



**One Year On**

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# Welcome to One Planet Food

An exciting new project invigorating local food in Sutton. One Planet Food aims to enable everyone in Sutton to enjoy growing and eating healthy local food; from Sutton's first community farm to food growing training, fun children's and family activities, healthy eating education and the colourful Veg Van. The project has been going for a year now and this booklet gives a flavour of progress so far...

## What is One Planet Food?

The programme aims to:

- 1. Bring local food into the borough, through:**
  - local food market stalls selling fresh local produce (the Veg Van)
  - market stall training for new producers
  - a local food network to increase access of local produce in schools and hospitals
- 2. Grow more food locally, through:**
  - establishing Sutton's first community farm
  - training adults, families and children in food growing skills
- 3. Encourage healthy eating, through**
  - fun learning for children, parents and young people
  - healthy cooking courses
- 4. Raise awareness about local healthy food, through:**
  - promotional activities at events, community centres and high streets
  - workshops delivered by local food ambassadors

## Why One Planet Food?

The project was set up in response to increasing concern about food, health and carbon emissions. Local environmental charities BioRegional and EcoLocal worked with over 2,000 local residents and found that many people did not have the space, time or confidence to grow food; most were not getting their recommended 5 a day portions of fruit and veg and unhealthy weight issues were rising. We also found that the environmental impact of food is enormous, accounting for around a quarter of Sutton's ecological footprint.

We worked with the local community to develop One Planet Food to address these needs. The project was launched in October 2009 and is funded until October 2012. We are very grateful to the Big Lottery, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Sutton Council, NHS Sutton and Merton and Southern Railways for enabling the project to happen. There are loads of ways to be involved, so do read further.

### Get involved:

- Sign up for EcoLocal's inspiring food growing training (p12-14)
- Join the weekly activity days at the community farm and Westmead allotment (p4/p11)
- Buy delicious fruit and veg at the Veg Van! (p7)
- Have your say: help us develop Sutton's food strategy (p9)





# Sutton Community Farm

## The Story So Far...

The 7.5 acre farm is a new shared growing space for the local community to grow fruit and veg together at the Woodcote smallholdings in Wallington.

The farm launched in January 2010 attended by over 60 enthusiastic local residents. We now hold activity days for: local residents, local disability college Orchard Hill, the Youth Offending Team and the Probation service, three times a week. We've cultivated over 2 acres of land and have grown an array of organic fruit and veg: including white maize planted by a local Zimbabwean farmer, delicious Sutton potatoes, wild herbs, raspberries and damsons to name a few!

**All volunteers are entitled to free produce** and we've been selling surplus via The Veg Van (see p7). We've had over 300 volunteers so far and employed two young people through the Future Jobs Fund, training them in food growing and selling.

Farm events have ranged from a Solstice celebration, summer bbq, complete with live music, to a charity team building day. The farm's not only a great place to develop growing skills, get exercise and make friends but also provides a space to share skills, from local spinning, wheat growing and





milling, cob building, bee-keeping to mosaic making and biodiversity monitoring. We also hold adult and family food growing training at the farm (delivered by EcoLocal) and ran a Permaculture course in October.

The message about the benefits of food growing at the farm has started to spread: we've featured in the local press, Evening Standard and BBC London news and radio! And we've had visits from the local MP Tom Brake, local councillors, Rosie Boycott (Boris Jonson's adviser on local food) and Green MP Jenny Jones.

**Join us for free activity days at the farm:**

Every Saturday and Tuesday

from 10am – 2pm.

Learn to grow together, picnic and eat free veg!

[www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk](http://www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk)

## The farm in 2009

*"I look forward to coming to the farm every week and have learned a lot from it. On the other side hopefully I can pass on some things that I've learned to encourage others. There's a lot more than just planting and growing there's a lot going on." - Paul*



Transformed by summer 2010





# The Veg Van

Being based in Hackbridge we're all too aware of the difficulty of getting fresh fruit and veg without a car. We therefore decided to buy and refurbish an old milkfloat, paint it with bright vegetables and name it 'The Veg Van' to sell local produce in Hackbridge and beyond. We launched the van at Hackbridge railway station in March 2010, complete with vegetable fancy dress!

The Veg Van currently holds four weekly markets and we have trialled the service at local schools. This year we took part in several local events including the fantastic Carshalton Environment Fair with our pedal-powered smoothie maker.

Initially we sourced most of our produce from Banks Farm in Kent, however, as the community farm has developed and local links have been made we've been selling even more local produce.

In September, The Veg Van won an award at the National Community Rail Awards, for best station retail outlet.

Independent monitoring by Cranfield University revealed that:

- 26% of customers are eating more fruit and veg;
- 11% of customers are eating less processed produce;
- £1 spent at The Veg Van creates £2.60 for the local economy (compared to £1.40 if spent in a local supermarket);
- 41kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq saved per month through reduced need to drive to buy food (significantly more if distribution is included);
- 9% of customers are getting more exercise through walking / cycling to The Veg Van and 9% have increased social interaction;
- from March to end of September we served 1,724 customers.

The Veg Van also now has a weekly veg box that you can pre-order and our mailing list has free weekly recipes and special offers.

## Where is the Veg Van?

Wednesdays:

St. Helier hospital Re:treat restaurant from 12pm - 3pm

Hackbridge Station from 4.30pm – 8pm

Thursdays:

Carshalton Train station from 5.30pm – 8.30pm

New locations coming soon, see: [www.vegvan.org.uk](http://www.vegvan.org.uk)



# The local food network

Our research found that 90% of local residents wanted local produce to be available in schools and hospitals. As a result since October 2009 we have been working with Sutton Catering to support them in increasing local produce in school meals for 30 local junior and infant schools.

We also joined the Epsom and St. Helier Trust Food Group which manages catering at Epsom and St. Helier hospitals.

Key progress includes:

- a weekly local food market in the hospital restaurant via The Veg Van
- all food waste at both hospitals now segregated and sent for composting at a local bio-digester in Mitcham;
- St. Helier hospital now only buys free range shell eggs
- supporting their catering contractor Aramark in linking with a local school to deliver free healthy eating activities.

## One Planet Food Strategy

Through our work, research conducted by Kingston University and EcoLocal's Healthy Hackbridge report we've been learning a lot about eating, shopping and travel habits in Sutton. The question is: what is a One Planet Diet and how can we ensure that everyone can lead a healthy sustainable diet in Sutton? We will be holding an event to discuss this further, hear your ideas and start developing a sustainable food strategy for the borough - so do get involved.

The project is part of the One Planet Sutton programme; to make Sutton the UK's first sustainable borough. See [www.oneplanetsutton.org.uk](http://www.oneplanetsutton.org.uk) for more details.



# Carshalton community allotment

Carshalton Community Allotment is half an acre of vegetables, fruit and herbs, located on the Westmead allotment site in Carshalton. The site is open for anyone to learn to grow on Friday and Sunday mornings from 10:30am-1pm, as well as being a venue for food growing courses and family fun sessions.

Over the past year, a new compost toilet and polytunnel have been installed and 21 new raised beds have been built and planted. The community payback team has contributed 1,652 hours of community service and 40 volunteers have been regularly getting their hands dirty!

Sessions run right through the winter and summer. We are a friendly group of people who come for lots of different reasons including:

- being on the waiting list for an allotment;
- not having enough space to grow fruit and veg at home;
- wanting to gain confidence in how to grow food at home;
- getting some outdoor exercise and enjoying time in the fresh air;
- making new friends.

*"I've learned some useful skills on the allotment such as thinning and how deep to plant. I've also met lots of new people"* - Akiko

*"I wanted to learn about growing vegetables and the community allotment has taught me lots. I've learned about spacing out plants and how to weed and I'm looking forward to more digging."* - Charles



# Adult food growing training

Carshalton Community Allotment and Sutton Community Farm are the venues for six week beginners' food growing courses, teaching everything you need to know to start growing your own tasty organic fruit and veg. In addition, one day courses are available in herb gardening, kitchen gardening, container gardening and fruit growing. In 2011 these courses will be expanded to include one day courses on: organic methods, wildlife gardening, food for free from the hedgerows, storing and preserving produce, raising chickens, bees and brewing beer and wine.

In the first year, EcoLocal ran four six week courses in beginners food growing, as well as four one day courses and issued 22 nationally recognised AQA certificates. 42 people attended courses, and their feedback shows that they learnt a great deal from the courses.



# Family and children's food growing learning



## the Beanstalk Project

EcoLocal's **free** fun family food growing 'Beanstalk' sessions enables children to get actively involved in food growing. Sessions are held at Carshalton Community Allotment, Sutton Community Farm and local libraries, or by taking part in class based sessions in schools such as 'Super Seeds' or 'Cool Cress and Mega Mustard'. Two schools each year also benefit from an after school club which runs for twelve weeks through the summer term.

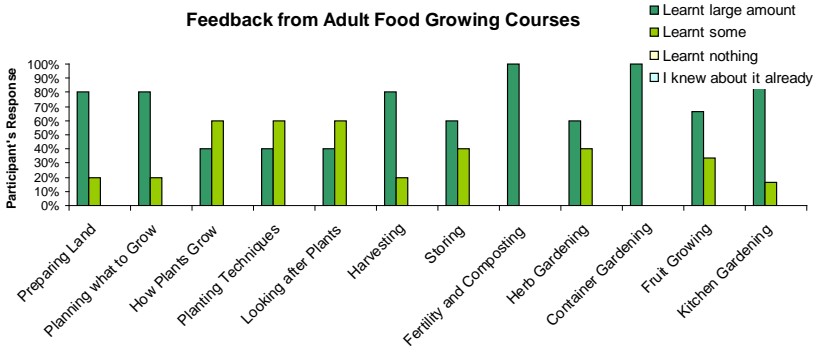
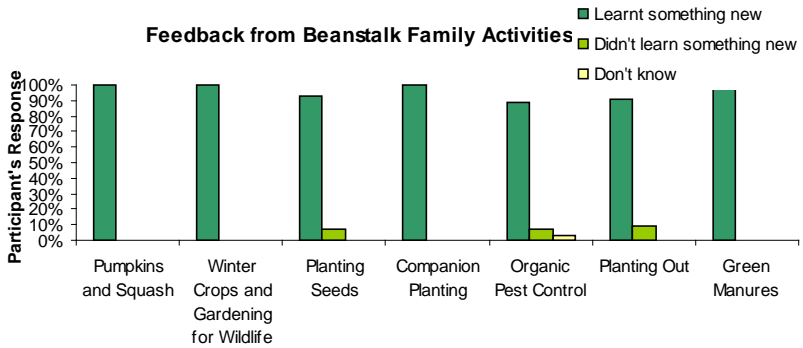
53 families have taken part in the 10 Beanstalk hands on learning days delivered so far. The vast majority of participants reported that they had learned something new by attending the session. Beanstalk sessions are a great opportunity to get your children involved in food growing.

## School Food Growing

This year EcoLocal introduced more than 500 school children to food growing. We held sessions at: Devonshire Primary, Tweedale Primary, Hackbridge Primary and Victor Seymour Infants, and at after school food growing clubs at Culvers House Primary and Carshalton Boys Sports College. All teachers surveyed said the school sessions were good or excellent.

We have also been working with a local volunteer to help schools grow more fruit and nuts, and have successfully raised funds to help 7 schools plant mini orchards this winter.

*"I learnt that seeds can look like what they grow into and talking to plants helps them grow by the CO<sub>2</sub> we breathe out."* - Participant at school food growing session



# Healthy eating learning

## Fun children's activities

EcoLocal tutors have been visiting reception classes in schools and parent and toddler groups, delivering fun and interactive healthy eating activities, such as the Giant Food Race, where children take part in a relay race gathering giant food to learn about 5 a day, healthy foods and exercising to burn calories. This year we worked with more than 600 people.

## Young people's courses

We delivered the project's first accredited healthy eating course for young people at a secondary school, teaching them all about food groups, 5 a day, food labelling and calories.

## Adult cooking courses

EcoLocal have developed a new healthy cookery course using seasonal produce. Courses are offered to adults **free of charge**. Participants learn how to make cheese sauces, pasta dishes, meat balls, burgers, fruit crumbles, soups and bread. More free courses will be available in 2011/12.

*"I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the cooking classes with Debbie. She was a fantastic teacher which made the classes even more enjoyable. I learnt a lot and touched up on the skills I already had. I was so sad the course only lasted for 3 sessions, but was grateful I could attend at all."* - Sarah Ladipo



# Community Awareness

## Local Food Ambassadors

Could you be a local food champion? EcoLocal have trained volunteer Local Food Ambassadors to deliver interactive local food workshops to community groups. Participants at the workshops learn about why local food is important, find out where they can buy or grow local food within ten minutes walk of their home and take part in fun activities about a healthy balanced diet.

*"Very helpful and informative-increased my awareness even though I thought I was pretty clued up to begin with!"* - Participant at Local Food workshop delivered by 'Local Food Ambassador'

## Community events

Over the course of the project we aim to run 15 community events promoting the benefits of local food and healthy eating.

In the first year EcoLocal organised or had stalls at the following events enabling more than 700 people to take part in food activities:

- One Planet Food project launch with a talk by Patrick Holden (Director of the Soil Association) in partnership with Surrey Organic Gardening group;
- Joining forces with Ruskin Community Cinema, we screened 'Food Inc' to 61 people;
- A Local Food Marquee at the Environmental Fair in Carshalton Park, with mobile allotment plots, children's activities and talks on a range of subjects from beekeeping to home brewing;
- Fun interactive food activities at St Helier Festival, Active at the Phoenix Centre, Glenthorne High School's healthy eating evening, Carshalton Charter Fair, Move it at the Manor, Sutton Play Day at Sutton Arena, Hackbridge Festival and Mad Hatter's Tea Party.

## Healthy Eating at Sutton Farmers Market

We held eight healthy eating activities at the Sutton Farmers' Market in Sutton High Street, with almost 300 people. We devised a range interactive quizzes and games such as; fruit and veg weighing, to guess what weight of veg comprises a 5 a day portion; the Eatwell Plate game - divide a shopping basket of food into the five food groups, the bicycle-powered smoothie maker, tasting sessions of healthy snacks and guess the home made soup ingredients.

### Join us at the Market:

Wallington Farmers Market is the second Saturday of the month,  
Sutton is every fourth Saturday.





For the Community Farm, Veg Van, Network or Local food strategy contact:

**BioRegional:** BedZED Centre, 24 Helios Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 7BZ  
 t. 020 8404 4880 e. [info@bioregional.com](mailto:info@bioregional.com)  
[www.bioregional.com](http://www.bioregional.com)  
[www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk](http://www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk)  
[www.vegvan.org.uk](http://www.vegvan.org.uk)

For the Carshalton Community Allotment, food growing training, healthy eating, abassador programme or farmers markets contact:

**EcoLocal:** The Old School House, Mill Lane, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 2JY  
 t. 020 8770 6611 e. [info@ecolocal.org.uk](mailto:info@ecolocal.org.uk)  
[www.ecolocal.org.uk](http://www.ecolocal.org.uk)



ONE  
PLANET  
FOOD

L♥VING LOCAL FOOD

