

Dublin Community Growers

“A citywide support network for the development of community spaces for growing and sharing”



Annual Report 2021



Dublin Community Growers

Dublin Community Growers (DCG) exists to connect community gardens, allotments and associated groups in Dublin, Ireland.

We support and organise events that promote:

- social inclusion
- environmental responsibility
- community gardens as valued amenities

DCG has been in existence for over thirteen years.

The committee meets monthly to share our experiences, link in with other organisations, discuss issues, organise events and help one another with what we've learned.

Our membership represents over 50 community garden projects, allotment sites and individuals who have an interest in community food growing projects.

Membership is free.

Check out our website www.dublincommunitygrowers.ie for further details.



Our Committee

Name	Role	Community Project
Aaron Foley	Member	Mucky Lane Collins Park Eco Garden
Billy Creevy	Funding Subgroup	
Derek Oman	Member	Beechhill Allotments
Diane Barker	Secretary	St Brigid's Community Garden
Hubert Martin	Member	WALK Community Garden
John Murphy	Media Subgroup	Galway University
John O'Donoghue	Vice-Chairperson	Muck & Magic Community Garden
Maeve Foreman	Media Subgroup	Mud Island Community Garden
Mark Cooke	Member	Blarney Park Community Garden
Mary May	Member	Blarney Park Community Garden
Michael Keigher	Treasurer	Summer Row Community Garden
Miren Maialen	Media Subgroup	Mud Island Community Garden
Rosa Stephens	Chairperson	GIY Dundrum (Grow It Yourself)
Sonya Agnew	Media Subgroup	
Tom Duffy	Member	Mucky Lane Collins Park Eco Garden

Dublin Community Growers 2021



Covid-19

Our 2020 AGM was on the 20th of March 2021, during the very strict restrictions we all endured at the beginning of the year. We had to use ZOOM as gatherings were out of the question. We were nicely surprised with the very high attendance and in the future will keep a mixture of presential and ZOOM events.

Conor O’Kane from Social Farms Northern Ireland gave a very interesting talk about the “Community Gardens Seed Saving Project”.

The first lockdown had shown the toll on mental health brought by isolation and the value of green spaces and gardening. On the other hand, a better understanding of transmission showed that the risk was considerably lower in open outdoor spaces. This meant that community gardens and allotments stayed open, even though some restrictions on numbers and safety measures had to be kept.

Fortunately, slowly life is coming back to normal, and we hope that this coming year we will be able to run workshops and many other activities we had to cancel the last two years.

On the positive side, the last two years have increased public awareness of the importance of food sustainability, and the role that our green spaces and communities have on our mental health. With this, community gardening is becoming considerably more popular.

2021 Achievements

Official Launch of DCG new Website



After a few postponements, The Lord Mayor Hazel Chu finally launched the new look DCG website on the 10th of June. It was great to see the support from Leslie Moore and Noel McEvoy (Dublin City Council, Parks Department), councillors Caroline Conroy and Donna Cooney, and Community Gardens and Allotments members. We would like to thank Marion Kelly and her team in St Anne's City Farm for their welcome and help.

The Garden List and Garden Map pages are particularly popular. We will be extending the resources section in the next few months.

As in 2020, the most frequent enquiries are in relation to allotments availability and volunteering in community gardens, but we also have students looking for help with research projects, people looking for advice about starting a new garden or collaboration for Erasmus links.

Media Subgroup

The media subgroup, lead by Miren Maialen has been very pro-active and we have now not just a user-friendly website, but also an increased presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Our website and social media are tools available to all our members. Let us know if you would like to promote an event, showcase your garden, share your news or some information that you found useful somewhere else. Just send us an email with the text and a few attractive pictures to go with it.

Submissions

Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan (2021-2025)

DCG had not been included in the groups consulted before the draft publication. In June, DCG put a proposal to include Dublin Community Growers as a named "Supporting Agency" to include in consultation under 8.8 in the plan.

Support to Community Gardens Ireland Submission

On the 22nd of October, CGI met Minister Malcolm Noonan to discuss potential changes for community growing spaces in Ireland. DCG officially supported their document "**Let's Get Growing!**" plan prepared for the meeting.

Dublin City Development Plan (2022-2028)

G1028	<p>Urban Farming and Food Production</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To support the provision of urban farming and food production initiatives, where feasible, and in particular, on the roofs of buildings, as temporary uses on vacant, under-utilised or derelict sites in the city and in peripheral urban areas / near M50, and in residential developments;2. to seek to increase the provision of allotments in the city in the order of 100%;3. To carry out a survey of underutilised open spaces for community gardens with a view to identifying areas in the city appropriate and suitable for community gardens.
--------------	--

In February 2022 DCG made a submission under the Chapter 10 of the Development Plan which includes Objective GIO28 Urban Farming and Food Production. DCG looked for the inclusion of an additional objective (iv) - *to create a designated post within Dublin City Council to work with local communities to develop, advise and support community growing projects, community gardens and allotments.*

Workshops

Workshops on various aspects of community gardening have been our primary activity in the past.

Due to the pandemic and need to socially distance we were not able to run any workshop in the first half of the year. Fortunately, we managed to squeeze two in when restrictions eased and run:

Seed Saving Workshop, Scoil Colm, Crumlin



Plant Propagation Workshop, Muck and Magic Community Garden

We are very grateful to the host gardens and Hubert Martin and John O'Donoghue who kindly gave their time and provided their expertise. Both workshops were well attended and enjoyed

by everyone involved.



Parks Department of Dublin City Council and DCG

Following two meetings with the Parks Department of Dublin City Council, we have agreed to work closely and look at potential ways to maximize the use of available green spaces that could be suitable for the creation of community gardens. We are particularly grateful to Leslie Moore and Noel McEvoy for their support.

Other Resources

One of the main challenges for any small community groups with very limited funding is the access to affordable and suitable training. It is therefore very important that we use all resources that are available to us. With that purpose DCG has joined:

- Dublin City and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Councils Public Partnership Networks (PPN).
- The Wheel
- Mailing List for Carmichael House and Volunteer Ireland

They also offer the opportunity to network with likeminded groups and provide a forum where

issued can be discussed and experiences shared.

Community Gardens Ireland (CGI)

Dublin Community Growers and Community Gardens Ireland have many common goals and priorities. Some DCG Committee members are also CGI Committee members and therefore communication is easy. We hope that we can strengthen our collaboration in the future.

SeasonsPace Meeting

Various members of our committee attended the Zoom & Airfield meeting and look forward further cooperation in the future.

New Community Gardens in Dublin

The challenges of the pandemic and climate changes have increased public interest in Community Gardens and sustainable living and brought the creation of new community gardens in Dublin, like:

- Taplin's Field CG in the Liberties, supported by the Robert Emmet Fund, replacing the closed Bridgefoot Garden, and named in honour of Richie Taplin.
- Skerries Community Garden
- Killester Community Garden

Looking Ahead

DCG Events

We will run more workshops and also hope to bring back or take part in three yearly events that due to the pandemic didn't take place in 2020 and 2021. These are:

- Sustainable Living Day
- St. Anne's Rose Festival
- Food Cycle

Increase links with:

- Community Gardens, Allotments and similar groups in Dublin
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
- Fingal County Council
- South Dublin City Council

Add more resource content to our website:

- Starting a Community Garden
- Funding
- Working with volunteers

Financial Report

End of 2020:

Balance in the bank: €1,407.19

Creditors: € 550.00

Balance at the beginning of the year: € 857.19

Income: € 200.00

Expenditure: € 634.06

Creditors: € 90.00

Balance at end of the year € 333.13

Income:

Donation € 200.00

Expenditure:

Stationary € 59.98

Website and domains € 370.88

Bank Charges € 63.20

Website Launch € 140.00

Total € 634.06

Creditors:

Zoom share € 90.00