

## **LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Community Food Growing and Engagement Officer</b>	<b>Grade:</b>	<b>S01</b>
<b>Reports to (Designation):</b>	<b>Senior Contract Officer</b>	<b>Grade:</b>	<b>P04</b>
<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Service Area:</b>	<b>Parks, Sport and Leisure</b>

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#### **Main Purpose of the job**

The Community Food Growing and Engagement Officer is responsible for managing initiatives for the development, partnership working and monitoring of sustainable community food growing in Lewisham. This role will foster community engagement, enhance local food security, and promote environmental sustainability by working closely with residents, allotment tenants/committees, community groups, schools, and partner organisations.

The post holder will upskill residents and motivate community groups to achieve self-sustaining community food growing spaces as well as achieve targets to increase the number of food growing spaces and Lewisham residents involved in community food growing. As part of achieving these aims the post holder will work closely with the Council's Allotment Service.

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#### **Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:**

##### **Key Responsibilities**

1. Develop and coordinate multiple food-growing projects across the borough, ensuring they align with council objectives and recommendations as outlined in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) task and finish working group on community food growing.
2. Identify suitable opportunities for new food growing areas such as Housing Estates and collaborate with associated service colleagues to encourage and enhance existing programs.
3. Identify suitable locations for community plots on self-managed allotment sites, collaborating with site representatives and associations as required, and identify appropriate community partners to take on management and food growing activities.

4. Engage with colleagues in Planning, Asset Management and Housing to develop a process for identifying derelict and brownfield sites that could support food growing.
5. Document, Monitor and evaluate project success, using data to measure community engagement, access, inclusivity and food growing outcomes.
6. Troubleshoot project challenges and implement solutions to ensure long-term sustainability.
7. Provide additional support for existing community allotment plots to increase and improve their capacity, including identifying any funding opportunities for growing.
8. Support Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) growers, enable more BIPOC growing projects/growers, as well as supporting/showcasing other growing groups with protected characteristics/from marginalised groups, enable growing of culturally appropriate foods.
9. Support the development of a financially sustainable Allotments Service that provides increased opportunities for community food growing.

## **Team Work**

1. Collaborate with internal council departments, including parks services and public health, to integrate food-growing initiatives into local strategies.
2. Collaborate with other external services and partners such as Lewisham Local and Grow Lewisham to promote Right to Grow and identify shared aims and opportunities for mutual support.
3. Work with Good Food Lewisham to support the development of Lewisham's Food Growing Network and compile a directory of food banks and other organisations that can accept donations of allotment produce and promote to all allotment tenants.

4. Share best practices and lessons learned with internal teams and external partners on engagement, establishment and co-ordination of Community Food Growing.
5. Participate in cross-departmental meetings and working groups to advocate for food-growing as a key aspect of local development.

### **Customer Support**

1. Act as the first point of contact for residents and organisations seeking support for food-growing initiatives.
2. Build strong relationships with stakeholders, allotment holders, the Lewisham Self-Managed Allotments Association (LSMAA), self-managed allotment committees, Lewisham Food Justice Alliance, Good Food Lewisham, partner organisations, businesses and community groups to foster a collaborative environment.
3. Provide tailored advice and guidance to Allotment Associations and Community Garden groups regarding best practice in Community Food growing helping them establish and maintain successful growing spaces.

### **Personal Duties**

1. Maintain accurate records of community food-growing projects, including participation, funding, and outcomes.
2. Prepare reports and presentations for stakeholders, including senior officers, councillors, and funding bodies.
3. Handle grant applications and funding proposals to secure financial support for community food growing initiatives.
4. Ensure compliance with relevant Lewisham policies, health and safety regulations, and environmental legislation.

5. Update the Council's online 'Community Garden guide' resource and disseminate resources on food growing at home and in the community, working closely with Good Food Lewisham and Food Justice where appropriate.
6. Increase occupancy of council-owned allotments available through the routine inspection and allocation of vacant plots and bringing neglected plots back into use on the Council's 10 directly managed and through liaison with committees on the 27 Self-Managed sites.
7. Document existing community allotment plots, identify suitable potential community allotment plots and support and promote their establishment.
8. Engage with and support the existing community projects on the Council's direct-managed allotment sites and facilitate with funding and promotional activities.
9. Respond to enquiries from elected members, senior officers, and residents. Collate responses to Council questions and media enquiries.
10. Build upon existing mapping of community food growing provision in the borough to maintain and promote a list and map of gardens on the Council website. Use this to identify gaps in provision and work with community partners to address these gaps.
11. Contact waiting list applicants for vacant allotment plots on both direct- and self-managed allotments, meeting those for direct-managed sites in person and arranging their Tenancy Agreements.
12. Carry out one survey of all applicants on the Allotments Waiting list to ensure their information is up to date and remove applicants that are no longer eligible or interested.
13. Represent the Council at meetings with allotment holders, allotment associations, and other community stakeholders including Good Food Lewisham network meetings and relevant Food Justice Action Plan meetings.
14. Promote and uphold the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the role.
15. Adhere to the Council's policies on data protection and confidentiality, ensuring that all personal and sensitive information is managed securely and in compliance with legal requirements.

## Other Duties

16. Carry out additional duties as assigned by the Council, contributing to the overall success and continuous improvement of the Allotment Service.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Community Food Growing and Engagement Officer

Post No

DIRECTORATE: Place

GRADE: S01

## Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

If you are a disabled person but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria, you will be shortlisted, and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

## Equal Opportunities

- Awareness of and commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community. **S**
- Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post. **S**

## Knowledge

Specific professional qualifications are not a pre-requisite for the job, though RHS or equivalent training to Level 3/equivalent would be welcome. But it is expected that the post holder will have extensive experience in an appropriate field.

Additional requirements are:

1. Good working knowledge of best practices in community engagement and participatory development ideally in either food-growing, allotments or parks and open spaces. **S**
2. Good knowledge of environmentally sustainable practices and the ability to incorporate them into site management and food growing projects.
3. Basic knowledge of relevant local authority policies, including climate change and public health. **S**
4. Basic knowledge of environmental and food security challenges within local communities.
5. Good knowledge of funding mechanisms and grant application processes for community projects. **S**
6. Good working knowledge of spreadsheet/database management. **S**
7. A clear understanding of data protection legislation and maintaining confidentiality. **S**

### **Aptitude and Skills**

To demonstrate the ability for:

1. Strong organisational and project management skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities efficiently.
2. Excellent communication skills, with the ability to engage diverse audiences, including residents, stakeholders, and local government representatives.
3. Ability to facilitate workshops, training sessions, and community meetings effectively.
4. Strong problem-solving skills, with the ability to troubleshoot project challenges and find innovative solutions.
5. Ability to work independently and as part of a team, fostering collaboration and cooperation.
6. Operate data systems proficiently, maintaining accurate electronic records and databases.
7. Support stakeholders to conduct thorough risk assessments for community projects and monitor corrective actions in compliance with health and safety standards.
8. Negotiate successfully while fostering positive relationships with stakeholders.

## **Experience**

The post holder would be expected to have demonstrable experience of:

1. Experience in community development, food-growing initiatives, or environmental sustainability projects. **S**
2. Working with local authorities, community groups, schools, or voluntary organisations. **S**
3. Proven track record of securing funding and managing project budgets. **S**
4. Working with or overseeing volunteer groups or community organizations, ensuring compliance with relevant standards. **S**
5. Promoting services and encouraging engagement from the local community.

## **Additional Requirements**

- Must hold a full and valid UK driving license and be eligible to drive Council vehicles as required by the role.

## **Personal Qualities**

- Self-starter, able to use own initiative. Innovative and enterprising. Effective team player.

## **Circumstances**

- Able to attend evening and weekend meetings as required.

## **Physical**

- Generally, candidates must meet standard Lewisham requirements for the post.