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# Evaluation of the Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature Project

**Dr. Helen Seers, Dr. Michelle Tytherleigh, Dr. Marie Polley**



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**Disclaimer:**

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not represent those of The Wildlife Trusts.

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**Main contact:**

**Dr Helen Seers, Co-Director Meaningful Measures Ltd, [helen@meaningfulmeasures.co.uk](mailto:helen@meaningfulmeasures.co.uk)**

**Dr Helen Seers** - An experimental psychologist by background, Helen has over 20 years' experience supporting voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations to evidence and communicate their impact. Formerly Head of Research and Evaluation at Penny Brohn UK (2004–2019), she led a pioneering team developing a mixed-methods evidence base for integrative cancer care, where she co-developed and validated the MYCaW® tool. Helen is a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of the West of England, a Chartered Psychologist, and an active member of evaluation networks including the Q Community, UK Evaluation Society, and the International Evidence Collaborative for the National Academy of Social Prescribing.

**Dr Michelle Tytherleigh** is an experienced Chartered Psychologist specialising in Research and Teaching, and is currently a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Chester. She is also the founder of MYT Consulting, which allows her to bring a wealth of expertise and knowledge to project design and evaluation. In her academic role, Michelle has developed a wide array of high-level research and evaluation skills, including evaluation design, data collection and analysis (both quantitative and qualitative), synthesis, and reporting. Her research portfolio, particularly in the areas of stress, well-being, and positive psychology, underscores her deep understanding of how opportunities for flourishing can (and should) be integrated into applied settings and through psychoeducation.

Michelle's commitment to education is further evidenced by her status as a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and her former role as Senior University Teaching Fellow at Chester. She is passionate about embedding positive psychology principles to enhance student learning and well-being, a dedication also reflected in her recent editorship of a book on Positive Education, part of the Emerald Positive Psychology in Practice series where she serves as a co-editor.

**Dr Marie Polley** - Alongside her position at Meaningful Measures, Marie is Co-Founder and former Co-Chair of the Social Prescribing Network, former Chair of the British Society for Integrative Oncology, and was awarded an MBE in 2025 King's Birthday Honours for services to social prescribing. With a background in biomedical science, Marie has held academic and research posts at Imperial College London and the University of Westminster, where she researched cancer cell biology, led work on integrative health and co-developed the MYCaW® evaluation tool. She has authored key national guidance and evidence reviews on social prescribing and has advised senior leaders, policymakers, and organisations on inclusive, evidence-based approaches to health and well-being. Marie is an Honorary Reader at University of East London's Institute of Connected Communities and an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at UCL.



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# Executive Summary

**Background:** The UK faces dual crises of poor dietary health and nature loss. Research shows that access to green spaces and nature-based activities including gardening can improve well-being and environmental outcomes. In this context, the Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature Project (2023–2025) was a UK-wide project that supported people, organisations and communities to use wildlife-friendly approaches to grow food. The aim of the initiative was to encourage small actions for nature’s recovery, support people’s well-being and provide a sense of community connection. The project is part of the legacy of King Charles III’s coronation. The project was delivered by four partners: The Wildlife Trusts, Garden Organic, the National Federation of Women’s Institutes (NFWI) and Incredible Edible, and was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

**Aim of the evaluation:** This independent evaluation, conducted by Meaningful Measures Ltd, sought to assess the Coronation Gardens project’s reach, outcomes and potential legacy. This report examines who engaged with Coronation Gardens, any changes in gardening behaviour that may have occurred and any potential impact on people’s well-being. It also looks at the impact on the additional work done by the Coronation Gardens project with Youth and Education Organisations (YEOs) and prisons. Finally, the report looks at the learning gained from the cross-partner collaboration behind Coronation Gardens.

**Methods:** A mixed-methods evaluation was conducted. Data sources included:

- A public pledge survey (N=3,147) with three-month follow-up sample showing any potential changes made or impact (N=253).
- A survey of YEOs (N=257) and feedback on a schools download resource pack that received 934 downloads across the span of the project.
- Case studies and narrative accounts from emerging prisons work.
- Focus group and interview with the project partner staff from the organisations.

**Results:** A large number of high-quality resources (e.g. gardening guides, schools pack, recipes, webinars, articles, and school craft and science projects for children) were created for the Coronation Gardens project. Also, a high-quality website for Coronation Gardens was made to serve as the long-lasting legacy of the project extending beyond the two years of the current funding.

**Public engagement:** Over 3,000 pledges were recorded across all regions, with most participants pledging their own home gardens. Participants pledged gardens across the full range of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Strongest engagement was from less deprived areas although meaningful uptake was also evident in more deprived communities, highlighting broad accessibility and potential equity impacts. Behaviour change was evident three months after making a pledge:

- 76% of non-food growers began food growing
- Over 70% reduced or stopped pesticide and peat use
- 87% provided water for wildlife.

At follow-up, 43% reported feeling “fully connected to nature”. Statistical analysis showed significant positive correlations for participants between time spent in nature, connection to nature and reported happiness.

**Youth and Education:** 934 schools downloaded the Schools Pack between 2023 and 2025 and there was high demand for seeds, tools and practical guidance. Case studies and spontaneous feedback from YEOs demonstrated increased biodiversity in school grounds, integration with the curriculum and improvements in pupil well-being, teamwork and fundraising skills.

**Prisons:** At the time of writing this report, the Coronation Gardens work in prisons was in an early phase, therefore results are limited. Early pilots at HMP Foston Hall, however, have demonstrated feasibility, with training about growing food in gardens provided to staff and WI volunteers by Garden Organic trainers. Initial feedback was positive, highlighting opportunities for rehabilitation, skills development and employability for women in these prisons. A support pack for short-term prisoners to help them apply learnings from the kitchen garden work when looking for jobs on release has been created and it has recently been confirmed that this will be offered to all UK prisons. This strand of work has received further funding in recent months and represents an exciting trajectory for the Coronation Gardens project.

**Partner collaboration:** Two main themes emerged from qualitative analysis of a focus group and interview:

“*Relationships and Connection*” – the project was a catalyst that allowed new partnerships to be made and enabled cross-sector collaboration between partners. These good-willed relationships opened up new opportunities and widened the potential impact of the Coronation Gardens project.

“*Project Management and Communication*” – there were challenges in the Coronation Gardens project due to unequal resource and funding allocation, reliance on goodwill and top-down management. These challenges created some strains and constraints for project partners.

**Limitations of the evaluation:** There were several limitations with this evaluation. There was a low three-month follow-up survey response rate (8.1% of the total pledge audience) which limits the robustness of the data. This low response rate was due to a technical fault with the website which was supposed to send out the survey at three months rather than participants not wanting to engage, though this was later rectified. Another limitation was that many participants were potentially already engaged in gardening, and therefore the project was talking to an already engaged audience and not reaching new groups of people who may have benefitted from food growing information. Also, the YEO and prison strands of the project did not collect well-being or impact data; therefore, any conclusions about wider impact are limited to case studies.

**Conclusion:** The evaluation demonstrates that Coronation Gardens successfully communicated with individuals, YEOs and communities to inspire them to adopt wildlife-friendly food growing practices. The project showed some well-being benefits at a three-month follow-up point and began to embed food and nature projects in education and prison settings. The project has laid foundations for future expansion into education, community and prison settings, while providing evidence to support further investment in community-led food and nature initiatives. Feedback from the partners on the project showed that they needed more resource support to be able to deliver the optimum outputs for the project.

Overall, the Coronation Gardens project leaves a strong long-term legacy through well-designed communication and educational resources including the website, the small gardens guide, the schools pack and the emerging prisons toolkit. Securing future funding would enable this inspiring work to be expanded, bringing further benefits to both communities and nature.

## Recommendations:

1. **Strengthen resourcing and infrastructure for future projects involving partners** – Adequate funding and equitable distribution of resources, greater involvement in decision making and dedicated project management staff within the organisation are essential to avoid over-reliance on goodwill and the expectation of working for free, which creates tension and limits the scale of the work. Connections to funding from commercial businesses may be useful for further sustainable development.
2. **Invest in follow-up and longitudinal data collection** – Systematic monitoring of pledgers over time, with adequate baseline and follow-up data collection time points was needed. YEO and prison projects would provide stronger evidence of sustained behaviour change and well-being impact. However, these are large projects in themselves, and each warrant a separate evaluation.
3. **Expand the prison strand** – This piece of work seems to be a tantalising legacy of the Coronation Gardens project which could result in real societal and environmental benefits. The pilot work established by the good-willed partners needs to be supported by finding further funding for their time to extend and embed horticultural interventions across prisons, linking to employability frameworks.
4. **Deepen education engagement** – Further funding could be sought to provide schools with the resources they are asking for (seeds, tools, training) and to integrate gardening into curricula to maximise benefits for skills and well-being. Connections to pre-existing community food growing projects, e.g. Nextdoor Nature from The Wildlife Trusts, could be aligned to this work.
5. **Ensure inclusivity and accessibility** – Future projects should ensure that participants reflect diverse communities and nations, addressing feedback about inclusivity. Make sure any future projects actively recruit people from wider communities who may not already be interested in nature and food growing.

# CULTIVATING CHANGE

## OUR IMPACT 2023-2025

Focusing on the dual power of food and nature to nourish both land and lives, this project highlights how community-led, nature-centred action can generate lasting positive change



### INSPIRING CHANGE

The aims of Coronation Gardens for Food & Nature were environmental and social:

- ✔ More people involved in natural heritage
- ✔ Improved well-being for all
- ✔ Shared knowledge and skills
- ✔ Local environments enhanced
- ✔ Learning that leads to change

The project encouraged people to take these actions:

- 1 Grow healthy food
- 2 Create water features
- 3 Plant for pollinators
- 4 Avoid chemicals & peat
- 5 Leave logpiles & long grass



### IMPRESSIVE OUTCOMES

Large audience pledged to adopt eco-friendly actions

✔ **3600** individuals pledged gardens, community spaces and even window boxes

✔ **83%** of pledged gardens were at home

Mass participation with meaningful engagement and awareness

✔ **6000** downloads of the Gardening in Small Spaces booklet

✔ **71%** of pledgers were not members or were new to the partner organisations



A wider range of people involved in heritage, developing skills for nature

**900** downloads of our school information pack

**97%** of schools surveyed wanted guidance on plants

**90%** of schools surveyed wanted advice on wildlife gardening

**4** prisons were offered advice and support for wildlife-friendly food growing



Realised significant impacts for local communities, well-being, nature recovery and sustainable living

**52%** of pledgers already growing food changed their gardening behaviour to include feeding birds, providing water for wildlife, and stopping pesticide and peat use

**76%** of pledgers already growing plants, but not food, changed their behaviour to include food, with vegetables and herbs being popular choices

Significant positive correlations between people's connection to nature and reported happiness

- ➔ Longer time spent in nature = higher levels of reported happiness
- ➔ Longer time spent in nature = a greater connection to nature
- ➔ Greater connection to nature = higher levels of reported happiness
- ➔ Pledging a greater number of activities = higher levels of reported happiness



### FUNDING FUTURES

We found that people in deprived areas described a stronger link between nature connectedness and reported happiness, reinforcing evidence that contact with nature may offer the greatest well-being gains for disadvantaged groups

*This highlights the case for funding community-led food growing and nature projects in these areas*



### MOVING FORWARDS

Recommendations from the findings of Coronation Gardens for Food & Nature:

- ✔ **Strengthen** resourcing for future partnership projects
- ✔ **Invest** in project follow-up and long-term data collection
- ✔ **Expand** prison work strands to provide real societal and environmental benefits
- ✔ **Deepen** engagement with education and schools
- ✔ **Ensure** gardening initiatives are inclusive and accessible

**“Me and my mum look forward to planting the seeds in our wildlife garden for autism. We created a pond and hope to get frogs. I enjoy feeding the birds regularly, too.”**

Coronation Gardens participant



# Introduction

## Food, Nature and Communities

Food, nature and communities are deeply connected in human societies.<sup>1</sup> Food systems profoundly impact the natural world around us. Industrial-scale agriculture remains one of the UK's largest drivers of biodiversity loss, with approximately 41% of species in decline.<sup>2</sup> In the UK, agriculture is also responsible for more than 10% of greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, households in the UK are recorded as wasting 4.7 million tonnes of food annually, which is a £4.9 billion loss to society.<sup>4</sup>

In parallel to the above environmental problems, we are experiencing a crisis in the health of our country, and poor dietary health has become a significant public health challenge.<sup>5</sup> The over consumption of ultra-processed foods combined with low fruit and vegetable intake has led to rising rates of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, therefore placing additional strain on the NHS with people's physical health.<sup>6</sup> The mental health of the UK population is also under strain with many people reporting feelings of isolation and reduced psychological well-being.<sup>7</sup> However, there is strong evidence that spending time in natural environments can significantly improve mental health, by helping to reduce stress and anxiety, enhance mood and support overall well-being.<sup>8</sup>



## Evidence and Context from Evaluation and Nature-Health Literature

There is a growing evidence base demonstrating health, well-being and social benefits of contact with nature and participation in food-growing initiatives. Research evidence highlights include:

- A meta-analysis of nature-based interventions, including gardening and exercise in green spaces, showed reductions in depression and anxiety, and improvements in positive mood.<sup>9</sup>
- Access to local green space is consistently associated with better mental health, improved social cohesion and lower stress.<sup>10</sup>
- Longitudinal studies in the UK have shown that green and blue spaces (gardens, parks, community plots, water-scapes) support mental health and well-being via social contact, stress reduction and restoration.<sup>11</sup>
- Two hours per week in nature significantly improves well-being across demographic groups, as shown in Natural England's MENE survey.<sup>12</sup>

These findings are echoed in two recent evaluation reports of UK community programmes supported by The Wildlife Trusts:

- A previous evaluation of Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature (2025) reported significant benefits for community well-being, local economies and nature recovery. The initiative strengthened calls for councils to establish a "Right to Grow", giving residents and groups automatic support to use disused land for food growing (Community Food Growing Report, 2025).<sup>13</sup>
- An evaluation of Nextdoor Nature (2024), a related Wildlife Trusts programme, showed how a community-organising model called "Nextdoor Nature", which was built around listening and supporting local connectors, has helped engage marginalised groups and sustain nature-positive action (MEL Research, 2024).<sup>14</sup>

All of the above evidence establishes a strong basis for projects such as Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature, which combine food-growing, community action and wildlife-friendly practices.

## About the Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature Project

Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature was launched in June 2023 to mark the coronation of King Charles III and to give tangible expression to his long-standing commitment to treasuring nature and promoting sustainable living. The initiative was designed as a practical legacy project, encouraging individuals, schools, workplaces and communities across the UK to grow food in ways that also help nature thrive.

The project was funded with a development grant of £247,834 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered by a partnership of four organisations:



**The Wildlife Trusts**

### The Wildlife Trusts

(wildlifetrusts.org) A federated movement of 46 charities with 944,000 members and 38,000

volunteers across the UK, Alderney and Isle of Man. The 46 Trusts work to inspire people and restore nature across the UK.



### The National Federation of Women's Institutes (WI) (thewi.org.uk)

This is the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK, representing approximately

175,000 members across more than 5,000 local branches in England, Wales, and the Islands. Established in 1915, and with over a century of activism on sustainability and community action, the organisation provides opportunities for women to acquire skills, participate in community initiatives and engage in national campaigns.



### Garden Organic

(gardenorganic.org.uk)

Established in 1954, Garden Organic is the UK's leading charity dedicated to organic

horticulture, citizen science and the conservation of plant genetic diversity. Established originally as the "Henry Doubleday Research Association", it has played a central role in developing and promoting best practice in organic growing, composting and seed conservation through its Heritage Seed Library.



### Incredible Edible

(incredibleedible.org.uk)

This is a UK-wide grassroots initiative

using food as a catalyst for social and environmental change. Starting in 2008, the movement has grown to approximately 150 community-led groups, working together to create confident, connected communities through food growing.

Together, the partners brought expertise in nature conservation, sustainable horticulture, citizen science and grassroots community mobilisation. More about the work of the partners on this project is described in the following section.

## Aims of the Coronation Gardens Project:

The aims of Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature were both environmental and social. Participants were encouraged to adopt five key principles:

1. Grow healthy food to eat.
2. Plant pollinator-friendly blooms.
3. Create a water feature.
4. Leave a patch of long grass or a pile of logs for wildlife.
5. Avoid chemicals and peat.

The project also aimed to provide information to enable people to:

- Inspire widespread nature-friendly food growing across homes, youth and education organisations (YEOs such as schools) and shared green spaces.
- Create new wildlife habitats in gardens, balconies and community plots.
- Strengthen community networks through shared activity, events and seed swaps.
- Reduce carbon footprints by encouraging local, seasonal, plant-based food production.
- Improve access to green space for those without gardens, by promoting community use of under-used land.
- Collect richer data on the role of gardens and small spaces in supporting biodiversity and well-being.

The initiative was structured across three phases:

**Phase 1 (2023):** engage individuals and families through pledges and online resources.

**Phase 2 (2024):** scale to schools, community groups, councils and businesses, including events and planting schemes.

**Phase 3 (2025):** evaluate success, share lessons and recognise outstanding participation.

By focusing on food, nature, and their combined benefits, Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature sought to mobilise people at scale to take small, practical actions that, together, could create meaningful ecological and social impact.

## Purpose of this Evaluation

As Coronation Gardens concludes in 2025, this evaluation seeks to document its outputs, outcomes and legacy. It explores how the project engaged with diverse audiences, encouraged the potential behaviour change, enhanced well-being and supported nature. The evaluation also considers what the four partner organisations learned through collaboration and if any future sustainable projects are now possible.

The structure of this report aligns with the National Lottery Heritage Fund's outcomes, which include:

1. A wider range of people involved in heritage.
2. Increased resilience among funded organisations.
3. Improved well-being for participants.
4. Development of new knowledge and skills.
5. Enhanced local environments.
6. Learning that leads to changes in ideas and actions.

By focusing on food, nature, and their dual power to nourish both land and lives, this evaluation seeks to highlight how community-led, nature-centred action can generate lasting positive change.

## History of the Coronation Gardens Project and Involvement of the Four Partners

The Coronation Garden for Food and Nature project was a collaboration between four partner organisations: The Wildlife Trusts, Incredible Edible, Garden Organic and the Women's Institute. Their combined expertise aimed to 'create a lasting legacy' by inspiring individuals and communities to grow fruit and vegetables sustainably, while also supporting local wildlife.

**The aim of the project:** Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature hoped to empower and inspire people and communities to share the joy of gardening across the British Isles. The project was created to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III in 2023. There was also a steering group, comprised of: Tom Burke (Chair), Dame Polly Courtice DBE, LVO, Dr Tony Juniper CBE, Elizabeth Buchanan, Craig Bennett (the proposers), and Geraint Richards (advisor). The Wildlife Trusts were the lead delivery partner.

**The four partner organisations:** The four partner organisations, and how they each were best able to contribute to the project in line with their specialism and areas of expertise are summarised below. The case studies shown are examples of the contributions made and include those which happened during the timeline of the project itself. They do not reflect all their contributions, however, or include case studies of projects that are either early in their development and described elsewhere in this report (e.g., with prisons), or are early in the planning stage as a result of the project.



The Wildlife Trusts' areas of expertise include the delivery of conservation, restoration and education initiatives to safeguard biodiversity and integrate nature into daily life. Their work includes the management of protected sites, marine conservation programmes and the collection of ecological data to inform national policy. In addition to this, The Wildlife Trusts provide expert advice to landowners, deliver environmental education to schools, engage communities in creating a wilder, more sustainable future and advocate for the importance of nature for everyone's health and well-being. The Wildlife Trusts see community food growing as a practical route to mobilise "Team Wilder" or "Nextdoor Nature" action—bringing people into nature recovery while improving local well-being. They emphasise embedding wildlife-friendly practices (peat-free, pollinator planting, water features) so small actions scale to meaningful ecological impact.

### The Wildlife Trust's role in Coronation Gardens:

The Wildlife Trusts instigated and hosted the administration and management of the Coronation Gardens project and provided the central hub for its delivery. They brought partners together, managed the project website, hosted pledges from individuals and groups, and coordinated the production of the Gardening in Small Spaces booklet. They led on communications and media relations, running social media campaigns and organising the "WildLIVE" YouTube event, as well as aligning the project with national campaigns such as No Mow May, Great Big Green Week and Plastic-Free July. Their CEO managed relations with the Palace and the Steering Group of Palace advisors. The Wildlife Trusts also coordinated launch and celebration events, distributed the schools pack on edible gardening and carried out follow-up impact surveys. As a federation of grassroots charities, they connected the initiative with local volunteer networks and regional Wildlife Trusts, ensuring strong community engagement. Their expertise in conservation and community organising helped embed biodiversity principles throughout the project, while their partnerships with the other partners extended the work into prisons and wider community groups, strengthening both ecological and social outcomes.

### Perspective of the Coronation Gardens project from The Wildlife Trusts:

*"During the past 50 years the King has frequently called for humanity to live in harmony with nature and has promoted sustainable food growing alongside planting for pollinators and pesticide-free gardening. Restoring nature and enhancing the health and well-being of communities has never been more important. We hope that people everywhere will enjoy helping wildlife whilst growing spuds and squash – and we'd like to invite groups across the UK to join our wonderful gardening coalition."*

**Craig Bennett,**  
Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts.



Incredible Edible's approach is based on inclusive participation and a shared

commitment to more sustainable living. With a decentralised structure, the network empowers local groups to strengthen resilience, promote sustainable food practices and build social cohesion through shared action. Its guiding principle is that access to and engagement with food provides an entry point for all individuals to contribute to community and environmental well-being.

Incredible Edible believes "if you eat, you're in", and that community food growing should be possible for everyone, anywhere, and without gatekeeping. They see edible public spaces as gentle "systems change", shifting local norms, unlocking land access and rebuilding community confidence through shared action.

### Incredible Edible's role in Coronation Gardens:

Incredible Edible supported the Coronation Gardens vision of "confident, connected communities" by sharing best practice in community food-growing and local organising. They helped engage non-traditional Coronation Gardens audiences through access to food growing communities for involvement in social campaigns, films and creative food projects, and ensured that the initiative was firmly rooted in citizen-led action. Their remit was to inspire bottom-up change, demonstrating how food-growing can strengthen social cohesion, improve well-being and reconnect people with place. The work of Incredible Edible was to support community gardens.

### Perspective of the Coronation Gardens project from Incredible Edible:

*"Growing fresh food to share in our neighbourhoods is the perfect way to reconnect with nature. Incredible Edible's experience demonstrates we have places close to our homes that can be transformed into edible, nature-friendly spaces that reconnect people to each other, to healthier futures and to our environment. Through the power of small actions, in these Coronation Gardens and community beds, each of us can be a part of building a more sustainable future by simply coming together to grow food."*

**Pam Warhurst CBE,**  
Chair of Incredible Edible.



### The National Federation of Women's Institutes (The WI).

Environmental concerns have been central to WI activity for over a century, with members addressing issues ranging from

marine pollution in the 1920s, to the recent End Plastic Soup campaign, which highlighted the environmental impact of synthetic microfibres. The WI continues to provide a unique platform for grassroots advocacy and national policy influence. The WI frames community growing as empowerment—particularly for women and under-served groups—linking practical skills with purpose and community voice. They value visible, place-based projects (from roundabouts to allotments) that turn participation into confidence, contribution and local pride.

**The WI's role in Coronation Gardens:** WI members supported creative food-growing projects with local Wildlife Trusts and grassroots groups, ensuring the project's reach was both wide and inclusive. By mobilising their extensive volunteer network, the WI ensured that Coronation Gardens was rooted in community action and capable of engaging audiences often overlooked by mainstream environmental programmes.

The WI championed the Coronation Gardens project on their website and amplified communications from The Wildlife Trust about this project. On their own website the WI pulled together resources such as recipes and seven craft and science projects (e.g. one project was instructions for using cabbage indicators of acid levels) for use in the Coronation Gardens schools pack.

Drawing on its heritage of nutrition and cooking skills, the WI also contributed seasonal recipes to the Coronation Gardens project to increase people's knowledge about how to use the produce they have grown and reduce food waste. The recipes were supplied via the WI Learning Hub.

For the Coronation Gardens project, the WI also contributed its long-standing tradition of grassroots activism and community support, playing a central role in extending Coronation Gardens into new and diverse settings. They initiated the prisons strand of the project, brokering relationships with HMP Foston Hall. WI volunteers also undertook specialist training, in partnership with Garden Organic, to build skills and confidence in delivering food-growing activities within secure environments and community settings.

### Perspective of the Coronation Gardens project from The WI:

*"We are really excited to be working on this fantastic new initiative to celebrate HM the King's longstanding commitment to sustainability and the environment. The WI has over a hundred years of proud history of protecting the natural environment, playing an active role in our communities, and promoting sustainability. We are honoured to be part of an initiative which continues the legacy of generations of members to safeguard the natural world and responds to the environmental challenges that face our generation and those ahead of us."*

**Melissa Green, Chief Executive, NFWI (National Federation of Women's Institutes).**



### Organic and sustainable gardening charity

**Garden Organic** regards community growing as the most accessible way to

spread organic principles—hands-on, skills-based and locally owned. They see it building confidence and resilience, while improving soil health and biodiversity at neighbourhood scale.

Garden Organic is also home to the Heritage Seed Library, safeguarding up to 800 rare and heritage vegetable varieties to ensure long-term biodiversity and food security. Through research, education and community engagement, it supports individuals and organisations to adopt environmentally sustainable growing practices that contribute to national biodiversity and climate resilience objectives.

### Garden Organic's role in Coronation Gardens:

Garden Organic brought specialist horticultural knowledge, championing sustainable and organic growing practices. They contributed practical resources, such as the Gardening in Small Spaces booklet and the Schools Pack, while also leading on composting, peat-free methods and pollinator-friendly planting. Their Heritage Seed Library expertise featured in national showcase events

and they trained WI volunteers and prison staff to embed reflective and sustainable gardening practices within secure settings. Their remit combined technical rigour with accessible resources, supporting both individual growers and institutional partners.

Specifically in terms of communications, Garden Organic supplied ten blogs to the Coronation Gardens site over the duration of the project and posted approximately two social posts a month, over three feeds: Facebook, Instagram and X.

### Perspective of the Coronation Gardens project from Garden Organic:

*"Garden Organic is delighted to be a founding partner of the Coronation Gardens project. We firmly believe that if everybody took even the smallest of steps to make their growing space—be that a garden, allotment or pot on a window ledge—a sustainable haven, rich in wildlife and fresh homegrown food, the collective impact on the UK's precious biodiversity would be significant."*

**Fiona Taylor, CEO Garden Organic.**



# Methods

A mixed methods approach to data collection was carried out across multiple activities. These included survey data collection with members of the public, engagement feedback from Youth and Education Organisations (e.g. schools) and prisons, a focus group and interview with partner organisations, and analysis of wider project resources and communications.

## Survey Data Collection

### Two main surveys were used:

The first survey was a website-based pledge survey, made available through The Wildlife Trusts' digital channels in May 2023. A copy of the questions asked is in **Appendix 1**. This collected participant location (latitude/longitude and postcodes), Wildlife Trust membership status and communication preferences.

The second survey was a three-month follow-up survey for pledgers (see text copy of the survey in **Appendix 2**). Also distributed online, this was sent out in a block in July 2024 as a survey link to everyone who had pledged their garden since 1 April 2023. It captured demographic data, garden type, baseline growing status, indicators of behaviour change, well-being outcomes and nature connection measures. It also included the *Inclusion of Nature in Self* "circles measure" (Schultz, 2002)<sup>15</sup>, a standardised tool which

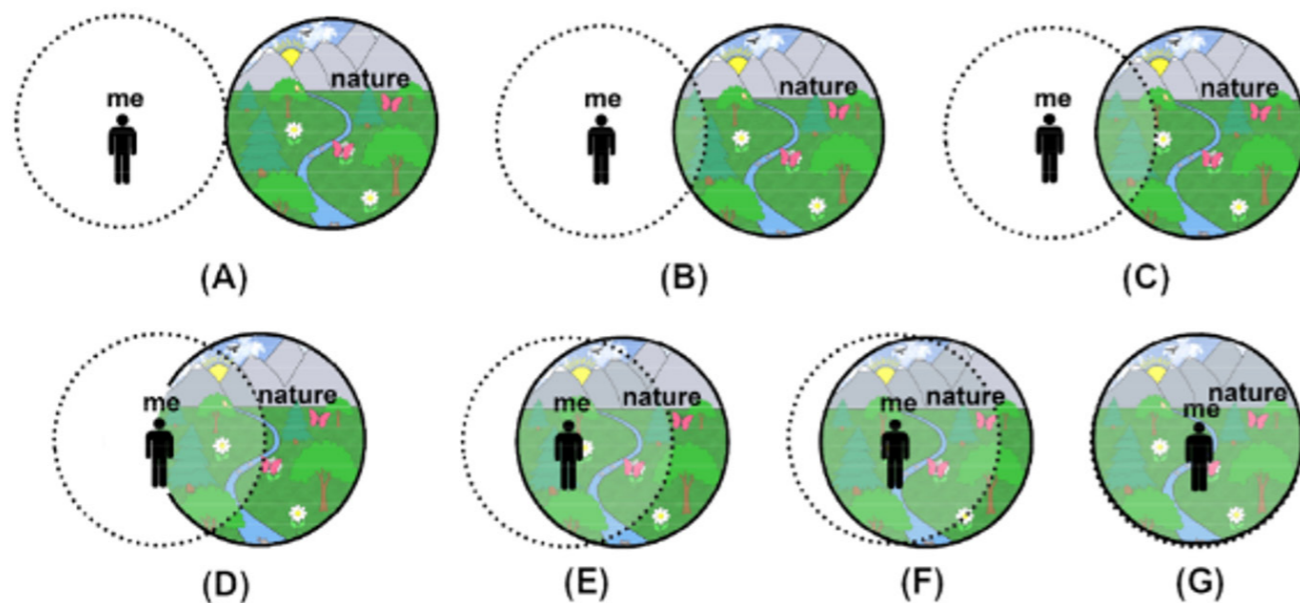
asks participants to select one of seven images (where A indicates totally separate, ranging to G indicating totally connected), to collect a snapshot in time for how much of a connection to nature people feel.

In line with recommendations made by Liefländer et al. (2013)<sup>16</sup>, responses to the *Inclusion of Nature in Self* scale were also scored by assigning a numerical value to each pair of circles (i.e., A = 1, B = 2, etc.). Higher scores indicate a greater connection to nature and using this data allowed the effects of nature on concepts related to well-being to be explored.

Quantitative survey data was downloaded, cleaned and analysed descriptively and statistically (at  $p < .05$ ) to assess reach, demographic spread and indicators of behaviour change over time. Relationships between scores for connection with nature, perceived levels of happiness, belief in the contribution of nature to overall happiness and time spent in nature and green spaces were explored using Spearman's correlations (for non-normally distributed data) to explore concepts related to well-being.

Qualitative data from open-ended survey questions was thematically coded to identify common themes and illustrative comments.

Figure 7: Diagrams reflecting different relationships with nature



## Youth and Education Engagement

A survey of YEOs (e.g. schools), held on a database by The Wildlife Trusts and engaging with the campaign, generated 257 usable responses. This included both structured questions e.g. needs analysis and uptake of the Schools Pack, and open free-text feedback. Responses were analysed descriptively and thematically to assess levels of engagement and to capture perspectives on the resources provided. (See **Appendix 3** for the YEOs' questions).

## Prisons Engagement

Narrative accounts and project outputs from work at HMP Foston Hall, HMP Peterborough and other prison sites were collected. These data were collated into a descriptive record of engagement and reach within the prison system. See **Appendix 4** for more details of the prisons work.

## Focus Group and Interview for Partner Staff to Record their Views

In August 2025, Meaningful Measures Ltd facilitated one focus group and one interview with staff from the four partner organisations collaborating in the project to capture qualitative reflections on the campaign. A semi-structured discussion guide was used to explore:

- What was working well.
- Challenges faced.
- Opportunities for future collaboration.
- What, if given a magic wand, participants would like to change.

As part of the recruitment process, all participants were provided with an information sheet which described the purpose of the focus group or interview, and were asked for their informed consent (see **Appendix 5**). A copy of the questions to be asked by the focus group is in **Appendix 6**. The focus group lasted approximately one hour and the interview approximately 30 minutes, and both were carried out, recorded and transcribed using Google Meet. The transcriptions were checked by Meaningful Measures Ltd for accuracy, anonymised and then the video recordings were deleted.

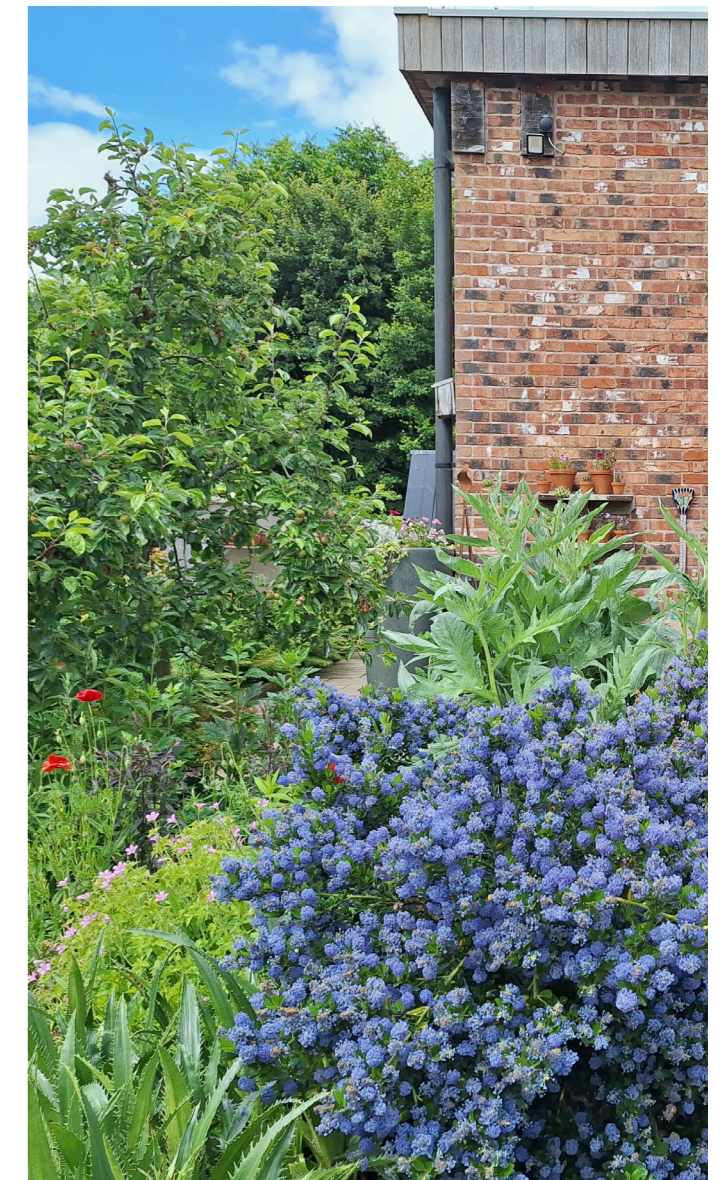
The more in-depth qualitative data gathered from the focus group and interview was analysed using thematic analysis. This analysis involved familiarisation with the data, where significant words and phrases were noted to identify initial themes. Initial themes were then refined and collapsed into final themes for reporting.

## Review of Internal Documents

Internal reports from previous Coronation Gardens' work and key documents were uploaded onto a shared drive by staff at The Wildlife Trusts. These documents were reviewed by the research team and findings/observations compared to the survey and focus group/interview data.

## Data Security

All survey and focus group/interview data was stored in password protected, encrypted files in a secure, GDPR compliant cloud-based storage location. No data files were stored on individuals' laptops. Meaningful Measures Ltd staff are also trained in GDPR compliant data processing procedures and accredited by Cyber Essential Plus.



# Results

There was a range of data sources, so the results are split into the following sections to make it easier to digest all the findings.

- **Section 1:** Outputs from the Coronation Gardens project.
- **Section 2:** Data from members of the public taking part in Coronation Gardens.
- **Section 3:** Coronation Gardens in Youth and Education Organisations.
- **Section 4:** Coronation Gardens in prisons.
- **Section 5:** Focus group and interview with representatives from each of the four partners involved with carrying out the Coronation Gardens project.

## Results Section 1: Outputs from the Coronation Gardens Project

A summary of the key resources produced by the four partner organisations collectively during the project is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Outputs from the Coronation Gardens from the four partners

Initiative Area	Outputs and Reach
Digital & Online Resources	Coronation Gardens website – central hub for pledges, resources and advice at <a href="http://mycoronationgarden.org">mycoronationgarden.org</a> . (17,345 views of website between 1.5.25 to 1.7.25) Gardening in Small Spaces booklet – Can be downloaded from <a href="http://www.mycoronationgarden.org/resources">http://www.mycoronationgarden.org/resources</a> (launched July 2025). 2,100+ downloads. Monthly newsletter – subscriber updates written in plain English, audience segmented. 10,370 subscribers (4,479 via Coronation Gardens). Social media campaigns – coordinated across Facebook, Instagram, X/Twitter, LinkedIn. From all four partners. Posts reaching on average 3,000 views. Community films – in production, due early autumn 2025. WildLIVE YouTube event hosted on The Wildlife Trusts' channel – featuring Tim Lang and Pam Warhurst. 327 live viewers, 1,171 total views
Youth & Education	Schools Pack: Schools Pack download available at <a href="http://www.mycoronationgarden.org/schools">http://www.mycoronationgarden.org/schools</a> . Downloaded 934 times as of time of writing this report. Additional booklets/toolkits in development to support wildlife-friendly gardening in varied and small spaces. The schools pack also included extra downloads of a food gardening glossary, sample budget calculator for a school garden project and a calendar for growing food in the school term times.
Prisons Work	Collaboration with SmellTaste (formerly Fifth Sense) and Suffolk Wildlife Trust, plus a nature-based artist, delivering creative sessions. Engagement with WI volunteers, local Wildlife Trusts and grassroots groups. Creative community food-growing projects with diverse groups via Incredible Edible and Garden Organic
Communications & Campaigns	The Wildlife Trusts' National campaign tie-ins: No Mow May, Great Big Green Week, Plastic Free July – all given a Coronation Gardens focus. External media coverage in journals such as Fresh Produce Journal, Hortidaily, About Manchester, Waitrose Weekend, the Big Issue and the Daily Express.
Events	Celebration Event National showcase event planned for 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2025, Loddington, Northamptonshire showcasing community action, with partners, funders, WI members and local media. Speakers include environmentalist Tom Burke, Head of Garden Organic's Heritage Seed Library, Membership Secretary of the WI, The Wildlife Trust's chief executive, and representatives from HMP Foston Hall.
Planned Coronation Gardens project events after September 2025	There is a joint communications plan developed by all partners to sustain resource-sharing beyond the project. The content developed for the Coronation Gardens website will be maintained for five years after the end of the project in autumn 2025. Partners will be encouraged to maintain information on their sites. The Coronation Gardens website may eventually migrate to being a part of The Wildlife Trusts' main website to increase its long-term searchability by having the information on a more well-known, national site and therefore being more likely to reach a wider audience.

## Results Section 2: Data from Members of the Public Taking Part in Coronation Gardens

Data was gathered using the Pledge Your Garden survey (**Appendix 1**) between May 2023 and August 2025. A total of N = 3147 participants responded and, of these, the majority were: not a member of the Wildlife Trusts (71.8%); requested communication in English (99.1%); and, of the options made available, wanted further information about the Wildlife Trusts (72.4%) and the work the Wildlife Trusts do (61.2%) by email. The majority (69.1%) also wanted more information about Garden Organic.

To understand more about the breadth and scope of the project, analysis was done of the number of pledges made by Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD; 2019)<sup>17</sup>. The IMD decile is an effective way of identifying the most deprived areas nationally, regionally and locally in England. Decile 1 represents the most deprived 10% (or decile) of small areas in England and decile 10 represents the least deprived 10%.

As shown in **Figure 1**, for those living in England and where postcode data were provided (N=2099), pledges were made from across the full range of IMD deciles, with 43.7% made by those living in the least deprived areas (i.e. IMD deciles 7 to 10). The majority of the type of garden pledged were gardens at home (83.4%), and this was consistent across all IMD deciles (see **Figure 2**).

## Impact of Pledge on Gardening Behaviour at Three Month Follow-up

Due to a system fault with automated emails being sent out initially, of those who had pledged their gardens, only 253 out of a possible 3147 participants provided follow-up data. As such, the analysis in this section is based on an 8.1% response rate. Whilst it is still worth analysing this data, this means the interpretation of these results should be treated with caution.

As shown in **Figure 3**, the highest percentages of pledgers living in England at follow-up lived in areas located in IMD deciles 8 to 10. This represents those living in the least deprived 30% of the population.

Looking at postcodes by region, the highest percentage of pledgers at follow-up live in England (86.6%), most in the south of England, and there are three who pledged their gardens from overseas (Australia, US and Canada; see **Figure 4**).

Similar to the data shown in **Figure 2**, at follow-up the majority of pledgers also pledged a garden at home (84.6%; see **Figure 5**) and, apart from the two participants living in Northern Ireland, this was reflected across all regions.

Looking at gardening behaviour in **Figure 6**, prior to pledging the majority were already growing food (62.8%), with 29.7% growing plants but not food, and only 7.5% not growing anything. This gives some insight into the types of people attracted to the campaign. Apart from decile 5, where most were growing plants but not food, growing food pre-pledge was also consistent across all IMD deciles.

Figure 1: Distribution of Coronation Garden pledgers in England by IMD decile.

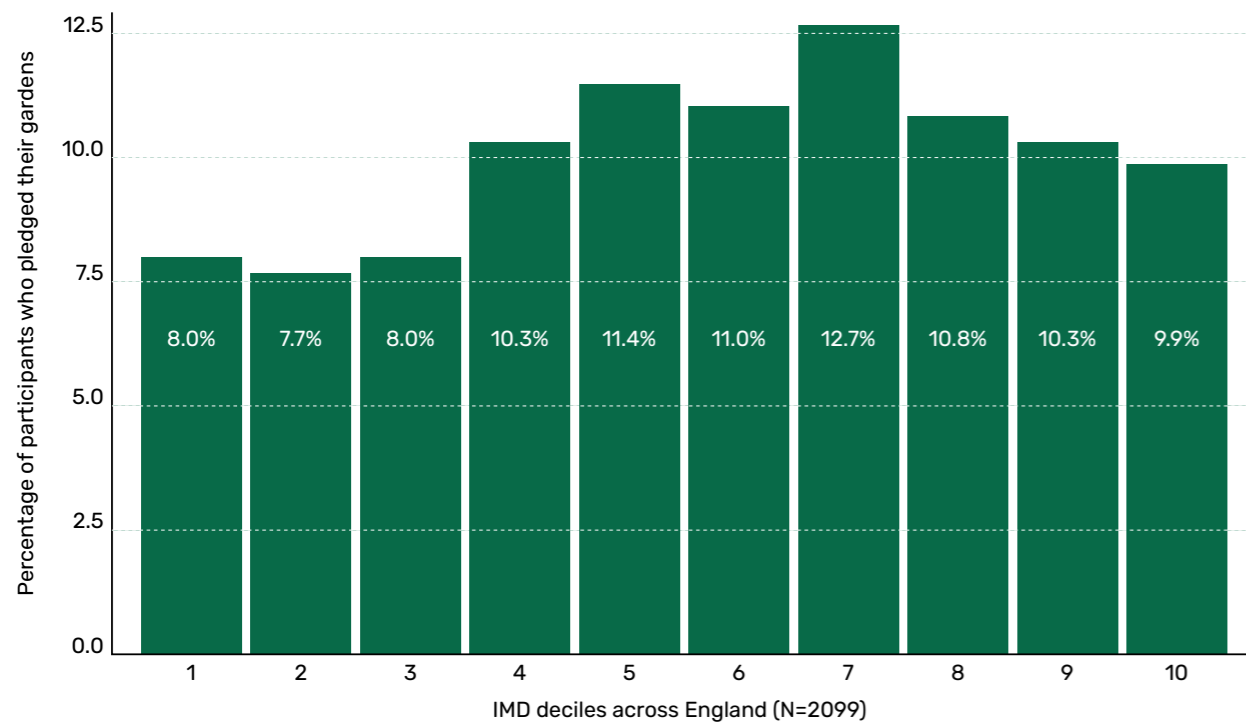


Figure 3: Showing proportion of respondents from IMD deciles.

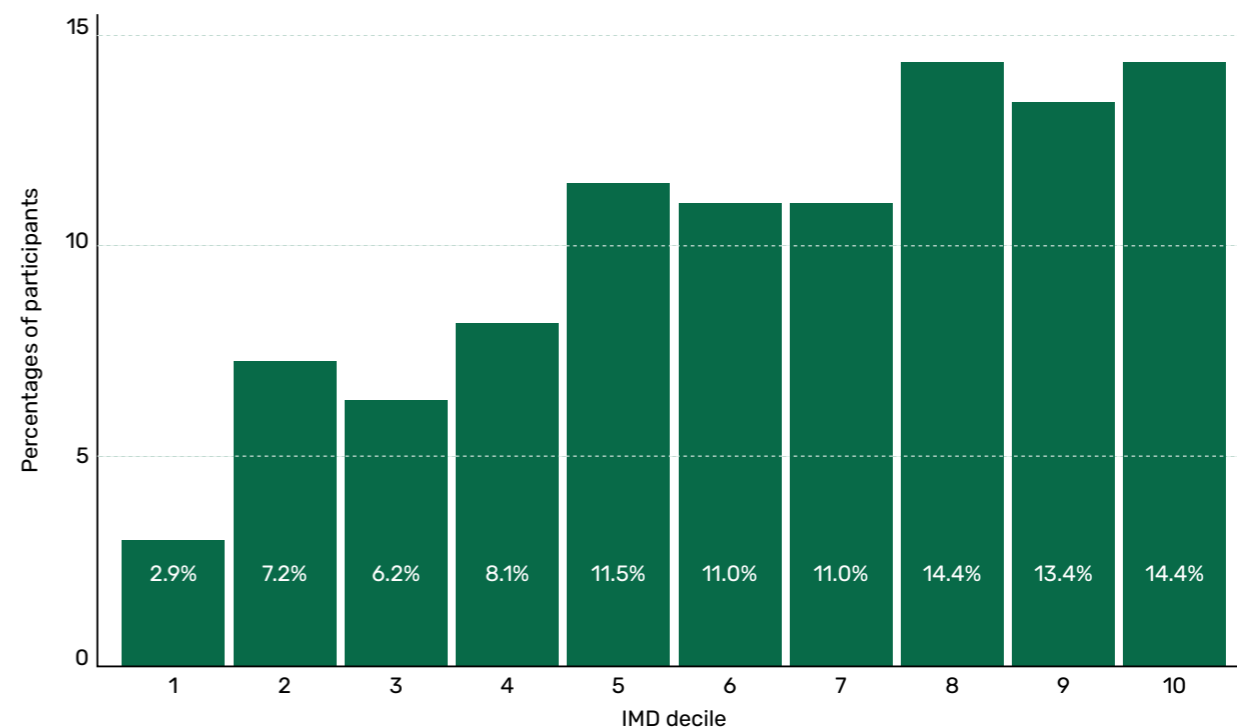


Figure 2: Types of garden pledged

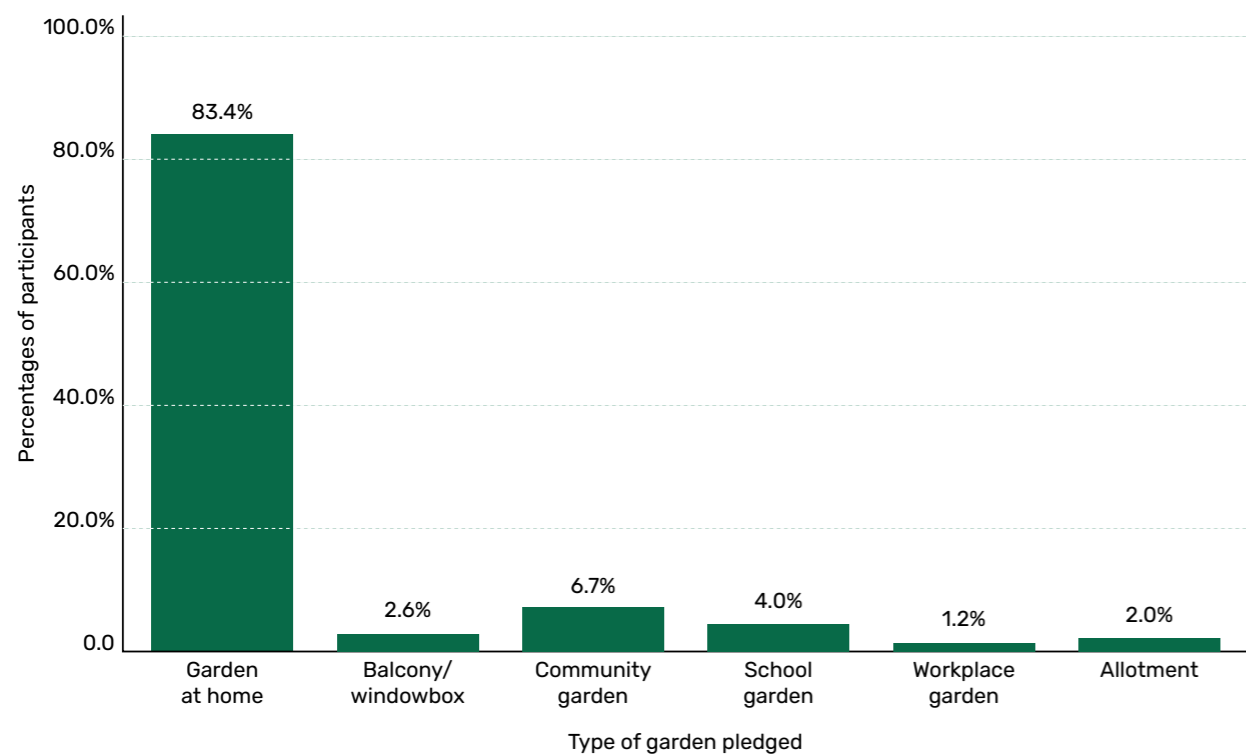


Figure 4: Regions, by postcode, where Coronation Garden pledgers live.

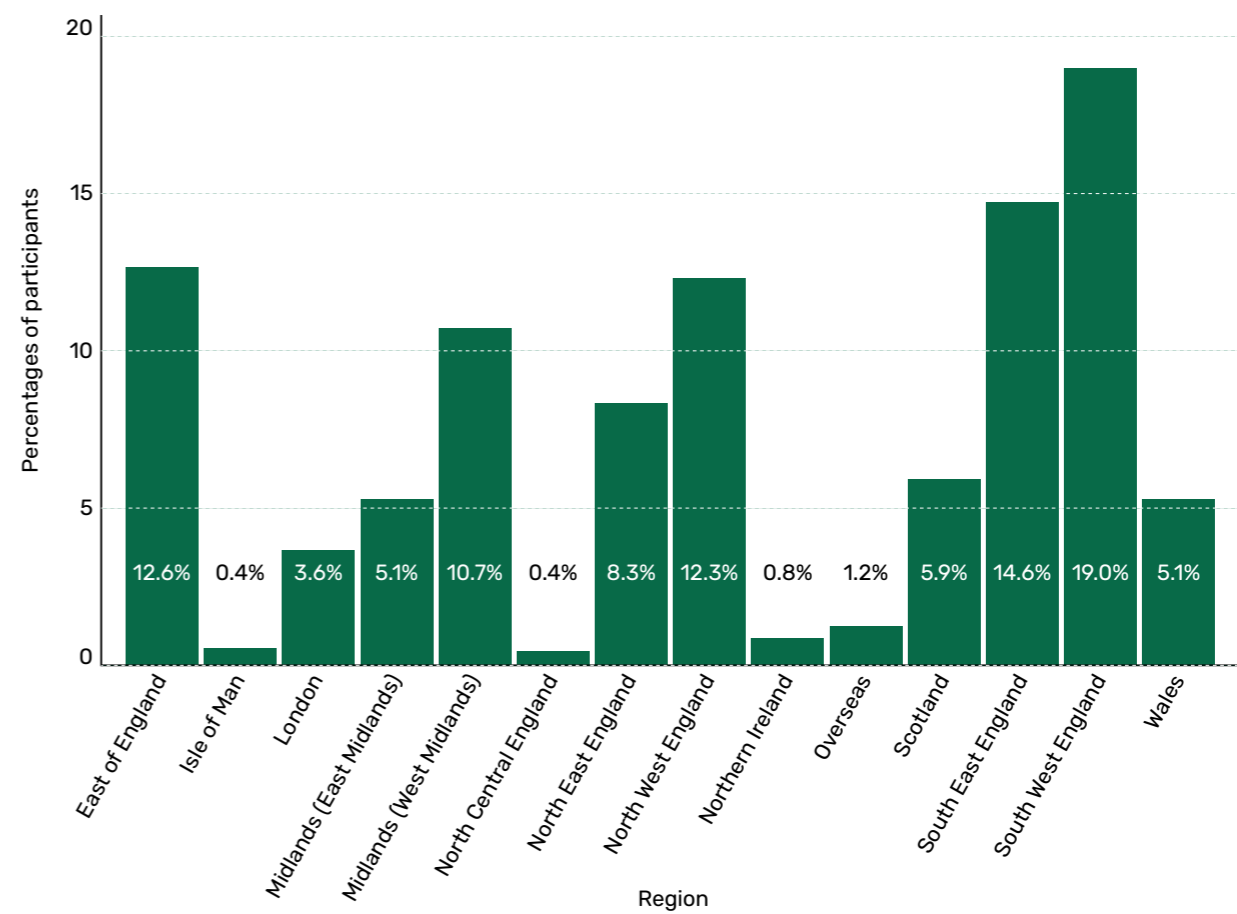


Figure 5: Locations of gardens.

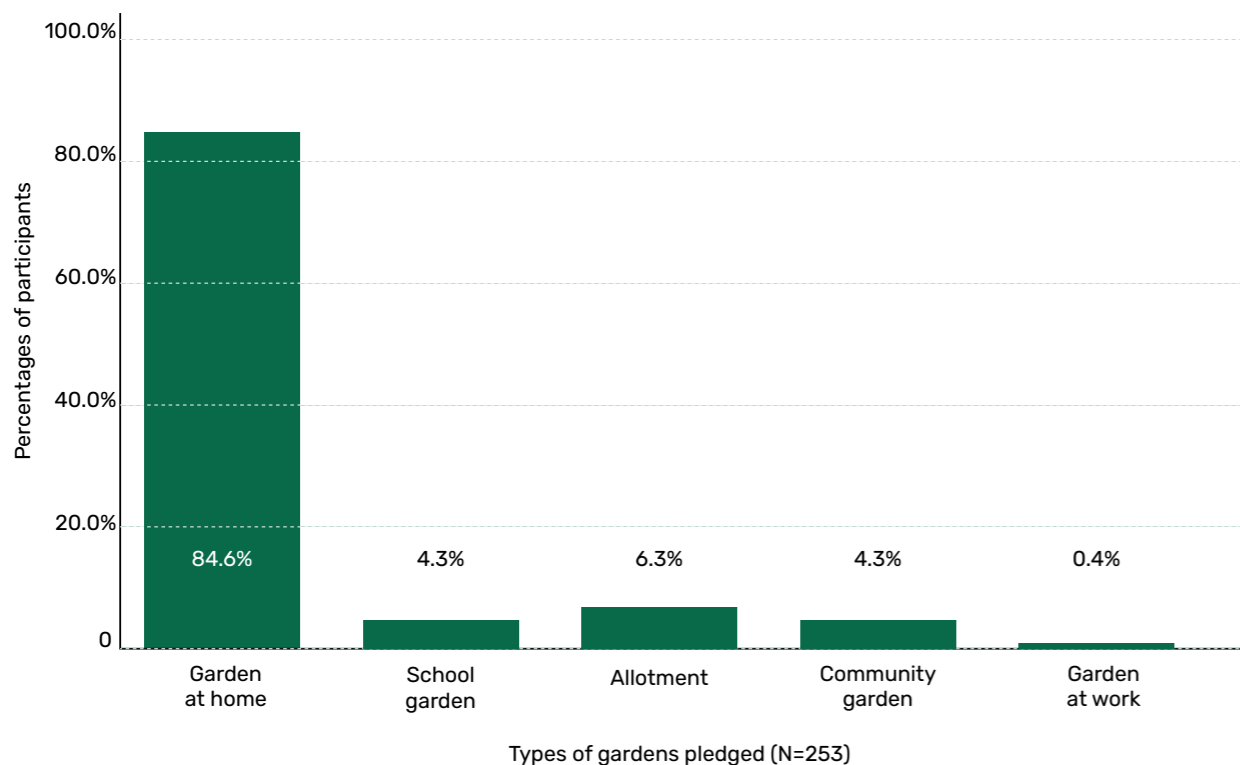
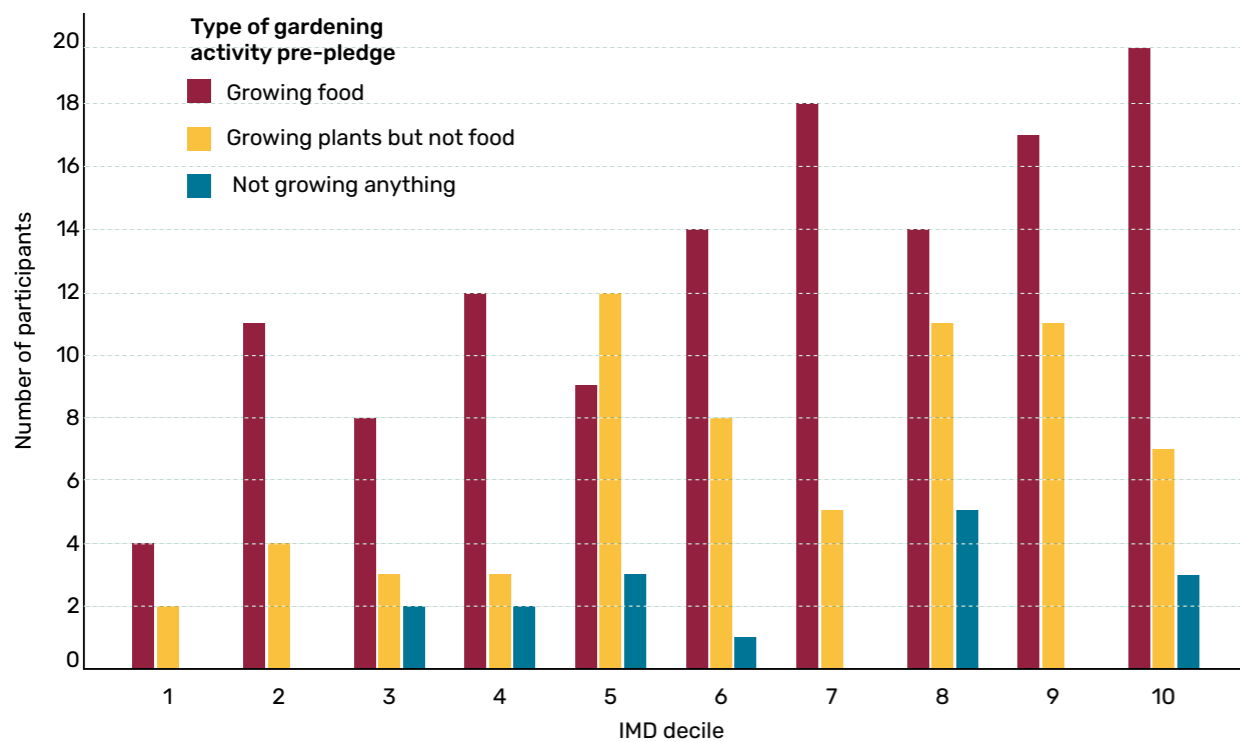


Figure 6: Type of gardening activity pre-pledge across IMD decile.



**Table 2** shows the changes in gardening behaviour at follow-up by the three main categories of pledgers, pre-pledge.

Those already growing food positively changed their gardening behaviour in all four option areas (i.e. by feeding birds, providing water for wildlife, and stopping using pesticide and peat), the most popular change by the majority in this group being to provide water for wildlife (86.8%), N= 138.

For those growing plants but not food prior to pledging, changes were seen in their gardening behaviour in all five of their option areas (i.e. by feeding birds, providing water for wildlife, stopping using pesticide and peat and starting to grow food). For this group, the most popular change by the majority (76%) was to start growing food (N=57).

Finally, for those not growing anything prior to pledging, the majority started to do so. In particular, by growing edible plants and, in particular, vegetables (52.6%, N=10) and herbs (47.4%, N=9). Like the other two groups, providing water for wildlife was also a popular behaviour change for the highest percentage in this group (47.9%, N=9). However, the number of respondents in this category overall is low, therefore results should be treated with caution.

Taken together, therefore, these results show some positive effects of the Coronation Gardens project on garden growing behaviour. In line with the aims of the National Lottery Heritage Fund's outcomes, they also provide evidence of having involved a wider range of people in heritage, changed ideas and actions and, as a consequence, helped develop skills for nature. In addition, this shows that the project may have reached people who are most likely to suffer inequalities and have the most to gain from this project.

Table 2: Showing types of behaviour change three months following pledging across three main groups of people before the pledge (food growers, just plant growers and non-growers)

Actions taken post-pledge	People who were already growing food before pledge (N=159)	Actions taken post-pledge	People who were already growing plants but not food before pledge (N=159)	Actions taken post-pledge	People who were not growing anything before pledge (N=159)
Feeding birds	67.9% (N=138)	Feeding birds	65.3% (N=49)	Feeding birds	26.3% (N=5)
Providing water for wildlife	86.8% (N=138)	Providing water for wildlife	73.3% (N=55)	Providing water for wildlife	47.9% (N=9)
Stopped using peat	71.1% (N=113)	Stopped using peat	64.0% (N=48)	Growing vegetables	52.6% (N=10)
Stopped using pesticide	72.3% (N=115)	Stopped using pesticide	56.0% (N=42)	Growing fruit	36.8% (N=7)
		Growing food	76.0% (N=57)	Growing herbs	47.4% (N=9)
				Growing inedible plants	42.1% (N=8)

## Connections with Nature at Three Month Follow-up

Using the Inclusion of Nature in Self scale (Schultz 2002)<sup>15</sup>, participants at three months after their pledge reported their connection to nature by selecting the most appropriate image from A = fully separate to G = fully connected to nature (see **Figure 7**).

The highest percentage reported being fully connected with nature (43.1%), with only one person (0.4%) completely separate (see **Figure 8**).

Figure 7: Diagrams reflecting different relationships with nature

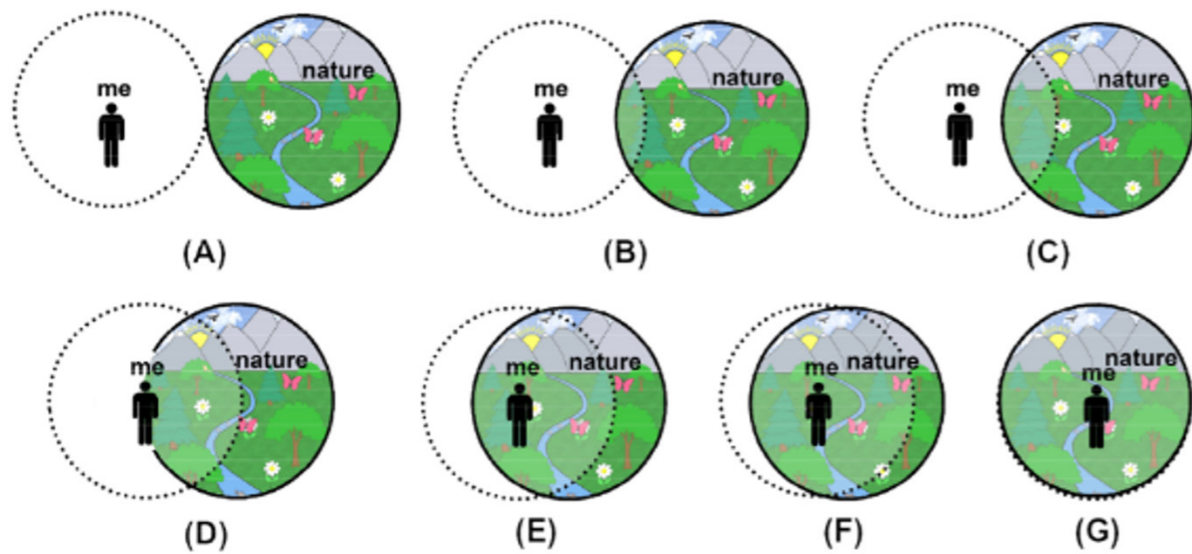
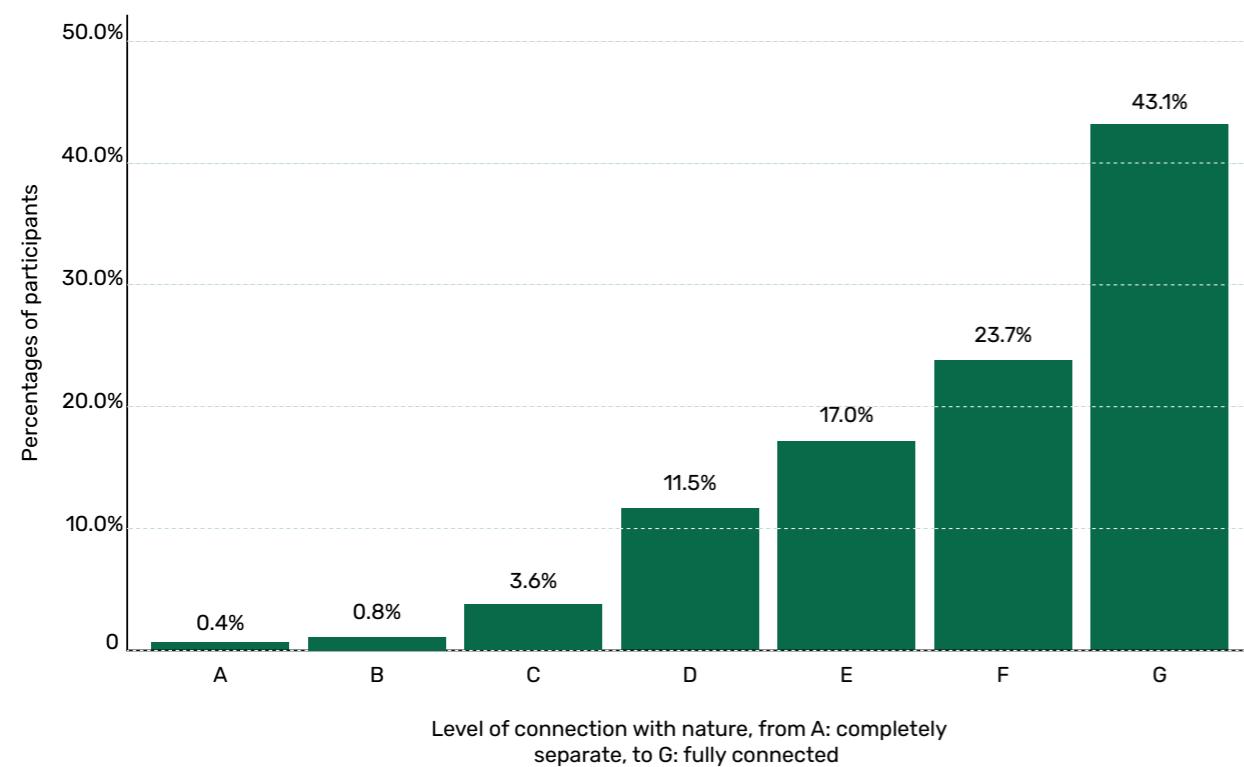
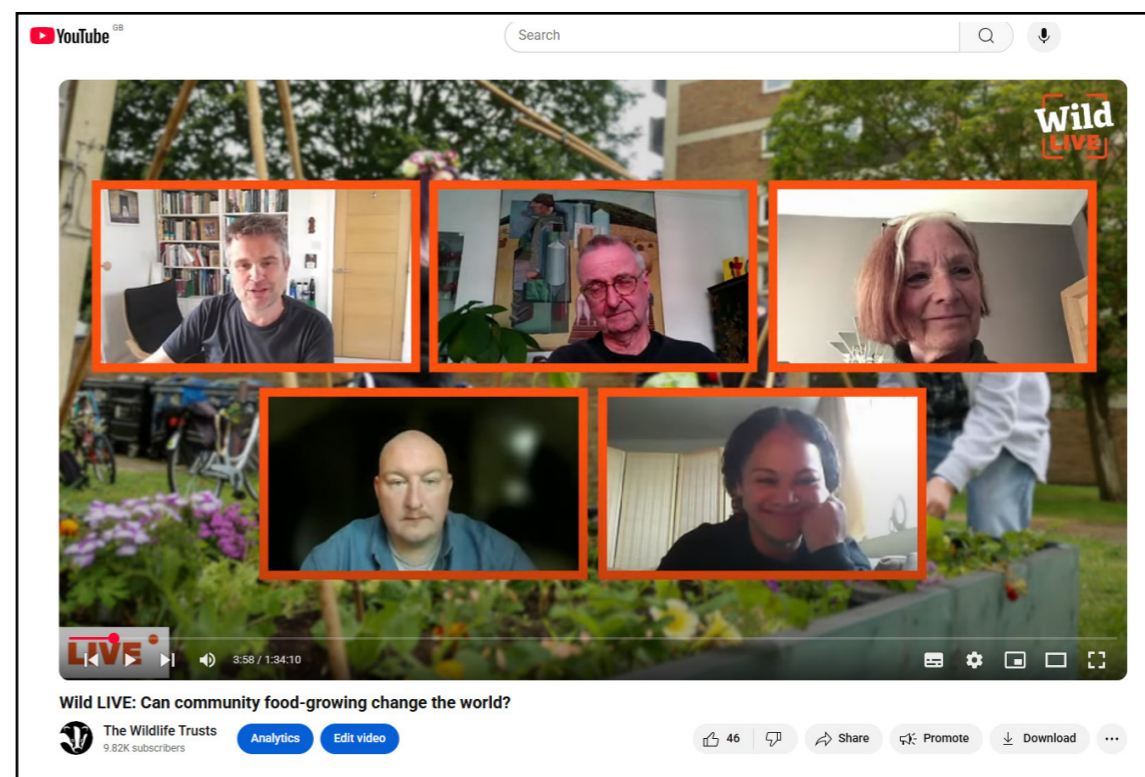


Figure 8: Levels of connection with nature across all participants (N=253).



Examples of Resources Created



## Relationships Between Nature and Happiness

Although a measure of well-being was not included in this survey, concepts known to be related to well-being (i.e. happiness, time spent in nature, and connection with nature) were. To explore the relationships between these variables, therefore, a series of Spearman's correlations were carried out using scores obtained from the Inclusion of Nature in Self scale, perceived levels of happiness, belief in the level of contribution of nature to overall happiness, and time spent in nature and green spaces. Whilst correlation does not imply causation, correlational research allows statistical associations among variables to be demonstrated.

A series of significant and positive relationships within the questions at the three month post-pledge responses were found. In particular:

- Longer periods of time spent in nature over the past year were related to higher levels of reported happiness ( $r=.253$ ,  $N=253$ ,  $p<.001$ ).
- Longer periods of time spent in nature were also related to a greater connection to nature ( $r=.329$ ,  $N=253$ ,  $p<.001$ ).
- Greater connection to nature was also related to higher levels of reported happiness ( $r=.335$ ,  $N=253$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

A significant and negative relationship was also found between IMD decile and greater connection to nature ( $r=-.215$ ,  $N=209$ ,  $p=.002$ ). Although only correlational, this suggests that people living in more deprived areas (i.e. with lower IMD deciles) feel a stronger connection to nature than those in less deprived areas (i.e. with higher IMD deciles), which could provide a powerful argument for directing funding toward community-led food growing and nature projects in deprived areas. (However, this finding should be treated with caution as it can only be related to the data collected and cannot be generalised to the whole population.) It should also be noted, however, that as the mean scores for connection to nature overall (i.e. irrespective of IMD decile) were high (i.e., at mean = 5.87 [SD = 1.26], and where the highest score is 7), there may be a ceiling effect being shown here.

What was also interesting were the positive and significant relationships between the number of activities pledged and both measures of happiness. In particular, having pledged a greater number of activities was related to: higher levels of reported happiness ( $r=.128$ ,  $N=253$ ,  $p=.041$ ), and feeling a greater contribution of nature to reported happiness ( $r=.143$ ,  $N=253$ ,  $p=.023$ ). Again, whilst correlation does not imply causation, these results could suggest that the act of gardening genuinely boosts reported



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happiness. Alternatively, this can be interpreted that happier individuals are more inclined to take on more activities. It is, however, also possible that something else, such as having more free time or a general love of the outdoors, influences both a person's willingness to garden and their overall happiness. Please note, these findings are only preliminary.

In addition to the quantitative data, several benefits of the Coronation Gardens project were also identified in the qualitative feedback comments made by individuals using the dedicated Coronation Gardens email feedback function.

In particular, participants described benefits of providing a better environment for wildlife to live:

*"Me and my mum look forward to planting the seeds in our wildlife garden/garden for autism... Just a few weeks ago we created a pond and hope to get frogs at some point. I enjoy feeding the birds regularly, too. We also have a log pile and a hedgehog house, two insect houses and plenty of trees and shrubs and flowers."*

*"We moved into a new build property in Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire just over three years ago. In that time I have re-wilded the garden to entice lots of different species."*

Also, in providing a better environment for individuals to live, and particularly those environments that had been devastated by previous use, there was a sense of pride reflected in the feedback from the hard work and transformations achieved.

*"Having only started 18 months ago from scratch just two of us have turned a waste strip of bare ground into a wildlife reserve."*

*"It was not long back converted, illegally, into a builders' yard which left the ground devastated and good for no useful purpose. Now, after much backbreaking work and effort it is usable."*

Several participants described a positive impact of nature on well-being, and how gardening and re-wilding had brought them happiness, pleasure, and a sense of purpose.

*"Creating a community garden that is a wildlife haven and can be used as a holistic mindful place."*

*"Nature is indeed a wonderful and intriguing thing. It has brought us so much happiness and pleasure. I would recommend anyone with the opportunity to get involved, either within their own gardens, or at a local wildlife, or wetlands trust."*

There was also a strong sense of wanting to involve and educate others, particularly children, to share knowledge and create learning opportunities.

*"We are currently in the process of developing a natural play area in our village. We were hoping to create a natural wild flower area in which to create a habitat for a bug hotel and area for children to observe and learn."*

And for some, there was evidence of individuals having influenced larger organisations and the communities where they live.

*"I run a homeschool service for learners who have crashed out of mainstream education. We spend a lot of time in the garden learning how things grow."*

*"The Monmouthshire Housing Association, whose ground it belongs to, gave us both permission to create this habitat for wildlife area [and] are now using both of our ideas to create the same environment for other tenants across the County of Monmouthshire where they have over 4,500 tenants enjoying the same things that my good friend and I have created and we are even having our input into their new builds."*

## Section 2: Data from Members of the Public Taking Part in Coronation Gardens LOTTERY LEARNING OUTCOMES REFLECTION POINT

	Lottery outcomes for Coronation Gardens					
<b>Results section.</b>	Wider range of people involved in heritage.	Increased resilience among funded organisation.	Improved well-being for participants.	Development of new knowledge and skills.	Enhanced local environment.	Learning that leads to changes in ideas and actions.
<b>Section 2: Public pledges &amp; three month survey data.</b>	Reach and demographics and geographical spread shown. Spread throughout all levels of IMD and the UK.	More sign-ups to newsletters. More awareness of partners' work and signposting.	Reported happiness, nature connection/ time in nature correlation. Those in more deprived communities have more to gain from nature engagement.	Food growing skills disseminated to people via the Coronation Gardens website, information booklets, newsletters, social media posts, films and live YouTube events.	Wildlife-friendly gardens. Network of Coronation Gardens created via pledges.	Behaviour change messages communicated to Coronation Garden pledgers: peat-free, pesticide-free growing. Food, community gardens inspired.

### Results Section 3: Coronation Gardens in Youth and Education

With youth and education an important part of the project, between October and December 2023 a survey was sent out to the 21,000 YEOs held on The Wildlife Trusts' YEO mailing list (see **Figure 9** for details of types of YEOs included). The aim of this survey was to find out what YEOs would like from the Coronation Gardens project to be able to best support them to be able to support themselves. A total of 257 organisations responded to the survey, making a 1.2% response rate.

As shown in **Figure 9**, and noting that 35.8% of responses (N=92) were either missing or unknown, the highest percentage of responses came from primary schools (46.7%, N=120).

The majority of YEOs were already growing fruit and vegetables (60.1%), with 31% expressing at least some plans or interest in doing so. The majority (97.3%) also wanted guidance on what to sow, plant and harvest, and on wildlife gardening ideas. See **Figure 10**.

In terms of which resources would be the most beneficial, and noting that organisations were able to select as many options they wanted, as shown in **Figure 11**, support was requested across all areas of support and, in particular, for seeds/plants (90.9%), and tools and equipment (80.2%). Thematic analysis of additional information provided an open-ended question asking for anything else that organisations wanted to say about their food growing and wildlife gardening activities, and how they thought the project could help. In addition, it also highlighted some clear motivations and aspirations for being involved in the project.

First, YEOs were clearly motivated by the idea of supporting local wildlife and improving the environment, and their ideas also often extended beyond just growing food to include creating habitats and fostering biodiversity:

*"We have a lovely "forest" school area and would like to use it better. Would like to grow vegetables and provide winter food for wildlife such as birds, hedgehogs, squirrels, mice etc."*

*"We are keen on encouraging pollinators and liaise with a local beekeeper who gives us advice on planting and would like to take this further."*

*"We are an eco school, we want to increase the biodiversity of our grounds to encourage wildlife."*

YEOs also recognised the benefits of gardens for health and well-being:

*"We have plans to turn the area into a more general garden that will be a place for pupils and staff to enjoy, rest, calm down and connect with nature."*

*"We are just starting to build the garden back up as part of a mental health and well-being programme."*

*"I would really like to find more opportunities to take my class outside and learn about nature and the environment by being in it! I think they would be fascinated by opportunities to attract wildlife."*

Some YEOs also appeared to have clear ideas about what they wanted to do with the food they grew, with schools often linking it to their school community or curriculum.

*"Would love to grow fruit and veg that children could snack on."*

*"Children use produce to cook with and sell at local market in town."*

*"Our students love getting involved in growing their own produce and turning these into soup etc."*

As evidenced in **Figure 11**, the need for resources and funding was obvious, with a significant number of responses explicitly mentioning their lack of tools, seeds, soil, equipment, or money, and many reporting that they had "no budget", or relied on donations.

*"We do not have equipment/seeds."*

*"Funding is so hard to improve things."*

*"Any help and advice would be greatly appreciated as we have a very limited budget."*

In addition to resources, many YEOs, including those with some experience already, also wanted new ideas and fresh inspiration on how to keep their gardening projects engaging and exciting for young people.

*"We would love to know more on developing it with shrub like plants that last all year."*

*"We are always on the look out for new resources for our secondary age gardeners to reference themselves on paper."*

*"We have a mosaic of habitats and pupils are actively involved in making changes but a fresh pair of eyes would be welcome. We would benefit from advice from an ecologist."*

A significant proportion of feedback also revealed a lack of gardening expertise, with YEOs frequently asking for guidance, advice, and structured information on what to plant, when to plant, and how to maintain their gardens.

*"We need structure about growing."*

*"We do not have the knowledge on what to plant and when."*

*"It would be lovely to open it up to the children... We'd love to learn as much as we can and get started."*

For schools, another concern was the timing and maintenance required for growing, with school holidays often clashing with harvest times, leading to wasted produce. Schools also wanted low-maintenance solutions and plant recommendations that fit the school year.

*"All other things are ready to harvest when we are on school holidays."*

*"Everything fruits during the summer holidays when people are away."*

*"How to keep things low cost... Difficulties with watering in holidays."*

Although not mentioned as frequently as other things, some YEOs consistently expressed a desire to use gardening as a tool for teaching, with their responses highlighting the importance of linking gardening to the curriculum, promoting healthy eating, and fostering a connection to nature.

*"This would help all sections with badge work etc."*

*"Growing to link food to plate is so important."*

*"I would like to develop this space into an area that incorporates as much of the Science curriculum as possible."*

Whilst, also, less frequent but still important, a need for engagement and community came through, involving specific groups like parents, local volunteers, and other schools.

*"We would like some ideas on ways to share our school garden with parents and carers."*

*"We are happy to work alongside other schools and keen to set up links."*

Figure 9: Type of Youth and Education Organisations that responded (N=257).

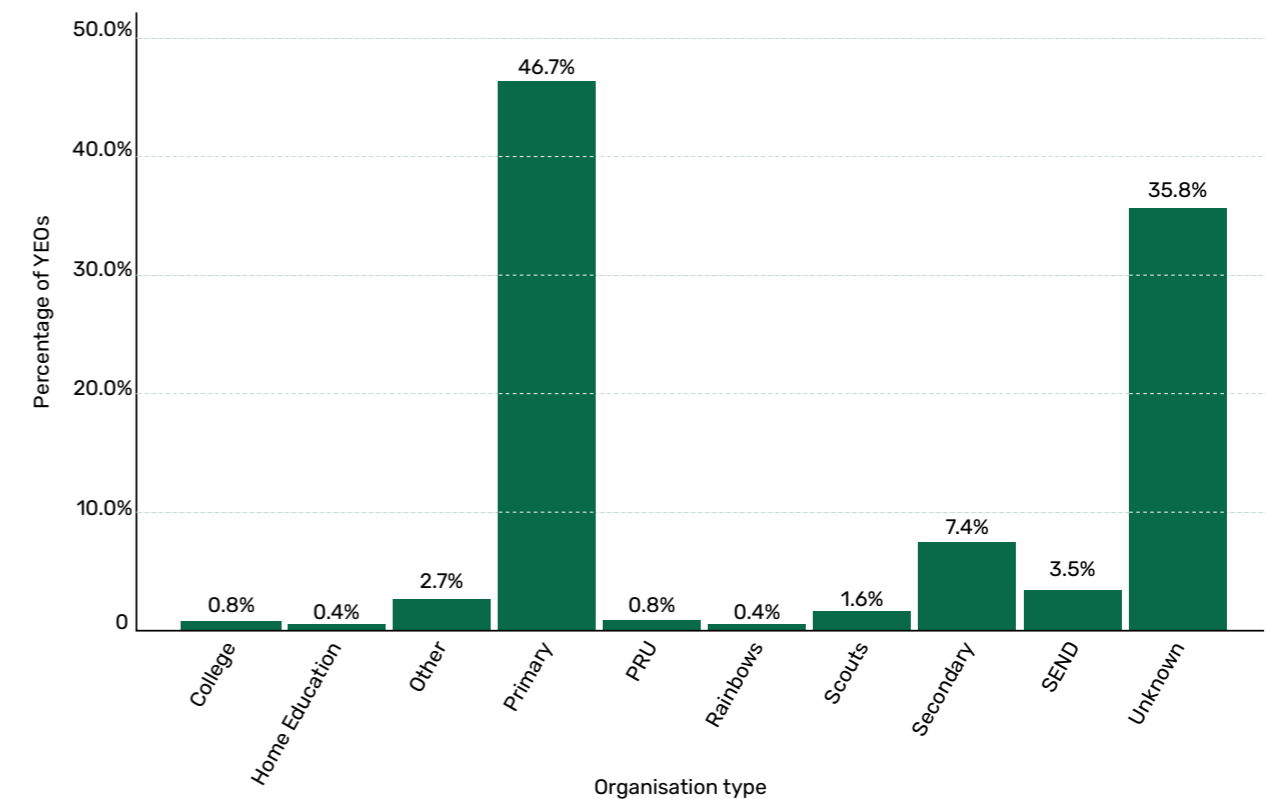


Figure 10: Frequencies (%) of schools already growing food.

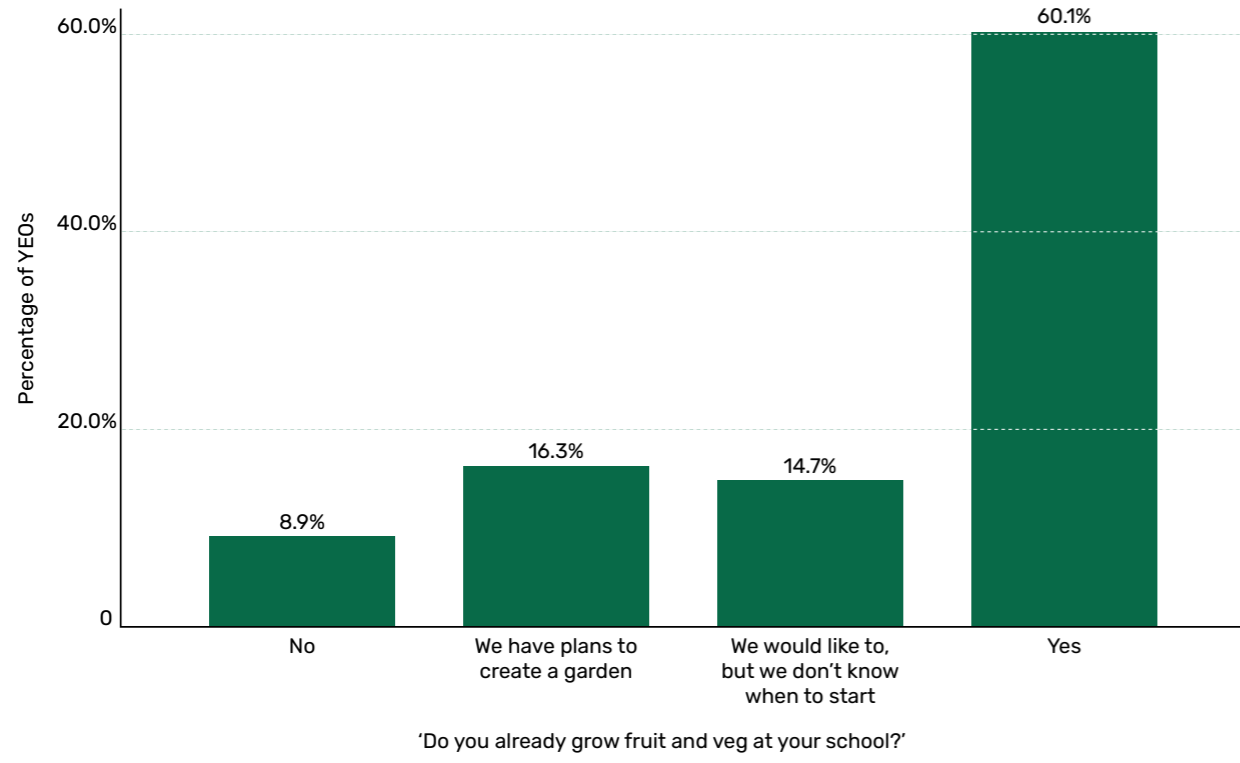
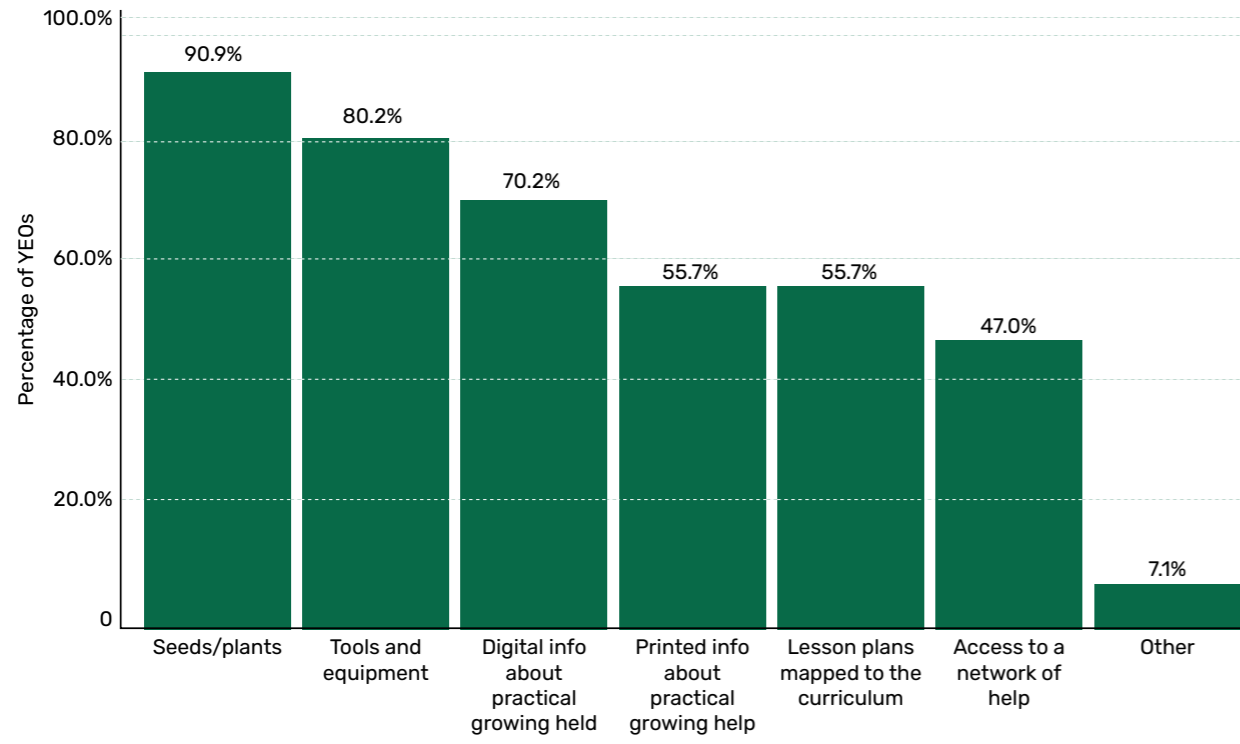


Figure 11: Areas of support needed for YEOs.



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### Creating the Digital Pack for YEOs and Schools

Utilising the feedback received from the N=257 organisations, and drawing on the expertise from all four partners involved in the project, two versions of a digital Schools Pack (a 2024 version and a later revised 2025 version), plus three optional downloads (sample budgets, a glossary, and growing calendar), were produced. **Figure 12** shows the percentage of YEOs who, out of the 21,000 on the mailing list and across the two versions of the pack, downloaded these resources (N=934 excluding duplicates). This represents a 4.5% response rate.

As an indication of geographic reach, **Figure 12** shows the uptake of YEOs by location. The category for Overseas included YEOs in Australia and Canada.

For the majority of YEOs who were located in England only (85%), and where accurate postcodes were provided (N=621), **Figure 13** shows an indication of geographic reach by IMD decile.



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Figure 12: Uptake of Coronation Gardens schools packs by location

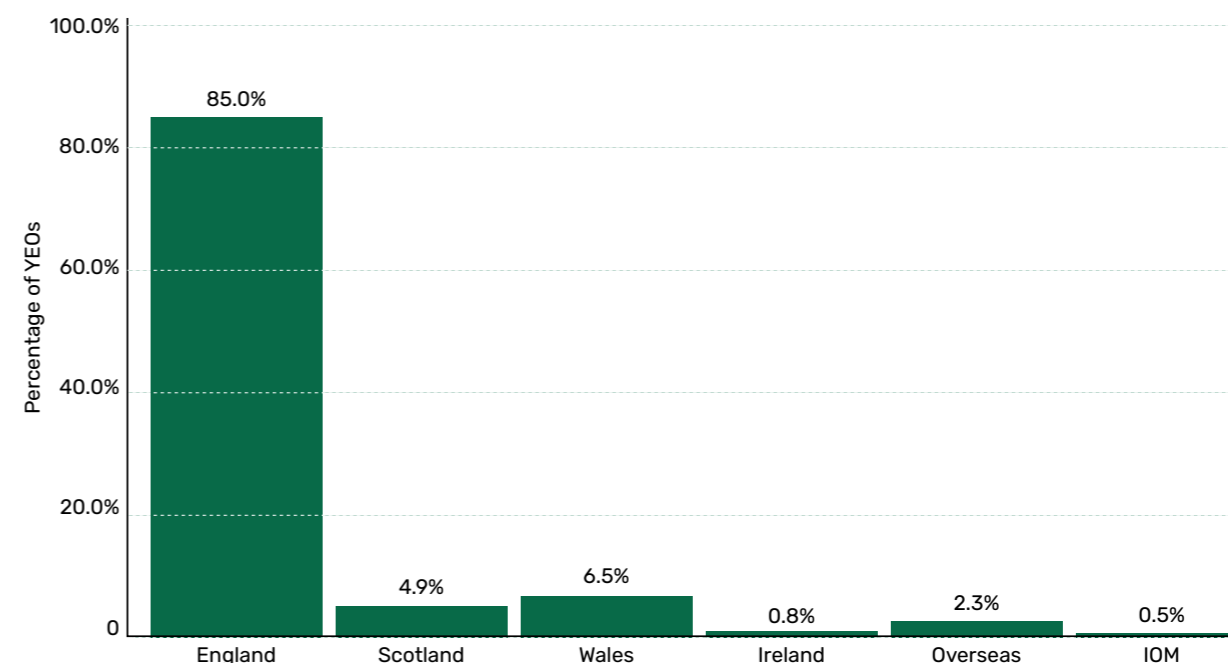
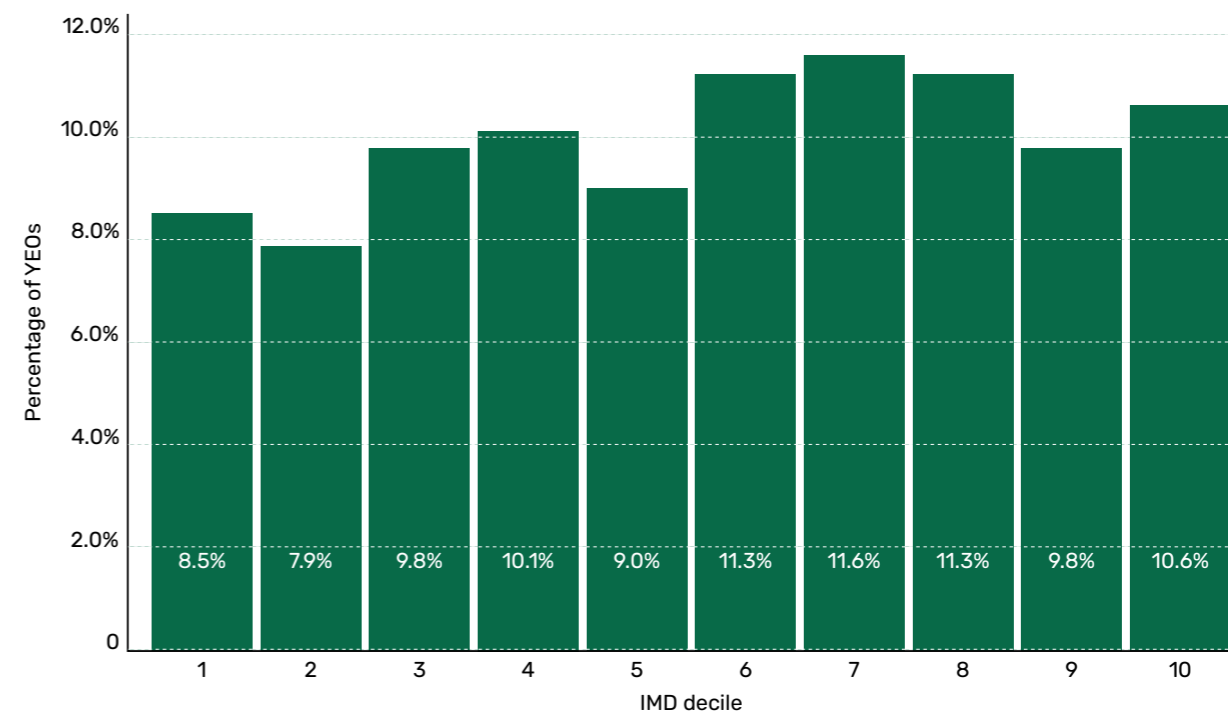


Figure 13: Showing uptake of Coronation Gardens packs by YEOs in England by IMD decile.



## Examples of Resources Created



**For schools**

### Your guide to growing food in a wildlife-friendly way




**2025**

[mycoronationgarden.org](http://mycoronationgarden.org)

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Remember this is just a guide – take into consideration your growing space and adapt timings as appropriate!

### Calendar

☀️ SOW OUTSIDE   🌱 SOW INSIDE/ UNDER COVER   🌿 PLANT OUT   🍷 HARVEST

AUTUMN TERM			SPRING TERM	
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☀️ Sow spring cabbage outside – you can harvest from April</li> <li>☀️ Sow radish outside in early September – you harvest as early as late October</li> <li>🍷 Pick the last of the apples</li> <li>🍷 Pick pears</li> <li>🍷 Harvest the last of the blackberries</li> <li>🍷 Harvest quince</li> <li>🍷 Harvest autumn-fruiting raspberries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☀️ Sow broad beans outside – you can harvest in May</li> <li>🍷 Pick pears</li> <li>🌱 Plant rhubarb crowns outside and harvest in spring every year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☀️ Sow broad beans outside – you can harvest in June</li> <li>🌱 Plant onion sets and garlic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌱 Sow tomatoes in a greenhouse, on a windowsill or in a sunny, warm spot – begin harvest in May/June</li> <li>🌱 Plant bare-root fruit trees and bushes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌱 Sow tomatoes in a greenhouse or sunny windowsill – begin harvest in May/June</li> <li>🌱 Sow carrots under protection of a cold frame or cloche outside – harvest in May/June</li> <li>🌱 Plant bare-root fruit trees and bushes</li> </ul>
Notes:				

### What to grow all year round - inside

**Herbs**  
Many herbs can be grown inside at any time, and they can be taken home over the summer if you have willing volunteers.

Easy to grow herbs include:

- Basil
- Mint
- Chives
- Lemon balm
- Thyme
- Fennel
- Dill and coriander need a fair bit of space and may be better in containers outside
- Parsley can be tricky to germinate so read the packet carefully

**Salad**  
Salads are great to grow inside and you can sow the seeds every few weeks for ongoing harvests.

Good salad options include:

- Lettuces (loads of types but choose leafy ones/cut and come again rather than the typical "head" lettuces like iceberg)
- Rocket
- Spinach
- Mustard
- Microgreens
- Cress

For a bit of fun and to re-use otherwise waste products you can grow cress, mustard and microgreens in eggshells!

Then branch out into pak choi, chard, and kale



well-established in the ground. However, they all grow well in pots and containers so perhaps someone could adopt them and take them home until September.

If you have a willing local volunteer who could water things over the summer break, then you can plant many things before you break up, though you will need to discuss this with the person responsible for site security and access over the holidays. You will be able to come back and harvest things in the Autumn Term, such as runner beans, French beans, beet, broccoli, sprouts, cauliflower, leek, onion, parsnip and squash (and what about planning for pumpkins at Halloween?)

**TOP TIP**

Consider reaching out to community groups involved in growing, such as Incredible Edible. You can [find your local group here](#), and they might have volunteers who are willing to help care for your plot during the summer months.

**What to do about the Summer Break?**

Growing perennial herbs, which grow year after year, can be tricky. Even though things like lavender, sage, rosemary, thyme and bay are Mediterranean and can survive some drought, they will need watering over the summer if you live in a hotter, drier area. In many places, they will survive if they are large plants outside and

**HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE RHUBARB TRIANGLE?**

There's a nine-square-mile area in West Yorkshire that once grew 90% of our rhubarb – and it's all done in complete darkness! "Rhubarb forcing sheds" are huge buildings that grow rhubarb by candlelight during the winter. It makes the rhubarb especially tender and sweet – perfect for a rhubarb crumble!

### Top five term-time plants for containers

**Choosing your container**

While we encourage a plastic-free lifestyle, it's important to remember that plastic was invented for a reason – longevity and durability. Those qualities make it a problem when it's used once and dumped, but actually if you are going to reuse plastic pots, there's no reason to avoid it. Terracotta pots, while they look great, are often not frost-hardy. A good quality plastic pot can be used again and again, and is a better investment than a cheap one that will break after one season.

Wooden containers can be built by anyone with minimal tools and skills – search online for instructions. Many schools may also find willing parents and carers that are happy to help out. However, wood can rot. Pressure-treated wood is a good choice as it

won't need maintenance, but it will need lining with plastic as the chemicals used to treat the wood can affect the plants. Timber designed to be used in outdoor construction (such as tanalised timber) is another good choice.

You may need to protect the wood with a wood stain (which soaks into the wood) or paint (this sits on the surface). Ask around as people often have half-used tins in their sheds, the perfect quantity for planters.

Use stainless steel screws that won't go rusty. And don't forget to add drainage holes!

Alternatively, if you are buying containers, don't just look in the usual garden centres. Many budget high street shops to supermarkets will have a range of useful containers and planters.



**TOP TIP**

There are lots of creative ways to reuse and upcycle containers, too. [Incredible Edible have a useful guide here](#).





\*To access these resources, simply make a free account



### Glossary

**Annual**  
A plant that grows and dies in one season.

**Aspect**  
The direction your plot faces. A south-facing aspect gets a lot of sun.

**Bare-root**  
Usually trees and bushes supplied dormant in winter, with no soil around the roots.

**Biodiversity**  
The variety of life in a habitat.

**Bolting**  
When a plant, usually vegetables and salads, produces flowers and seeds too early.

**Cane**  
Fruit bushes such as raspberries and blackberries grow on long stems called canes.

**Chitting**  
Putting seed potatoes in a tray to encourage them to grow small sprouts before planting.

**Cloche**  
Made of glass or plastic, to cover plants to protect them in early spring.

**Cold frame**  
A frame of wood and plastic or glass, like a very small unheated greenhouse, which protects plants when they are put outside for the first time.

**Direct sow**  
Sowing seeds straight outside where you want them to grow.

**Germination**  
When a seed starts to grow.

**Harden off**  
To get young plants used to growing outside, gradually.

**Hardy**  
A plant that is capable of living outside without protection.

**Hybrid/F1 hybrid**  
The first offspring from two distinct parent plants, which usually grow very well and are often pest-resistant. But the seeds of the offspring plant don't grow true and may not grow at all.

**Mulch**  
Material that is placed on the soil around plants. Often manure, compost or bark chippings or gravel; it can help to retain moisture and suppress weeds.

**Perennial**  
A plant that grows year after year.

**Pollination**  
When pollen is transferred between flowers, usually by the wind, insects or animals.

**Pot on**  
When a plant outgrows its container and is moved to a bigger one.

**Prick out**  
Planting out seedlings into bigger pots or trays for more space.

**Propagate**  
Any act of growing plants, from seeds, or cuttings, or other means.



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### Feedback from YEOs and Schools

Whilst feedback from schools was limited, the following highlight some of the benefits that being part of the Coronation Gardens project was able to bring.

For example, Finn Academy describes how the act of gardening was able to cultivate a positive emotional connection to nature in the children:

*"We are so overwhelmed with what the children have achieved through their love of growing fruit and vegetables so far."*

For one student, who managed to raise £120 for his school, the gardening project was also seen as an opportunity to teach children about fundraising and commerce:

*"My son... grew sunflowers to sell at his school summer fete, to raise money to buy bird boxes for the school (Bemerton St John Primary). His idea was surprisingly successful!"*

As something other schools had also reported wanting, one school (Damers First School) was able to use their gardening project to engage with and improve their wider community:

*"The children created a wildflower meadow in the community by picking seeds from wildflowers. They then wanted to educate the community on what they might find around them, raising money for a nature information board with QR code. This was unveiled a few weeks ago. The meadow is now known as Damers' Meadow!"*

This school also featured on the Coronation Gardens project website for their "holistic approach to food and gardening", another example of a way of sharing the success of the project with the community.

The sustainability benefits of the project are also highlighted in terms of the skills that children have developed for the future, and to make the world a better place to live:

*"All the skills learned in the school garden can help support the next generation to make our world better for everyone."*

Also related to skills, Poplars Farm Primary School described the key life skills their children developed, including social (teamwork) as well as practical skills:

*"We are soon to be starting (a very small for now, approximately six children) gardening club for the rest of the Autumn term, as there is plenty of tidying up to do along with some planting and arranging for new areas I am hoping to designate for growing."*

*"We have not started yet, hope to do so next week. We have a community garden which is overgrown, but I'm hoping to tidy it up and plant some bulbs now, veg, and spring flowers etc in there. We also have some new spaces coming up around the site, so I've just been hoping to get as much in as I can."*

### Section 3: Data from Coronation Gardens in Youth Education Organisations LOTTERY LEARNING OUTCOMES REFLECTION POINT

Lottery outcomes for Coronation Gardens						
Results section	Wider range of people involved in heritage.	Increased resilience among funded organisation.	Improved well-being for participants.	Development of new knowledge and skills.	Enhanced local environment.	Learning that leads to changes in ideas and actions.
Section 3: Coronation Gardens in Youth Education Organisations	Reach and demographics and geographical spread shown. Spread throughout all levels of IMD.	More sign-ups to newsletters. More awareness of partner's work and signposting.	Not explicitly measured - but case studies and spontaneous feedback show positive sentiment.	Food growing skills Schools Pack disseminated to nationally to 21,000 Youth Education Organisations.	Wildlife-friendly gardens pack information sent to Youth Education Organisation.	Behaviour change: peat-free, pesticide-free growing. Food, community gardens relevant to Youth, Education. Term time and available resources inspired.

### Results Section 4: Coronation Gardens in Prisons

One of the most innovative and potentially socially impactful strands to emerge from the Coronation Gardens project has been the development of partnerships work with prisons. While community food growing is already recognised for its benefits to health, social cohesion of the general public applying these principles to prisons has the potential to deliver lasting value for both prisoners and society. It must be noted that the work is still in progress and cannot be reported on fully in this current evaluation. What follows is a narrative of what the evaluators have been able to gather from the project partners in terms of the progress made with this work; this is not a formal evaluation of the work as the feedback from participants (staff/prisoners) is not yet available.

**Evidence base and wider context:** The Coronation Gardens prisons work builds on earlier evidence of the benefits of horticulture in secure environments.<sup>18</sup> Garden Organic's previous project at HMP Rye Hill<sup>19</sup> demonstrated positive outcomes for prisoner well-being, skills development, and employability. Independent academic commentary has similarly argued for evidence-based policies to support reintegration of ex-offenders, noting the role of practical, skill-based interventions in improving life chances.

Beyond individual outcomes, prison horticulture projects can contribute to societal value by reducing reoffending, enhancing community safety, and building pathways into employment sectors that face significant labour shortages (e.g. food production, land management, environmental restoration).<sup>19</sup>

A Coronation Gardens project pilot, though modest in scale, to date shows strong alignment with these wider social benefits.

**Role of partners:** The prisons work grew directly from the central aims of Coronation Gardens: connecting people with nature, promoting sustainable food growing, and creating opportunities for skills development. With support from The Wildlife Trusts, Garden Organic and the WI, the project set out to provide gardening skills that could enrich prisoners' daily lives, improve well-being, and support employability upon release.

The prisons strand exemplifies the collaborative strengths of the Coronation Gardens partnership:

- The WI provided entry points into prisons, mobilised volunteers, and sustained relationships with staff at HMP Foston Hall.
- Garden Organic offered technical expertise, delivering accredited-quality training and providing guidance from past prison projects.
- The Wildlife Trusts coordinated delivery, administered funding, and connected local Trusts with prison partners to expand provision.
- Incredible Edible, whilst not directly involved in the prisons strand, contributed information and knowledge from their website to the wider project.

The first piece of prisons work for Coronation Gardens was started at HMP Foston Hall, a women's prison in Derbyshire, led by the WI. The prison has extensive kitchen gardens, but these lacked resources, seeds, and structured support. While accredited Level 1 and 2 horticulture courses existed, there was no provision for shorter-term prisoners. Coronation Gardens partners worked together to form valuable relationships with prison staff and laid the basis for piloting a food-growing support project.

A significant milestone in this work was the delivery of a one-day Principles of Organic Gardening workshop at Garden Organic for WI volunteers and prison staff from Foston Hall. This training combined hands-on horticultural learning with discussion of the challenges of food growing in secure environments. The case study recorded by Garden Organic shows the work carried out:



Case study

### HMP Foston Hall from Garden Organic

**“Garden Organic welcomed a group of staff and local volunteers from HMP Foston Hall for a one-day Principles of Organic Gardening workshop to help them transform a large area of currently unused land into a productive food growing space.**

*The group spent the day in our organic demonstration garden, getting hands on with practical organic growing skills and learning from the methods we use to build soil health, encourage biodiversity, and foster a healthy and accessible growing space. We also discussed the best ways to engage others in growing and how to anticipate some of the challenges when growing within a prison setting.*

*The group had a great session commenting on how they were inspired to get started with their new growing space and also appreciated the time to get to know each other better ahead of starting on the transformation project.”*

Some prison staff feedback included:

*“Good collaboration between Garden Organic, Wildlife Trust and Foston Staff to give us both the theoretical and practical knowledge to take forward into the prison environment.”*

*“Lovely, relaxed atmosphere. Friendly, supportive, and inspirational.”*

*“Engaging, honest, inspiring, and informal session. We touched on lots of different topics and learnt things to change our own practices. Enthused about the project.”*

The HMP Foston Hall training session equipped volunteers and staff with both technical knowledge and confidence to support prisoners in starting new growing projects. It also reinforced the partnership model, with Garden Organic providing expertise, The Wildlife Trusts facilitating delivery, and WI volunteers acting as the vital link into prisons.

To complement the training, a support pack has been developed for use at HMP Foston Hall (See **Appendix 4**). This resource has been designed to help participants reflect on their achievements, articulate transferable skills, and frame these in ways relevant to employers or further education. The pack is being printed by the Prison Service's in-house printers and will be offered to all UK prisons.

Since 2024, the Coronation Gardens work has gradually extended to other prisons. New engagement has been initiated with HMP

Peterborough, where local Wildlife Trust staff will provide expert advice, and exploratory discussions have been held with HMP Kirkham and HMP Onley. Recent additional funding in 2025 provided crucial flexibility, enabling WI volunteers and prison staff to attend training, supplying seeds, and supporting the development of tailored materials.

Most recently, Lancashire Wildlife Trust has begun using Coronation Gardens funding to support prisoners on day release at HMP Kirkham, building on their established work with the prison. The aim is to co-develop resources that help individuals transition from prison to community volunteering and, potentially, employment in food-growing or conservation settings. This represents an important step towards embedding employability outcomes into the work.

Planned and future work: At the time of writing this report, the Coronation Gardens prisons strand is still in its early stages. Current plans include:

- Distribution to all UK national prisons of the reflective support pack originally designed for HMP Foston Hall.
- Delivering additional Garden Organic training sessions for prison staff at HMP Onley, funded through flexible grant support.
- Developing co-designed toolkits and resources with Lancashire Wildlife Trust to help day release prisoners at HMP Kirkham sustain their skills and volunteering post-release.
- Exploring replication of the model at one or two additional prisons, as identified in project updates to the Heritage Fund.

Prisoners' experiences in the gardens will also be documented and translated into a skills framework. By encouraging participants to record their roles, personal skills (e.g. punctuality, teamwork, initiative), and knowledge (e.g. health and safety, sustainable practices), the project can help individuals demonstrate employability and readiness for future opportunities. These reflective tools will form a cornerstone of the project's legacy as they will now be adopted across the prison estate.



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#### Section 4: Data from Coronation Gardens in Prisons LOTTERY LEARNING OUTCOMES REFLECTION POINT

	Lottery outcomes for Coronation Gardens					
<b>Results section.</b>	Wider range of people involved in heritage.	Increased resilience among funded organisation.	Improved well-being for participants.	Development of new knowledge and skills.	Enhanced local environment.	Learning that leads to changes in ideas and actions.
<b>Section 4: Coronation Gardens in Prisons.</b>	Reaching people in prison from wide variety of backgrounds (demographics unknown).	Working partnership between four partners to develop this new strand of innovative work.	Data as yet unavailable - warm sentiment from case studies.	Food growing skills work developed by Garden Organic and WI.	Data as yet unavailable.	Data as yet unavailable.

## Results Section 5: Focus Group and Interview with Representatives from Each of the Four Partners Involved with Carrying out the Coronation Gardens Project

One focus group, which lasted approximately 50 minutes and was attended by representatives from three of the four partner organisations. One semi-structured interview, which lasted approximately 20 minutes and was attended by one representative from the one partner organisation unable to join the focus group. The aim of these meetings was to document the experiences of the four partner organisations who were part of the project and, in line with the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcome, explore whether their experience had enabled them as “funded organisations to become more resilient”.

Using a semi-structured approach around four main question areas: what are the main legacies of the project, what worked well, what were any challenges/barriers, and what would you change (see **Appendix 6** for questions asked), thematic analysis of responses received identified two overarching themes: Relationships and Connections; and Project Management and Communication. These are explained further below.

### Theme 1: Relationships and Connection

Although one partner organisation described it as being like a ‘shotgun marriage’, one of the main themes, and a key legacy of the project noted by all four partner organisations, was how the project had acted as a ‘catalyst’ to bring four different groups together which otherwise might not have collaborated formally:

*“I think one of the main sort of outputs, I suppose ... is the connections that we’ve been able to make.”*

*“I think you end up in meetings with people. So, it’s not that you don’t know different organisations and stuff like that, but X is right. You do sort of discuss things, but you need a catalyst, don’t you? You need something [like] that to get on.”*

The formation of relationships and connections across partners had been important for making the case for food and nature and, most importantly, how one does not have to come at the cost of the other:

*“The main legacies are those relationships that have been formed at the grassroots... it has helped us start to make the case for how food and nature are not opposed to each other.”*

The project had also provided an opportunity for the partner organisations to get to know each other, what each organisation does, what makes it ‘tick’ and more about its members:

*“I love that we’ve learned so much more about all of you as organisations, not just what your remits are and your focuses [...] what your strategies are, but also what makes you tick, what you want to achieve, and about your members and your supporters. And I think it really gave us an opportunity to work out different ways through our communications of how you can bring different networks of people together around a shared cause.”*

Despite some not being appropriate for every partner organisation, connecting with each other had also provided opportunities to share ideas:

*“So, I think a legacy, which I would hope will come out of this is ... just facilitate idea sharing. What works in one place won’t work in another place, but being able to make those connections, I think, should be a really key legacy.”*

And, for some organisations, the project had enabled them to make connections with other organisations (e.g. the British Legion) which, as a result, had helped them attract new and different audiences:

*“And then we’ve found one of the great outcomes is to be able to link up with the other organisations. So, having that connection has been great. It’s led to a connection with the British Legion. So, for a small charity like us, that’s really great. And it’s been good to get out messages in front of all sorts of different new audiences via those partners.”*

Having a common platform that allowed partner organisations to get in front of different audiences had, also, inspired existing members as well as new audiences, and with more people wanting to hear more about the partner organisations themselves.

For two of the smaller partner organisations this had increased their number of sign-ups quite substantially:

*“I had a look earlier and we had a couple of thousand new people sign up to hear from us, so that’s a real benefit.”*

Also, one of the larger partners (the WI) had an impressive additional sign up to their newsletter.

*“And we got just over 1,400 new people signing up to our newsletter.”*

Not surprisingly, the highest number of sign-ups reported for the WI was between June-August 2023, and particularly in July, the month after the project was launched.

Whilst the project had created new sign-ups for those partner organisations where growing food was not their key message, however, for those where it was business as usual, the project wasn’t perceived as doing anything new. What it did do for these organisations, however, was to get audiences

doing more and created an awareness of what was already happening:

*“I don’t think our involvement led to our audience doing more. I think it might have led to other audiences doing more and having more awareness, which is great. But I couldn’t put my finger on any evidence to show that more community gardening ... more food growing happened. I think there was potentially just more awareness of what was already happening.”*

The project was, also, already showing signs of sustainability. For example, plans for future relationships between the partner organisations and prisons were already in progress, which one partner organisation described as their reward for all the hard work they had done:

*“It has facilitated a conversation between the WI and the Wildlife Trusts with supporting them with a gardening project as well.”*

*“Four of our WI members were trained by, I think it, was Garden Organic ... to help look after gardens at a woman’s prison. So they were trained and the prison they’ve been linked to is Foston Hall. They’re currently going through security checks. So the actual next part hasn’t happened yet but that, we are hoping, will be a really significant legacy.”*

The creation of the Coronation Gardens website and its availability as a repository for resources had also been a source of inspiration for future projects too:

*“Our education arm is the WI learning hub. And it’s the hub that provided the recipes and they got their link onto the Coronation Gardens website. So, from our point of view, that’s good to sort of get that out there because the education resources on there is for everyone not only WI members.”*

Continuing the website for a further five years was also seen as a key legacy of the project and, for one partner organisation in particular, this had given them some purpose:

*“I know they’re going to make a website that’s going to be up and running for the next five years ... it’s great to have that legacy and all that sort of content that we input is still up there and being useful.”*

The Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature Community Food Growing Report<sup>13</sup> had also made the partners more resilient and this was seen as an essential resource they could use for sustainability too. For example, when applying for funding and to support them with what they might go on and do:

*“The first thing is the evidence report that was pulled together. I think it’s really important that we understand what it actually takes for communities to be able to create these growing spaces, the*

*pressures it puts them under. We learned about the downsides of this, people feeling that they could burn out, the responsibilities that it carries with it, as well as the great things of what people grow and how they bond and the social cohesion that comes from it.”*

*“Every one of us as partners can take that report and use chunks of it as evidence for why I have come for this funding.”*

In addition to showcasing what had ‘worked well’ for growing food and nature, this report had also been able to provide an honest look at the realities of community growing and what it takes to do it well, which was deemed essential when thinking about what to do next.

In summary, within this theme it is clear that the Coronation Gardens project served as an important catalyst for the partners, allowing valuable relationships and connections to be made and across organisations that might not have otherwise collaborated formally. These connections also allowed the four partners to learn more about each other’s missions, strategies, and the challenges their members face and, for one, had led to some new relationships with outside groups being formed, which further helped the partners reach new audiences.

The collaboration which evolved also helped the partners, collectively, make a case for food and nature, and to demonstrate that food production and nature preservation are not mutually exclusive, or should be in competition with each other. This is a key legacy that can be used to advocate for future projects.

The project website had also provided a shared platform that allowed the partners to be introduced to wider audiences, resulting in a substantial increase in sign-ups for two of the smaller organisations. Also, while the behaviour of some existing audiences may not have been changed, it had successfully raised awareness about what was already happening.

### Theme 2: Project Management and Communication

Very much aligned to the power of having a shared project platform, and one which, for this project, highlights some negatives as well as several positives, a second theme to come out from the thematic analysis was that relating to project management and communication.

To place this theme into context, as described previously in the description of the roles of the partners in the project in the introduction, it is important to point out that The Wildlife Trusts was the only organisation to actually receive any funding

from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. There were also constraints to this in that the funding envelope covered just the needs of the central project management which, as a result, created some tension across the four partner organisations. The Wildlife Trusts commented:

*"We were trapped by that ... we had no way of distributing funds because all of it had to be committed to central project management delivery."*

Another downside for those partners who didn't get any funding, was that it created a massive workload challenge for everyone, which was particularly problematic for the smaller charities who had limited numbers of staff:

*"A budget would have been great and what might seem like a small pot of money to [The] Wildlife Trust, would have been a big pot of money for us... And that's a significant project for a charity of our size. So I think that created a challenge from the off and it created a bit of tension internally as to how we resourced it."*

*"We didn't get any funding and we appreciate the funding was very small and we appreciate [The] Wildlife Trust was the lead charity. It created a lot of workload alongside what we already had."*

The lack of funding also created tension between how best to use the resources that were available and, for some partners, which departments across their organisations they could draw on for support:

*"We had to be very careful to manage workload. We're a really small team and have got limited resources."*

*"...generating work but there being no funding for it. So it was just adding to a workload. It also made it difficult to ask for input from other departments because it was asking them to do more work to create something that could fit in with the Coronation Gardens."*

One partner organisation also described how not having any resources was 'naive':

*"I would say the fact that we were called upon to engage with no resource whatsoever actually ... was a bit naive. So, I think in the future, if we are going to build good working relationships, we need to resource them properly and I think we weren't in a position to do that."*

Being the only organisation to get any funding also created some tension for The Wildlife Trusts directly themselves, both in terms of the work they had to do as well as how they felt working with the partners:

*"It would have been nice to have a little bit more help so that we could have had a more equal partnership because what that then means is that*

*the organisation that's gone out and had to find the original bit of money, you end up with a lot of work because we've got the project to manage and stuff like that, and responsibility. But it made...it meant that we did it, actually, on such a shoestring we couldn't share that money properly across the partners."*

Not being equal partners financially also meant that the project's success was heavily reliant on the goodwill of the unfunded partners.

*"I think we have to acknowledge the absolute goodwill of Women's Institute, Garden Organic, and Incredible Edible because without their goodwill, this would not have worked."*

Another area of tension relating to the project management and communication was the top-down approach to project management:

*"Regardless of what your workload is, you just get told to do it."*

One partner organisation commented on how they hadn't been consulted in terms of the deliverables:

*"We didn't play much of a part in what the project was delivering in some respects, on the ground. So we were sent things at the proofing stage to say we've produced this booklet, or we've produced this and here it is at the proofing stage. But I don't remember ever being sort of asked for input at the stage of when it was produced, if that makes sense."*

By being top-down, there was also some misalignment in terms of whether they were partners in a community-led project or not. Indeed, and as evidenced below, it felt more like a communications project, and that the way it was funded didn't help with this too:

*"It's pitched as a community project, but it was top-down. This is what's going to happen and it was all comms."*

*"And I think all of us in this room know that a community project needs to be led by a community. So, from the very off, it was like, this doesn't quite feel right. And I think that's kind of one of the underlying tensions of it."*

*"...really it was a communications program and it was not a community-led project. That was not possible in the structure that we were given or the funding that we had."*

The top-down structure, coupled with the rapid pace of the project, had also made it difficult for some partners to align their own campaigns and messaging, which had led to some missed opportunities and feeling a lack of inclusive representation in the final reports and media:

*"So, in some instances, our messaging didn't get into those booklets, or those pieces of information, and I think that was a sort of missed opportunity in some respects. And from just a social point of view, I would have liked to have seen more sort of sharing and cross promotion of content across the social media channels."*

For others, finding this 'fit' had been more of a challenge. Also, without having the finances and staff available to support them, this had resulted in them becoming 'less visible', which had caused some further tension too:

*"So, this didn't comfortably sit anywhere. So there were things that other teams might have been able to get involved in, but they're so 100% delivery against a funded project that kind of tied the hands on that a little bit."*

Despite the negative aspects to project management and communication, which in themselves should be seen as good lessons to be learned, there were also some very positive aspects to the project management and communication felt by the partner organisations too. In particular, the strengths, level of support and qualities of the project manager 'on the ground' could not be commended enough. They also felt that the project manager had showed them 'great equity' and the 'value' in everybody:

*"And I think the fact that we had a project manager who really worked in that way and gave equal value, despite the fact that we're all different sizes, shapes, forms, is really important."*

The 'power' of a good project manager was also perceived as being essential for keeping everything going and for helping partners manage their additional workloads:

*"...what worked well from our point of view... the sort of project management from X just kept everything driving forward."*

The time they took for 'a bit more understanding' made the partnership feel more 'meaningful' too:

*"And I think by having the regular meetings, a consistent contact, and that time for a bit more understanding of what everyone needs, has worked a lot better. It feels like it's been a more meaningful partnership, or there's kind of the potential there, I think, because of that working. And I'd echo what X said that the sort of project management from X just kept everything driving forward, which is really great. Everyone's got a busy life, so it was good to have that person keeping everything on track."*

Like the 'power of a platform', therefore, it was clear that there was a 'power' from having a good project manager for the partner organisations too.

In summary, therefore, this theme identified both positives as well as negatives but which, in themselves, are important lessons to be learned:

First, the project faced significant challenges due to its structure, which created tension and workload issues among the partner organisations. The project's funding model was also a major source of tension which meant the partner organisations, and particularly the smaller charities, had to take on a significant amount of extra work. In addition to leading to an unequal partnership, and with a lot of reliance on goodwill, this also left The Wildlife Trusts feeling uncomfortable with the arrangement too.

The project's top-down approach to management also caused some significant tension, with the partner organisations not feeling consulted on the deliverables, excluded from decision making, and with being simply told, and with no choice, what they had to do. This also led to a significant disconnect, as the project was marketed as a "community project" but was executed more like a "communications program." The rigid structure and fast pace also resulted in missed opportunities for partners to align their own messaging and campaigns, and to be represented, with equity, in the final reports and some media.

Despite these challenges, however, there were clearly some positive lessons learned too. How the project's success was greatly aided by the positive qualities of the project manager, who was consistently and highly commended for their professionalism and organisational skills.

# Discussion

The Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature project was a multifaceted, ambitious initiative designed to create a legacy of sustainable food growing and biodiversity enhancement across the UK. This evaluation demonstrates that this project has made important potential contributions at multiple levels—individual, organisational and societal. The evidence collected here forms part of a patchwork of evaluation materials gathered from diverse sources which, together, present a broad picture of what has been achieved, and where the project may have lasting impact. In addition, this evaluation can point to valuable lessons learned from this project from the four partners' experience of working together and the challenges that remain to be overcome.

The breadth of the Coronation Gardens project was impressive:

- 3,666 members of the public pledged their gardens for the sustainable food growing approach.
- 21,000 Youth and Education Organisations were encouraged to embed food growing into teaching and extracurricular activities and 934 schools downloaded the information packs to help them grow food.
- A new strand of work was initiated in four prisons to upskill people who could return to society with food growing skills and, potentially, lead to future employment.
- In addition to the above, four national partners collaborated on implementation and developed working relationships.

These different strands, when combined with contextual evidence from the wider literature, underscore the project's significance for community well-being, nature recovery, and sustainable living.

## Section 1 and 2: Outputs of the Project and Public Pledges and Behaviour Change

A wide range of high-quality resources such as a gardening guide, school pack, recipes, webinars, articles, and children's craft and science projects, were developed for the Coronation Gardens. In addition, a dedicated website was created to provide a lasting legacy for the project, ensuring its impact continues well beyond the two years of initial funding.

Over 3,000 members of the public pledged their gardens, with responses spread across all areas of

the UK (most from the south of England), and with all IMD levels of deprivation being represented. Therefore, this project demonstrates good national reach and an ability to mobilise a wide audience, echoing previous research that shows that mass participation in nature-based campaigns can potentially generate meaningful engagement and awareness. Most pledges from the general public were from gardens at home, confirming the importance of domestic green space as a site for biodiversity and sustainable practices. Note, however, these pledgers do not represent the wider community garden projects that were referenced in the previous report for Coronation Gardens Community Food Growing.<sup>13</sup>

The follow-up survey at three months does provide some evidence of behaviour change in line with the Coronation Gardens project aims. However, these results should be treated with caution as they are limited by a low response rate, due to technical challenges, and only represent a small proportion of the overall pledging participants. For the group providing their three month follow-up data, participants reported high engagement with peat-free and pesticide-free gardening, bird feeding, and food growing. Importantly, there were positive correlations between connection to nature and reported happiness. This was found to be the case with stronger associations for individuals living in more deprived areas. This reinforces the evidence that nature contact may confer disproportionate well-being gains for disadvantaged groups (Geary et al., 2023).<sup>20</sup> It was also very interesting to see that, in this data set, people living in more deprived areas felt a stronger connection to nature than those in less deprived areas. This provides a powerful argument for directing funding toward community-led food growing and nature projects in deprived areas. Note, overall, there was a high overall mean score of connection to nature at 5.87 out of possible 7 overall – indicating that all the sample were connected to nature at a high level.

Further caution should be urged with the results relating to the garden pledgers in this sample and that they may already have been interested in growing food in gardens, and that this was what attracted them to look at the Coronations Gardens communications in the first place. This issue was also raised in the focus group by the WI and Garden Organic, who commented on how they could not claim the project had increased interest in growing as their members were already interested in this topic, although they did both also identify an increase in sign-ups to newsletters around the time of Coronation Gardens pledges launching.



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Overall, these emerging findings demonstrate progress across several of the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes:

- A wider range of people were involved in heritage;
- Pledges supported the development of new knowledge and skills;
- Participants reported changes that led to improved well-being (using our proxy measure of happiness); and
- Pledges enhanced local environments, e.g. evidence of behavioural shifts towards peat-free and pesticide-free practices indicates learning that leads to changes in ideas and actions.

Taken together, Section 1 and 2 data illustrate that the project successfully reached a large pledging audience and encouraged pro-environmental behaviours, and potentially enhanced an already existing nature connection. However, the results must be interpreted cautiously given missing three month follow-up data from many pledgers and the limitations of correlational analysis.

## Section 3: Youth and Education Organisations

Engagement with schools and other Youth and Education Organisations (YEOs) was another key output from the Coronation Gardens project. The survey of YEOs achieved a good response rate, with findings highlighting the enthusiasm and clear needs of YEOs. Primary schools formed the largest group of respondents, many of which were already growing food, or planning to do so. The overwhelming demand for practical resources and with limited budgets—particularly for seeds, tools, and curriculum-linked guidance—demonstrates both the appetite for, and barriers to implementing food and wildlife gardening in education. One of the strengths of the Coronation Gardens project from the perspective of the partners was that it provided an opportunity to learn what the challenges are for growers, so getting to understand the barriers is also a successful outcome of the project too. A useful guide for YEOs for gardens for schools was produced by the project team and refined after one year to improve it. This resource, and the accompanying supportive materials, is a key legacy resulting from the Coronation Gardens initiative.

Feedback from schools shows that Coronation Gardens helped cultivate not only practical skills but also wider educational and community benefits. For example, projects linked gardening with community engagement, and student well-being. This aligns with



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existing research which highlights the role of school gardening in developing transferable skills, promoting healthier diets, and supporting children's mental health.<sup>21</sup> The qualitative responses also point to the potential for gardens to foster biodiversity awareness and community connectedness, in line with broader evaluations of "eco-school" models.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes, it can be stated that this strand demonstrates the development of new knowledge and skills among pupils and staff, and a clear contribution to enhanced local environments. Although systematic measures of well-being were not collected from YEOs, spontaneous feedback indicates that schools recognised the contribution of gardening to well-being and social connectedness. Importantly, uptake across different types of YEOs with different IMD deciles also reflects progress towards engaging a wider range of people in heritage.

Although still early in development, the work with YEOs demonstrates that Coronation Gardens has the potential to strengthen long-term education for sustainability. With adequate resourcing, and further sustained support from the partners, this strand of work could have a significant impact on both young people's skills and local environmental improvement.

#### Section 4: Prisons Engagement

Perhaps the most innovative component of the Coronation Gardens project has been its work supporting prisons to provide gardening skills to women prisoners to help with future rehabilitation and well-being. Early case studies from HMP Foston Hall and emerging potential partnerships at HMP Peterborough, HMP Onley, and HMP Kirkham illustrate the feasibility and appeal of embedding horticulture in secure settings. Garden Organic's training sessions for prison staff and volunteers, including those from other partner organisations, provided both technical skills and inspiration, while the development of reflective support packs (with help from the WI) is likely to strengthen employability outcomes for prisoners.

The prisons engagement project is consistent with previous evidence that horticultural programmes in prisons can potentially improve well-being, reduce stress, and provide transferable skills that support reintegration (Farrier et al. 2019)<sup>22</sup>. Also, it could be argued that prison-based food growing could contribute to broader societal benefits by reducing reoffending and in skilling people to work in food production and environmental management jobs in the future. However, due to these projects being in their infancy, no further data on the impact of the prisons engagement work currently exists, and we do not yet know the impact of this section of the

Coronation Gardens work. This project represents a tantalising strand of work that could potentially receive further funding and represent a whole new project in itself to take a deeper and longitudinal dive into the impact of this innovative work. Also, please note, the prison strand aligns closely with National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes – but as there is no wider impact or feedback data available, it is premature to comment on how these outcomes have been met. At the time of writing this report a further piece of funding has been allocated to HMP Kirkham and therefore more work will occur in this area.

#### Section 5: Reflections from the Four Partners in Coronation Gardens

It was important to get the views of the four partners involved in Coronation Gardens as their coming together resulted in the creation of this ambitious and wide-ranging project. Capturing their experience also allows future projects, like this one, to be delivered in a more improved way by learning from the teams' experience.

Feedback was obtained by gathering qualitative data from a focus group and an interview with the four partners. Two key themes emerged from the data: "Relationships and Connection" and "Project Management and Communication".

In terms of "Relationships and Connection", the Coronation Gardens project was 'catalytic' in forging new relationships between the four organisations and in demonstrating that food growing and nature recovery are mutually reinforcing goals that can be shared. For the partners, connecting on the project allowed new networking between the organisations that would not have happened otherwise and created opportunities for future collaboration. This project also expanded their audiences by providing new subscribers to newsletters. It also raised awareness of what is happening, and provided inspiration for those already growing food too.

For "Project Management and Communication", the feedback from the partners showed tensions stemming from the nature of the project having a top-down funding and management structure. Reliance on goodwill, working for free, an unequal distribution of resources between the four partners, and lack of partner input into key deliverables and decisions made were perceived as negative and constraining factors. Notwithstanding this, the partners could not commend the project manager who brought the four partners together, listened to them, valued their opinions and allowed their voices to be heard, highly enough. This, in itself, also highlighted the importance of having someone able to do this and of the importance for success that it brings.

It should also be noted that the original Phase 2

project plan did state that businesses would be harnessed to push the project forward by asking for their private funding. However, this part of the project was not possible, probably due to time and resource constraints on the part of the partners, therefore this further source of support was not unlocked.

Despite the strains of the project, however, overall the partners agreed that the Coronation Gardens project did produce some good quality outputs in terms of the project's legacy resources—particularly the Coronation Gardens website, schools pack, and the emerging prisons work. The fact that the website will be maintained for five years, and connects and amplifies the work of the partners is a very positive outcome for all too. Partners did reflect that the Coronations Gardens project was actually more of a communications project rather than a community actions project and, perhaps, initially that the scope of the project had seemed wider than it finally achieved. However, the promised long legacy of the communications may lead to future community action after the end of the project.

In terms of the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes, the partners were able to demonstrate increased resilience by strengthening collaborative networks and providing lasting resources and, in particular, the evidence and impetus to support future applications for funding.

#### Limitations of the Evaluation

While the evaluation provides rich insights, there are limitations that must be acknowledged. First, gaps exist in Section 2 data: due to a technical error with the website, not all pledged gardeners were surveyed at three months, resulting in low follow-up response rates. Second, participants were already biased to be interested in gardens for food and nature as participants were not sampled from the wider population and were those already interested in these agendas. Third, we do not have any systematically collected impact data for the work in the context of YEOs and prisons data as this was not possible within the limited nature of the scope of the work.

These limitations highlight the need for further work to be carried out in these areas to see the ripple effects of the Coronation Gardens project.

# Conclusion

Coronation Gardens was an ambitious project which aimed to support the general public to be more engaged with growing food in a nature friendly way. Projects with YEOs and prisons offer an exciting potential for wider societal benefits from this work. Further longitudinal data collected to show the wider impacts of behaviour change and measurements of well-being are needed to show the impact of this project. Lessons should be learned from the four partners taking part in this project as there was inequality in resources across the partners leading to tension and limitations for the project. Overall, the Coronation Gardens project leaves a good long-term legacy of well-crafted communication assets like the website, guide for small gardens, guide for schools and a developing resource pack for prisons. Hopefully future funding can be found to take some of this inspiring work forward and further benefit communities and nature.

# Recommendations

1. Strengthen resourcing and infrastructure for future projects involving partners. Adequate funding, and equitable distribution of resources, greater involvement in decision-making, and dedicated project management staff within the organisation are essential to avoid over-reliance on goodwill, working for free, creating tension and limiting the scale of the work. Connections to funding from commercial businesses may be useful for further more sustainable development.
2. Invest in follow-up and longitudinal data collection. Systematic monitoring of pledgers over time, with adequate baseline and follow-up data collection time points was needed. YEO and prison projects would provide stronger evidence of sustained behaviour change and well-being impact. However, these are large projects in themselves and each warrant a separate evaluation.
3. Expand the prison strand. This piece of work seems to be a tantalising legacy of the Coronation Gardens project which could result in real societal and environmental benefits. The pilot work established by the good-willed partners needs to be supported by finding further funding to extend and embed horticultural interventions across prisons, linking to employability frameworks.
4. Deepen education engagement. Further funding could be sought to provide schools with the resources they are asking for (seeds, tools, training) and to integrate gardening into curricula to maximise benefits for skills and well-being. Connections to pre-existing community food growing projects, e.g. Nextdoor Nature from The Wildlife Trusts, could be aligned to this work.
5. Ensure inclusivity and accessibility. Future projects should ensure that participants reflect diverse communities and nations, addressing feedback about inclusivity. Make sure any future projects actively recruit people from wider communities who may not already be interested in nature and food growing.



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# Appendix 1 - Coronation Gardens Pledge



- About Us
- Get involved
- Getting started
- Food for you
- Food for nature
- Garden wildlife

Home / Get involved



## Pledge to create a Coronation Garden For Food and Nature and receive a free wildlife gardening guide.

Feed yourself and your wild neighbours. It doesn't have to take a lot of space to grow your own food, from herbs to salads, fruits and vegetables. Home grown food can be easier on our wallets and the climate. As nature gives these gifts to us, we can help give back to nature by creating habitats for wildlife too! And when you sign up, you'll receive your free wildlife gardening guide via email.

There are an estimated 24 million gardens in the UK, which make up nearly 30% of the total urban area and create a mosaic of oases for nature in towns and cities. Add to that all the millions of balcony and window ledge plant pots. So what we choose to grow and how we care for these spaces, however small, can make a big difference for us and wildlife. Pledge your garden below.

### Are you a business?

Your contribution could make a vital difference in supporting schoolchildren across the UK! [Find out how we can work together here.](#)

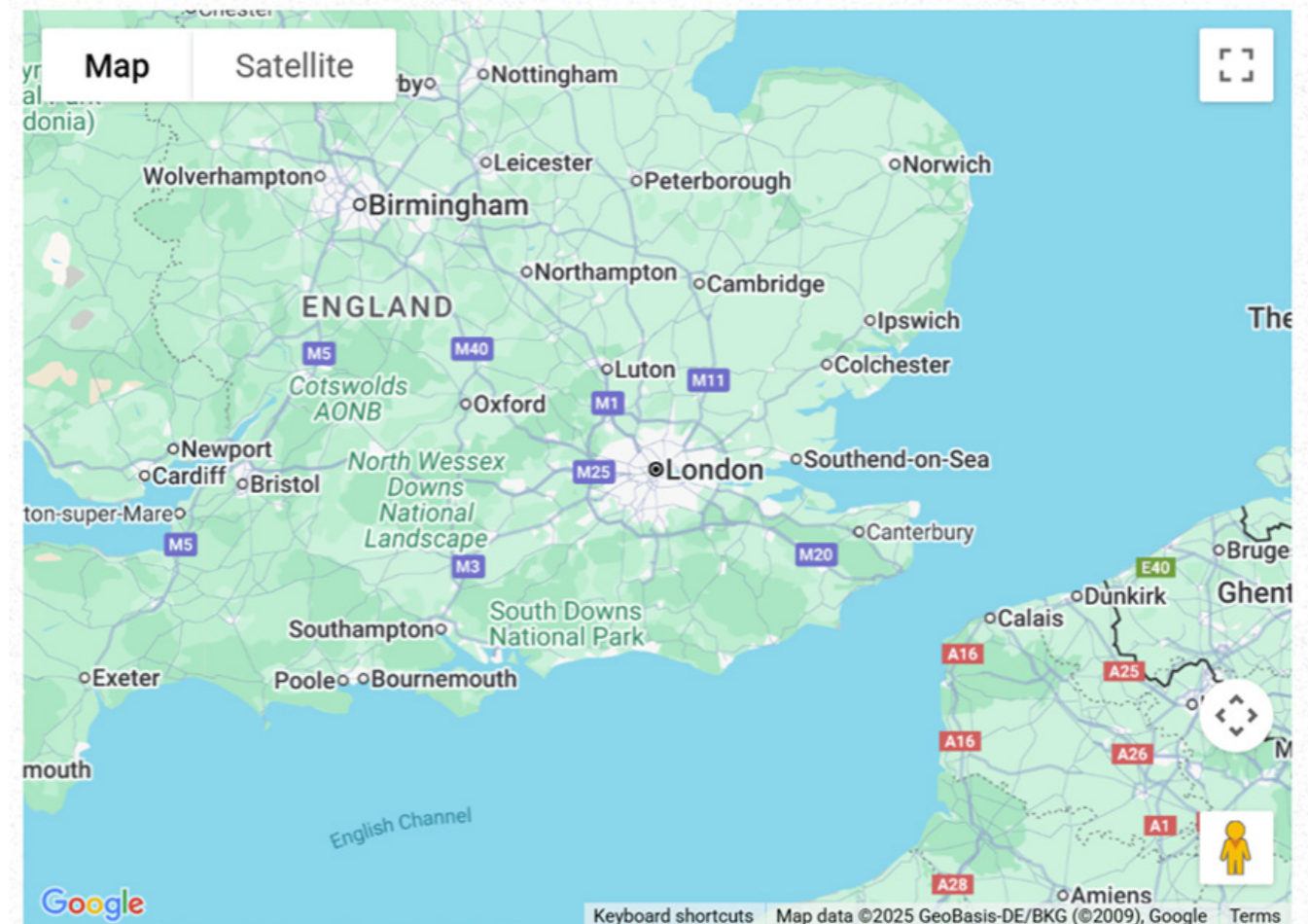
## Where is your Coronation Garden?\*

Choose your Coronation Garden\*

- Select - ▼

Address ? \*

Add the location of your Coronation Garden



First name\*

Surname\*

Email address\*

Postcode\*

Are you a member of a Wildlife Trust?\*

Yes  No

Would you like to hear from Coronation Gardens in English or Welsh?\*

English  Welsh

**Would you like to receive email updates from the Coronation Garden partners?**

Would you like to hear from your local Wildlife Trust via email?\*

Yes please  No thanks

Would you like to hear about The Wildlife Trusts' national work by email?\*

Yes please  No thanks

Would you like to hear from Garden Organic by email?\*

Yes please  No thanks

Would you like to hear from The Women's Institutes by email?\*

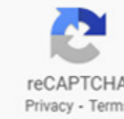
Yes please  No thanks

By signing up to these email mailing lists you are opting in to hear from the relevant partner, you'll hear more about their work, news and campaigns as well as other ways to get involved.

We promise to protect your data in accordance with [our Privacy Policies](#).

CAPTCHA

I'm not a robot



This question is for testing whether or not you are a human visitor and to prevent automated spam submissions.

**Submit**

# Appendix 2 - Coronation Gardens Three-Month Follow-up Survey Questions

**Postcode** (mandatory)

**Type of garden** (mandatory, use existing 6 categories - Garden at home, Balcony/windowbox, School garden, Allotment, Community garden, Garden at work)

**When I pledged, I was** (choose one)

Already growing plants but not food

Already growing food

Not growing anything

Option one. If answered: Already growing plants but not food, then:

**Since pledging, I have** (tick all that apply)

Started to grow food to eat

If you previously used pesticides but have now stopped, tick here

If you previously used peat products but have now stopped, tick here

If you didn't feed the birds, but now do, tick here

If you didn't have a water source for wildlife, but do now, tick here

**Option two. If answered: Already growing food, then:**

**Since pledging, I have** (tick all that apply)

If you previously used pesticides but have now stopped, tick here

If you previously used peat products but have now stopped, tick here

If you didn't feed the birds, but now do, tick here

If you didn't have a water source for wildlife, but do now, tick here

**Option three. If answered: Not growing anything, then:**

**Since pledging, I have** (tick all that apply)

If you didn't feed the birds, but now do, tick here

If you didn't have a water source for wildlife, but do now, tick here

Started to grow herbs

Started to grow fruit

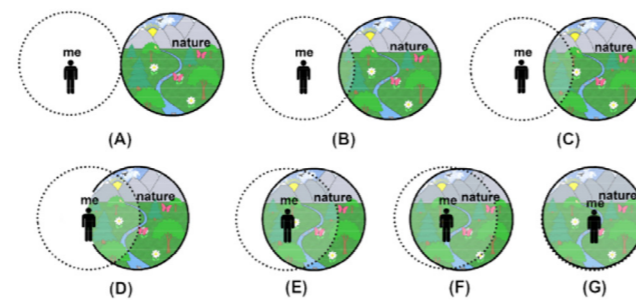
Started to grow vegetables

Started to grow plants which are not edible

**Further questions for all responders:**

**Choose the pair of circles that best describes your relationship to nature, where A represents being completely separate to nature, and G represents being completely part of nature.**

[A, B, C, D, E, F, G]



**In general, do you feel happy?**

[Please select a number from 1-10, 1- Not at all, 2-9 - unlabelled, 10 - Completely]

**Over the past year, do you feel that nature has contributed to your overall happiness?**

[Please select a number from 1-10, 1- Nature has had nothing to do with my happiness, 2-9 unlabelled, 10 - Nature has had everything to do with my happiness]

**Over the past year, how often have you spent time in nature and green spaces?**

[Daily, Several times a week, About once a week, Once or twice a month, Less than once a month, Never]

# Appendix 3 - Original Survey Questions for Schools and Responses

Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature is a partnership between The Wildlife Trusts, Incredible Edible, Garden Organic and The Women's Institutes. Our goal is for individuals and communities to pledge to grow fruit and vegetables sustainably, while also helping nature along the way.

We're exploring how we can use this initiative to support schools in growing food in a wildlife-friendly way. We'd very much appreciate any feedback you can give us through this short survey. This will help us plan the best resources to develop and offer.

- 1. Do you already grow fruit and veg at your school?** Yes/no/we have plans to create a garden/we would like to but don't know where to start
- 2. Would you like guidance on what to sow, plant and harvest within school term times?** Yes/no
- 3. Would you like guidance on wildlife gardening ideas?** Yes/no
- 4. Is your wider community involved in your school garden?** Yes/no/Not yet but we plan to have more involvement/we would like to but don't know where to start
- 5. What resources are most beneficial to you?** Digital information about practical growing help/printed information on practical growing/lesson plans mapped to the curriculum/a network of help/tools and equipment/seeds/other
- 6. Please use this space to tell us anything about your food growing and wildlife gardening activities at your school, and how you think we and our partners can help you.**

**Thank you for taking our survey! If you would like some immediate ideas about growing food in a wildlife-friendly way, please visit these websites:**

The Wildlife Trusts <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions> for ways to help wildlife and <https://mycoronationgarden.org/getting-started> for food growing.

Garden Organic <https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/expert-advice>



# Appendix 5: Focus Group Information Sheet and Consent Form

**PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET -**

**Evaluation of The Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature project**

**Researchers:** Dr Marie Polley, and Dr Michelle Tytherleigh, Meaningful Measures Ltd.

As part of the project to evaluate the Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature project, you are being invited to participate in a focus group. The aim of the focus group is to document your experience of being involved with this project. It is an opportunity to share your experiences, the things that worked well, the challenges and, also, your ideas moving forward. These data will be reviewed alongside other internal reports and information, and results from a survey which is gathering the thoughts of the public taking part in the Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature project.

**What will the focus group involve?**

The focus group will be via Google Meet or Teams and will last for 1 hour. It will be recorded and transcribed, and then anonymised. During this time, we will ask a few simple questions and give everyone a chance to share their thoughts. You may put comments in the chat as well.

**Please note:**

- Your participation in this focus group is entirely voluntary.
- You have the right to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
- Withdrawal from the focus group will not affect any involvement or relationship you have with Meaningful Measures Ltd, or the Wildlife Trusts.
- You have the right to ask for your data to be withdrawn, as long as this is practical and for personal information to be destroyed.
- You do not have to answer a particular question if you do not wish to do so.
- Your responses will be made anonymous and will be kept confidential unless you provide explicit consent to do otherwise. No individuals will be identifiable from any collated data, written report of the evaluation, or any publications arising from it.
- All computer data files will be password protected. The researcher will keep files in a secure place and will comply with the requirements of the UK GDPR regulations tailored by the Data Protection Act (2018).
- Any hard copy documents, e.g., consent forms, will be scanned and kept securely in a digital form in a password protected file. The hard copies will then be destroyed.
- If you wish, you can receive information on the results of this evaluation. Please indicate on the consent form if you would like to receive this information.
- The researchers can be contacted during and after participation using the following contact details,

Dr Helen Seers Helen@meaningfulmeasures.co.uk; 07565 261100

Consent Form

Evaluation of The Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature project

(Delete yes or no as applicable)

I have been given the Participation Information Sheet (previous page) and/or had its contents explained to me.	Yes	No
I have had an opportunity to ask any questions and I am satisfied with the answers given.	Yes	No
I understand I have a right to withdraw from the focus group at any time and I do not have to provide a reason.	Yes	No
I understand that if I withdraw from the focus group, any data included in the results will be removed if that is practicable. (I understand that once anonymised data has been collated into other datasets it may not be possible to remove that data.)	Yes	No
I would like to receive information relating to the results from this study.	Yes	No
I wish to receive a copy of this Consent form.	Yes	No No
I confirm I am willing to be a participant in the above focus group.	Yes	
I note the data collected may be retained in an archive and I am happy for my data to be reused as part of future research activities. I note my data will be fully anonymised (if applicable).	Yes	No

Participant's Name:

Signature:

Date:

This consent form will be stored separately from any data you provide so that your responses remain anonymous.

# Appendix 6 - Focus group Schedule of Questions

Introduction by MP/MT to confirm aims and key consent issues. First, and again, many thanks for agreeing to participate in this focus group as part of the Coronation Gardens evaluation. Second, are you happy for me to start recording?

Start recording

As stated in the consent form, the aim of this focus group is to document your experience of being part of the Coronation Gardens project. It is your opportunity to share your experiences, including your successes, any challenges and your ideas for moving forwards.

The data you produce will be anonymised and remain confidential, and no individuals will be identifiable from any collated data, written reports or publications. You also have the right to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and for any data obtained up until that point to be withdrawn as long as this is practical. By doing this, it will also not affect an involvement or relationship you have with Meaningful Measures Ltd or the Wildlife Trust.

Confirmation of how the FG will operate: We have 4 open ended questions to ask of you around the aforementioned areas of interest. However, we also want the conversations we have as a group to flow naturally and, as long as we cover the areas we need to, what we talk about in this group will be very much led by you. You can also add anything to the chat facility as we go along.

Key questions:

- (1) What do you feel are the main legacies/ outputs of the Coronation Gardens project?
- (2) From your organisations' perspective, what worked well on the Coronation Gardens project?
- (3) From your organisation's perspective, What are the difficulties/ barriers you experienced with the Coronation Gardens project?
- (4) If you had a magic wand, what would you change?

One of the NLHF outcomes for this project was for “funded organisations to become more resilient”. What are your thoughts on this? (e.g., stronger, greater connections, more resilient for future, more opportunities/ funding).

Closing question for all:

Is there anything else you haven't said but would like to finish by saying?

Conclude with Thanks. End recording



The Wildlife Trusts are a federation of 47 charities, 46 individual Wildlife Trusts and a central charity, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. Together we have more than 900,000 members, 39,000 volunteers and 3,600 staff across the UK. We share a vision of nature in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife and natural processes creating wilder landscapes where people and nature thrive.



Wildlife Trusts care for – and have restored – some of the most special places for wildlife in the UK. Collectively we manage more than 2,300 nature reserves, operate 123 visitor and education centres and own 29 working farms. We undertake research, we stand up for wildlife and wild places under threat, and we help people access nature.

We work with businesses who are committed to being nature positive and take action to help restore 30% of land and seas for nature by 2030.

### The Wildlife Trusts

✉ [enquiry@wildlifetrusts.org](mailto:enquiry@wildlifetrusts.org)

🖱 [wildlifetrusts.org](http://wildlifetrusts.org)

✂ @WildlifeTrusts

f @wildlifetrusts

📷 @thewildlifetrusts

