



My job as Community Allotments Officer is to promote and support people to grow their own fresh fruit and veg in Dundee's regeneration areas.

These areas are ID'd using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), which looks at various indices such as health, income and education level.



IYN entrants across Dundee

The map of Dundee shows the 12 It's Your Neighbourhood entrants from this year, most of which operate independently or with varying amounts of support from the council. I'm going to talk about four that I've had significant involvement with: Douglas, MAXwell, Ardler and Whorterbank.

Douglas Community Garden



The Douglas garden was built on a demolition site right in the heart of the area so it's handy for everyone. We built a lovely polytunnel for tomatoes but soon realised it was at the lowest point on the site and it flooded over the winter. Then Storm Gertrude destroyed it altogether...



On a more positive note – this year we discovered that peas can be musical if you rub them together. This group of kids love eating peas and anything green. Indeed, fights have broken out over the broccoli and once they'd eaten everything green, they started munching on the onions. So this just goes to show that kids WILL eat their veg if they are part of growing them and picking them.

Get them involved!

MAXwell Centre - Hilltown

- *Climate Challenge Funding*
- *Mini-allotment plots*
- *Raised beds*
- *Polytunnel*
- *Community space*
- *Outdoor classroom*



The MAXwell Centre is a very urban site with lots of demolition areas around. The garden there is at the end of its third season. The centre has lots of groups using its facilities so is central to the community and has connections with diverse groups. It was built with Climate Challenge Funding initially so there was scope for ambitious development such as raised beds, a polytunnel and lots of communal fruit.

Primary Schools involved – 4 in walking distance

Regular garden sessions

Environmental Education



- *Outdoor learning*
- *Wildlife gardening*
- *Healthy eating sessions*
- *Cooking*
- *School support*

There are four primary schools within walking distance so it's relatively easy to get them to come along, and they each have their own plot. The garden is a great site for outdoor education and promotion of healthy eating again.



But schools shut down in the summer and that's when the good stuff happens. So it's really important that the kids get to see the garden over the summer holidays and that's where the MAXwell Centre's Summer Garden Club comes in.

20 children a day attend the club; no parents required and they get to make lunch as well. So there's lots of gardening to do if they want to, endless fruit to pick and they learn how to make the food as well. The garden offers some fantastic urban wildlife experiences with bees and butterflies and, amazingly, only a year after the pond was built, they found this newt!

MAXwell centre's community fruit area:

Apples, morello cherries, plums, pears, blueberries, straws, hazelnuts, currants, japanese wineberry. By Rococo Gardens.





The Ardler garden was the first one I had the opportunity to plan from the very beginning and it started with this unlikely-looking paved space. We decided to plan the raised beds within the footprint of the existing slabs, so the paths would remain slabbed and we could maximise the growing space whilst maintaining access. We installed a ramp to get into the garden and a new, wider gate so it's fully disabled accessible. Our Community Payback team did the building and filled all the beds with Dundee's green waste compost. The wood is locally-sourced larch from the sawmill and our communal fruit bed was all propagated from free, local runners and cuttings so it's as eco-friendly as it could be. The artist's impression looked a bit optimistic to me but by mid-Summer it looked green and productive and we soon started to harvest some amazing veg. Our opening day was on the hottest day of the year.

Whorterbank Tattie Patch



The Whorterbank Tattie Patch is really my pet project and it allows me to work with local children in a garden space, which is fantastic.

What's Whorterbank?

Multi-storey development
in Lochee

SIMD ranking 79 out of
6976 - 1.1%

Get 10/10 for access!

OPFS Laughter Club for
kids





From a weedy, rough space

To bountiful veg and happy gardeners

This was a weedy, neglected space in a severely deprived multi-storey development but the children (with a little help from Community Payback again!) dug it over and planted it up. Now in its second season, the Tattie Patch has become an accepted and appreciated part of the local landscape and the comments from local residents have changed from ‘that’s a waste of time – everything around here gets trashed’, to ‘the veg are coming on nicely, when can I have some tatties?’



Beautiful veg...

*Cabbages big enough to
feed 4 families.*

We make this look cool.

Again, the children are keen to eat the produce and have learned some basic cooking skills; we are planning to establish a community kitchen nearby and to expand the garden into a bigger space next year.



The psychedelic mural



Brandon's big bunch o' radish



Finally, the Robertson St garden is a new project which is planned to be built this Winter. This area is not as deprived as Whorterbank but is still in the bottom 10%.



The site is on a steep slope with a view of the Tay, so we plan to terrace it and build paths that run with the contours, so it should look like a paddy field when it's finished. We've engaged with the local community with leaflet drops, collaring people as they walk across the site and at local events, as well as directly contacting local organisations to tap into existing contacts and groups. We hope to incorporate street art on the four metre-high concrete retaining wall at the north of the site, as well as establishing a pond for biodiversity and a natural play space. The council has stumped up for the cost of the build and we hope to support the community to take over the running of the garden as it develops.

So, I hope that shows you the variety of gardens in Dundee and how effective they can be in engaging people in these kind of areas.