

# Romsey Town Community Garden

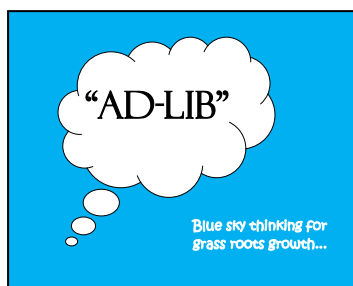
April 2011

**Site:** Fenced land on the junction of Madras Road and Marmora Road, off Mill Road, Cambridge

**Project:** To make use of a derelict plot of land for the benefit of the local community, by creating a sustainable community garden.

**Partners:** Transition Cambridge  
Ad Lib Community Development

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## Outline:

Transition and Ad Lib propose to work in partnership to create an inclusive community garden on the available plot of land. The land will be managed as a permaculture space, sustainably and organically. The garden will provide a green space where the community can collectively grow fruit, vegetables, herbs, and other flowers and plants, while encouraging wildlife and enjoying the outdoors. The project will also provide a number of training and education opportunities for the City, as well as a space for use by community organisations, local schools and the local community. The garden will develop in response to, and reflect the needs of, the local community. It will provide a safe, creative, productive and high quality open space. It will include ornamental beds, vegetable plots, a wildlife garden, and a composting area.

Cambridge Community Garden will be managed by a Partnership Committee, made up of interested stakeholders and members of Transition and Ad Lib. The Committee will ensure the site's active use and upkeep, and will be the point of communication with the Council, the community and partner organisations.

## Aims:

Cambridge Community Garden seeks to:

- provide a viable community space created for, and by, the local community
- provide opportunities for relaxation, leisure, education and training
- develop as many partnership opportunities with community organisations as possible to maximise the benefits of the project
- make use of a previously derelict piece of land. The land is currently a focus for anti-social activity. The project aims to make productive use of the land and therefore to stop these activities and improve the safety and civic pride of the local area and community.
- increase biodiversity in the area and improve habitats for wildlife and plants
- produce food for the local community, thus increasing food security
- help combat climate change
- provide land to act as a social space and to increase the sense of community in the area
- involve as many people from the local community as possible
- support the formation of a more cohesive local community, to encourage pride in the local area
- support self sufficiency and sustainable practices
- capacity build within the local community – to offer skills training around food production methods, sustainability and horticulture
- offer volunteer opportunities – to allow people the chance to make a positive contribution
- provide health benefits and increase the wellbeing of volunteers and the local community
- provide a value for money service with minimal costs which will be met through local and national funding applications

- provide a space where different groups and people from different backgrounds, nationalities, and generations can mix
- form partnerships and work alongside other Community Supported Agriculture Schemes, fostering new ideas and development in this sector, and providing a model for Community Gardens and community development in Cambridge through Transition’s ‘Growing Spaces’ project

**What is the wider importance of the Community Garden?**

Cambridge Community Garden sits firmly within City Council priorities for 2011. The table below highlights which of the priorities it would help to achieve. The project would work towards the majority of priorities across the City Council remit:

Recreation Services	Green Team	Sports Development	CHYPPS	Safer Communities	Landscape Architects
Enhance allotment provision	Accessible	Increased sports participation	Increased children and young people’s usage	Impact on community safety	Improves appearance of street or area
Sustainability	Attractive	Usage patterns	Increased children and young people’s satisfaction	Alignment with the Safer Neighbourhoods and Local Area Neighbourhoods	Visually benefits the public realm of the City
Reduction of carbon footprint	Biodiversity	Childhood obesity	Inclusion/equalities access	Reduction in anti-social behaviour	Publically visible and accessible
Opportunities for play	Community	Open space for health problems	Play value – children and young people’s view	Increase in the range of diversionary activities	Has local people involvement
Increased access	Usage	Inclusive fitness	Social value; a young people’s view	Impact on Community Cohesion	Benefit for a large number of people

Cambridge Community Garden would also sit within ideas of social engagement as laid out by The Big Society, involving the community in improving and engaging with their local area. The project would also tap into the National Curriculum and informal Education and Youth Work agendas in numerous ways within partner schools and organisations, and would underline the Council commitment to Healthy Schools and Every Child Matters.

A Community Garden would allow the Council to move towards achieving its Strategic Objectives. These Objectives include a commitment to enable people to ‘thrive, achieve their potential and improve their quality of life’; as such, a Community Garden would offer opportunities for relaxation, leisure, education and

training. The project would also partner with groups working with vulnerable people and would therefore help to 'support and protect vulnerable people' as laid down in the Strategic Objectives. Moreover, a Community Garden would also be a cost-effective way in which to deliver on the pledge to 'manage and deliver the growth and development of sustainable communities'. Strategic Objective 4 seeks to 'promote improved skill levels and economic prosperity...helping people into jobs and encouraging enterprise'; the Community Garden would certainly build new skill sets, encouraging self sufficiency and providing important benefits especially for low income families. Finally, the pledge to 'meet the challenges of climate change and enhance the natural environment' dovetails with the key aims of a Community Garden. The Community Garden also sits within the Council Climate Change and Environment Strategy.

Most importantly, the Community Garden would support the Council to deliver on pledges within the Parks and Open Space Strategy; 'to provide opportunities for young people in the City to have constructive activities to take part in, and to provide a diverse range of green spaces that cater for people's social, educational and physical needs and changing lifestyles - this includes City Farms and Community Gardens'.

### Partners:

In the long term, Cambridge Community Garden would aim to build partnerships with the following:

- Local community/residents and youth and community groups.
- The Parkside Federation – Coleridge School Site.
- Wintercomfort/Jimmy's Night Shelter/homeless organisations in Cambridge – these organisations currently run gardening projects with their client group to build skills, and encourage self sufficiency and useful enterprise. These organisations could expand their projects to include this new site.
- Nearby Social Housing Organisations, local churches and religious organisations
- NHS services/agencies on the Brookfields Hospital site – the project would hope to encourage services to use the space, especially for more vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities
- Local businesses

### Project Leads:

**Transition Cambridge**, a group of volunteers dedicated to creating a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable future for Cambridge in the face of the twin challenges of peak oil and climate change. [www.transitioncambridge.org](http://www.transitioncambridge.org).

**"Ad-Lib" Community Development**, a not-for-profit organisation created to release potential within individuals and communities. "Ad-Lib" works with voluntary and statutory organisations and local communities to run innovative community projects which promote positive social growth. [www.ad-lib.org.uk](http://www.ad-lib.org.uk)