Finding a Food-Growing Space



2,012 spaces by the end of 2012

1. Identification of and familiarisation with the space

- a) Begin by identifying the precise area in which you want to start a project. For example, a 1-mile radius from your home.
- b) Print out a Google map aerial photograph of this area and walk it, noting the addresses of any appropriate looking green spaces within the designated area.
Look out for any clues as to who owns the land: commercial notice boards or any indication of local council/borough activity. If you know the exact address of the site then the Land Registry might be able to help
<http://www.landreg.gov.uk/kb/Default.asp?ToDo=view&questId=8&catId=2>
- c) Make a note of what is being done with the land at present, any unusual permanent features, what surrounds the area, is it suitable for a food growing initiative, good access etc.
- d) Talk to the neighbours: canvas the area directly bordering on to the piece of land – neighbours may know who owns it, may be able to tell you what the land has been used for in the past and if there are any plans for a change of use in the immediate future. They may also be able to tell you what people use the land for at the moment and what kinds of spaces and uses would have to be maintained or otherwise taken into account when setting up a food-growing project at the site. Do they feel any sense of ownership, would they like to be involved, and can they think of any other stakeholders who may need/wish to be consulted? You need to know what the prior claims on the site as a public space are, and what the shared vision for the future use of the space might look like.
- e) Spend some time at the site at different times of the day, take note of who is there and what they are doing and talk to them.
- f) Survey the site: notice where the sun is at different times of the day. Are there any nearby buildings that may be suitable for rainwater collection/storage? Is there a water/power supply?
- g) Design your project, what will it look like, who will it involve, what will be its aims and goals, who will it benefit etc?

2. Identification of and contacting the landholder

Once you've identified the space and thought carefully about its potential, you will need to contact the landholder and obtain permission to use it for food growing (Capital Growth may be able to help at this stage capitalgrowth@sustainweb.org).

Write up a brief document clearly stating who you are as a group or individual, what your connection to the local area is, and what you plan to do with the land once you've gained access to it. Enthuse about why this would be a desirable way to use the site you've identified. Include at this point what you will need to realise this goal and where you plan to get what you need. The landholder will need to know from the beginning what will be expected of them, if anything, over and above authorising access.



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You should also be aware of the legal issues relating to meanwhile land use. For a summary of the main issues, as well as guidance and relative links you should consult the 'Access to Land' section on the Capital Growth website: www.capitalgrowth.org.

3. Apply for support from Capital Growth

Once you have access to the site go to <http://www.capitalgrowth.org/apply> to apply for support for your new food-growing space!