

Stalled

Spaces

Scotland

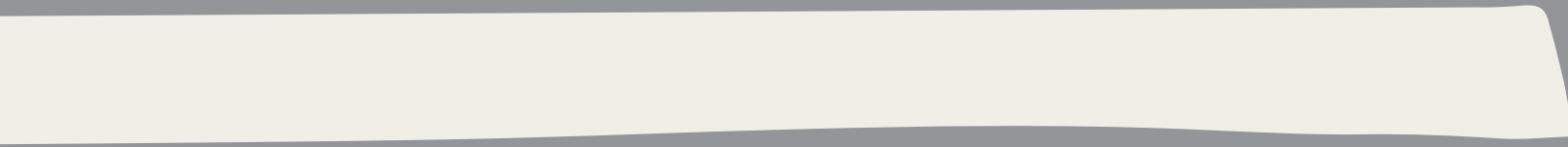
> Toolkit

Stalled Spaces Scotland > Toolkit

Architecture &
Design Scotland
Aithearrachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba



Toolkit Contents



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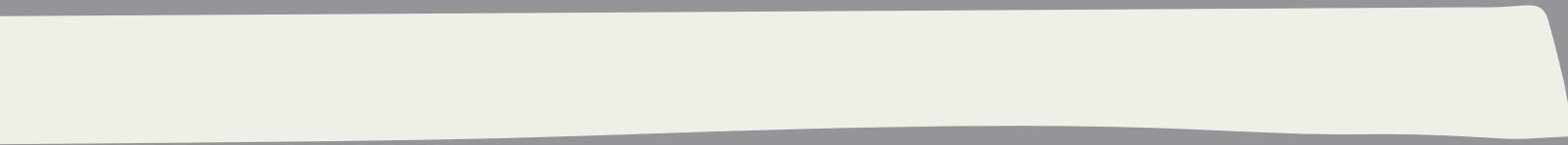
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Programme Context



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About Architecture & Design Scotland

Our purpose is to promote the value good architecture and sustainable design adds to everyone's lives. Our role is to help people – whether by enabling them to get more involved in shaping the places they live in or improving the design of the buildings they use. Well-designed buildings and places make the very best use of our resources and create places that help people and communities to flourish.

Through our work we help to implement the policies of the Scottish Government, and while we have involvement across a number of policy areas, our principal policy focus is on implementing Creating Places, Scotland's Policy for Architecture and Place. We were set up in 2005 by the Scottish Government and we are an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB).



Well-designed buildings and places make the very best use of our resources and create places that help people and communities to flourish.

About Stalled Spaces Scotland

Stalled Spaces Scotland was a Legacy 2014 programme commissioned by the Scottish Government and delivered by Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS) to facilitate the temporary use of under-used green spaces, stalled development sites or vacant and derelict land in town centres throughout Scotland.

To align with the Scottish Government's Town Centre Action Plan and the Town Centre First Principle the programme looked primarily at stalled spaces located within town centres to empower people to bring these spaces back into positive use for the benefit of the whole community.

Through this programme A&DS supported seven local authorities to develop their own initiatives, using the knowledge and learning from the award-winning Stalled Spaces initiative developed by Glasgow City Council.

The seven local authorities were:

- Angus
- East Dunbartonshire
- East Renfrewshire
- North Ayrshire
- Argyll & Bute
- Fife
- Renfrewshire

The Stalled Spaces Scotland Programme objectives were:

- To encourage and support local authorities and related organisations across Scotland to deliver a stalled space initiative in their area.
- To enable communities to transform disused spaces and communicate their aspirations to local authorities in their development.
- To create a learning resource through community involvement.
- To ensure there is legacy from the skills developed.
- To increase skill sharing and provide opportunities for knowledge exchange with both local communities and professionals.

Scotland's town centres

Town centres are an important element of the economic and social fabric of Scotland. Town centres can be a central component of successful local economies, offering a base for small business and jobs and often being at the core of community life. The Stalled Spaces Scotland programme focuses on providing funding and opportunities to groups who hope to transform town centre spaces. It is one of a number of demonstration projects included in the Town Centre Action Plan.

The Town Centre Action Plan was published by the Scottish Government in 2013, setting out its vision for greater investment in town centres and identifying how public and private sectors could better work together to encourage the economic growth of Scotland's communities.

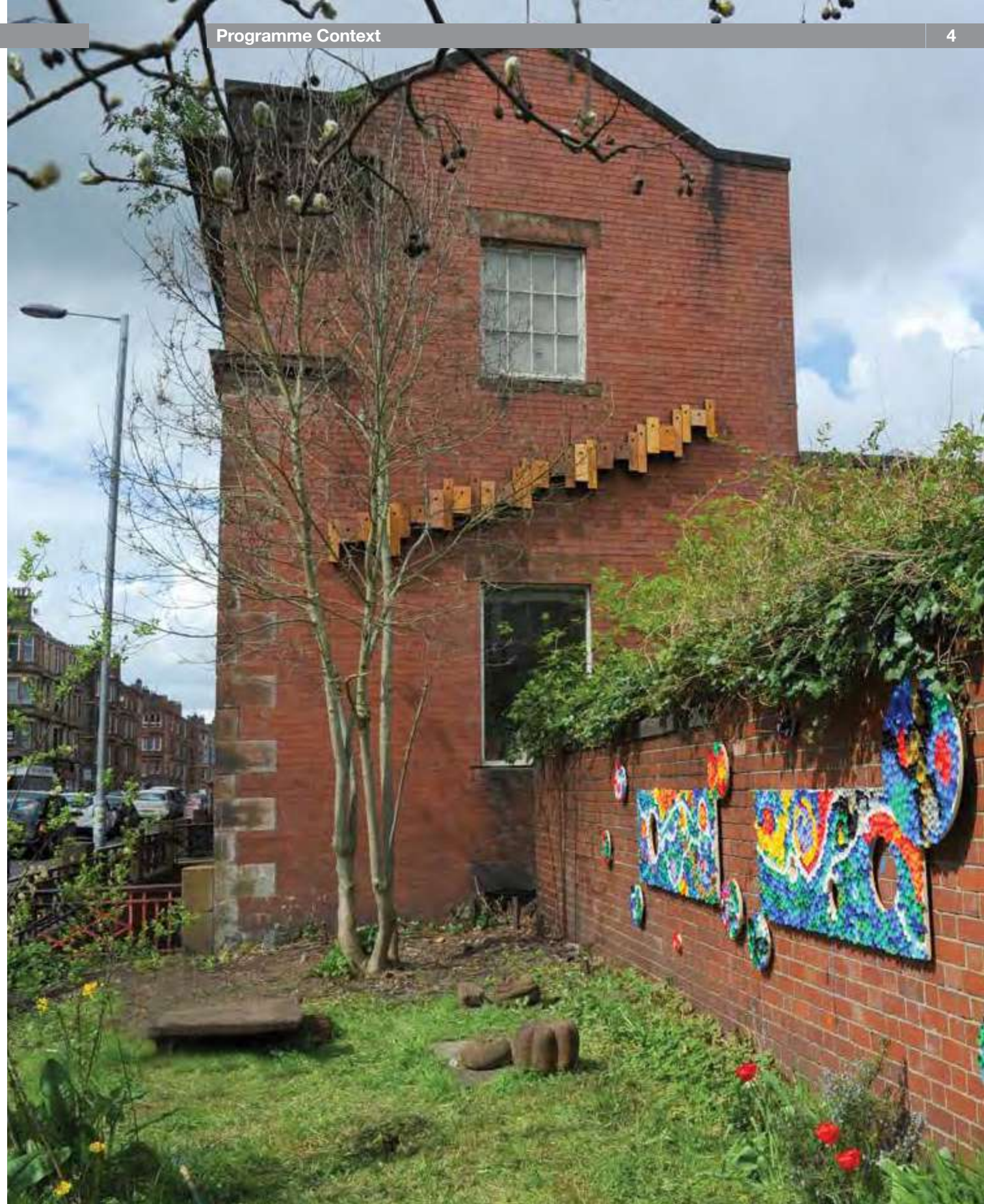
The Town Centre First Principle is a key part of the Action Plan, encouraging investment in town centres to help communities thrive.

The Town Centre Toolkit was developed by the Scottish Government to provide lots of useful ideas and advice for people and organisations on how to make their town centres more attractive, active and accessible. It is full of inspirational case studies and guides drawn from projects both in Scotland and worldwide.

You can find more information on town centres, and download the toolkit, at www.scotlandstowns.org



The Town Centre Toolkit was developed by the Scottish Government to provide lots of useful ideas and advice for people and organisations on how to make their town centres more attractive, active and accessible.



Community groups funded by Stalled Spaces Scotland

Angus

Brechin Partnership
Canine Capers
Dundee & Angus College
Forfar in Flower
Montrose Playhouse Project
Muirhead, Birkhill and
Liff Community Council

Argyll and Bute

Argyll College
Blarbuie Woodland Enterprise Ltd
Helensburgh Community Council
Oban Communities Trust
South Kintyre Development Trust
Tarbert Village Hall

East Dunbartonshire

Bearsden Baptist Church
Kirkintilloch Community Council
Lennoxton project group
Milngavie Community Council
Rosebank Allotment Association

East Renfrewshire

Barrhead Community Council
Off Grid Kids

Fife

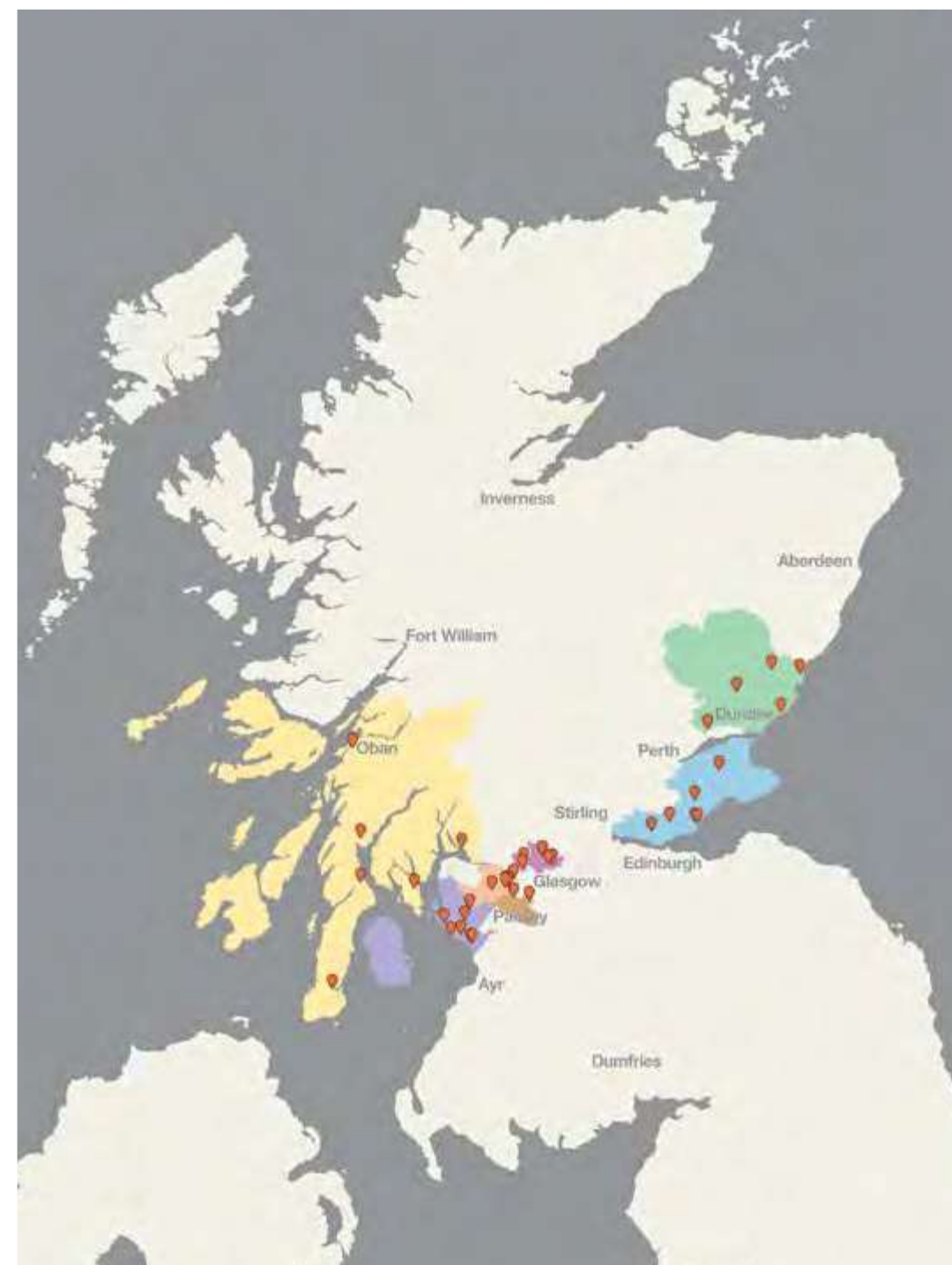
Cowdenbeath Community Council
Cowdenbeath Environmental Group
Cupar in Bloom
Cupar Arts
Fife Youth Arts Hub
Fife Cultural Trust
Go Glenrothes
Growing Kirkcaldy
Suit and Pace

North Ayrshire

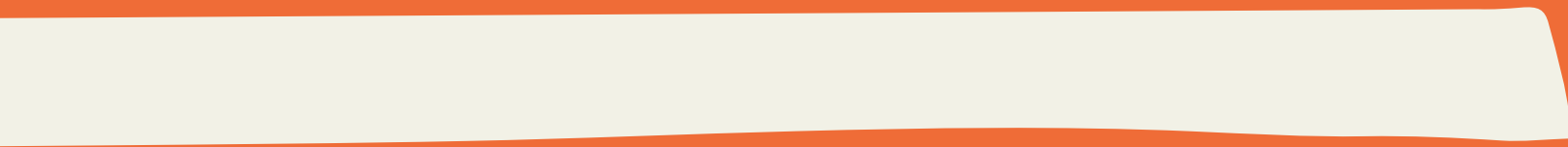
Ardrossan Castle Heritage Society
Dalry Community Hub
Fullarton Church
Hayocks Tenants Resident Association
Model X Media
Project Kilbirnie
West Kilbride Improvement Group

Renfrewshire

Environmental Training Team
I Am Me
Kilbarchan Community Council
Kilbarchan Smile
Loud N Proud
Paisley West & Central Community Council
& West End Growing Grounds Association
Reaching Older Adults in Renfrewshire
Renfrew Development Trust
The STAR Project



Toolkit Introduction





What you will find in this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to provide support and help with aspects of taking on a stalled spaces project. It includes inspirational examples of the types of projects you might develop for your space. There is also information that helps to introduce and explain many of the behind-the-scenes issues and obstacles that you might encounter, from where to seek further funding for your project, identifying a site's owner, through to encouraging and managing volunteers. Each guide is presented as a clear and straightforward list of the sorts of things you'll need to have available to deliver your project, and the steps you might take along the way.



This toolkit is designed to provide support and help with aspects of taking on a stalled spaces project. It includes inspirational examples of the types of projects you might develop for your space...

What is a stalled space?

Stalled spaces can be land owned by developers or local authorities where development has not yet started or has been delayed. This delay could be due to the current economic climate, or uncertainty over the proposed development due to take place there. Alternatively, stalled spaces can include vacant* and derelict† land or unused open space with no function. These can be enclosed private areas of land, spaces that are out of bounds to the public or rough wasteland that have a negative impact upon an area. More often than not, they tend to be eyesores that annoy people who pass them by every day.

Definitions:

* **Vacant Land** is an area that previously had buildings and other structures on it but is now cleared and suitable for re-use, and which the local planning authority has indicated is currently available for redevelopment.

† **Derelict Land** is an area on which buildings and other structures once stood, but that is not suitable for immediate redevelopment. This could be due to abandoned buildings on the site in need of demolition, or ground which remains contaminated from the site's previous use.

There are 3 main types of stalled spaces:

- A piece of land where development has been proposed but is delayed due to the current economic climate.
- An area that is unused or has no clear function.
- A vacant or derelict piece of land that has been abandoned.

All of this land may be privately owned or council owned, and it may be possible to contact the landowner and propose making use of the space for your own temporary project.

Making temporary use of these under-utilised spaces can:

- Turn a problem into an opportunity
- Have a positive impact on the appearance of the area and improve the use of facilities by local people
- Engage and involve people in making a difference in their neighbourhood.

Common starting points

While there are lots of ways you could make use of a stalled space in your local area, there are a number of common points that most groups will experience when starting out on their project.

Creating a constituted group

Often a community organisation will need to be a constituted group in order to receive funding. A constitution helps to establish your group's aims and objectives, and also provides legal protection for its members. For more information on constituted groups, go to page 21.

Getting permission from the landowner

It's vital that you seek permission from the owner of your stalled space before you do any work there. This permission should be formalised as a short contract that describes when your lease begins and ends. For more information on creating a formal agreement, go to page 43.

Creating an exit strategy

It's important to remember that a stalled spaces project is temporary. You may know exactly when your lease runs out, or you may have a rolling agreement, but at some point you may be asked to leave the site when a more permanent development is to take place. When starting out, you should think about what you will do when you need to leave. You may want to move your project to a new site, or wrap it up with a celebratory event.



How to



3



Introduction to the How-to section

Turning your stalled spaces project from an idea into reality takes more than a good location and a temporary activity you'd like to try. There are lots of common issues that groups will have to deal with behind the scenes, from finding funding for your project, and working out if you need insurance, through to promoting your project in the local press and online. While each group will find different ways to work out these issues, this section of the toolkit gives some advice and tips to help you navigate these challenges and make your project a success.



While each group will find different ways to work out these issues, this section of the toolkit gives some advice and tips to help you navigate these challenges and make your project a success.



Creating a constituted group

First things first – what is a constituted group and why do you need to create one?

A constituted group is simply a community group or organisation with a written document – a constitution – that describes what the group's going to do and how they'll do it.

4 good reasons to constitute your group

- 1 You need a constitution **to set up a bank account**.
- 2 You need a constitution to qualify for most funding.
- 3 You can ensure common understanding by clearly stating the rules and structure of the group, its scope and what's expected of individuals.
- 4 It'll help you **to consider the future** of your group and, if relevant, look at things such as ongoing maintenance of the space.

What you'll need to constitute your group

- **A constitution** – This important, but simple, legal document states what your group intends to do, that it'll work for the benefit of the whole community and that provision has been made for future development of the objectives. Once adopted, it requires a formal procedure to change it. **See our quick guide to writing a constitution on p23.**
- **A steering/working group** – This team will be responsible for setting up the group and drafting the constitution (members often become the elected Management Committee).
- **A Management Committee** – This should include a chairperson to lead the group, a secretary and a treasurer.
- **A bank account** – This is necessary to keep accounts and apply for funding.

What happens next?

When you've finalised your constitution, **convene a meeting to agree and adopt it**. Record the key members' names, addresses, positions in the group and signatures/dates on the last page of the document (**keep a copy!**). Once this is done, your group has been formally constituted and it's time to really get started on your project.

Good to know

- As a voluntary association **a constituted group's Management Committee could be personally liable** for any debts incurred, and legal proceedings can be taken out against individuals – rather than the organisation – as it is not recognised as a legal body.
- **Looking to obtain charitable status?** Why not think about setting up as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation? This provides limited liability for members and is suitable for groups that want to become charities but don't want/need the complex structure of charity law. To register as a charity, you can adapt a model constitution approved by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).
- **Don't want to create a constitution for your group?** You may be able to work with an organisation such as a housing association that can act as a constituted group for you. It's also worth checking if your area already has a constituted group that you could work with.

For more information about creating constituted groups, contact your Local Authority.

A rough guide: Writing your constitution

The important thing is that YOUR constitution must fit the requirements of YOUR group. Typically, however, you should include the following sections to cover some key points:

- 1 **The Name** of your group or association.
- 2 **Objectives** – What does the group aim to achieve?
- 3 **Audience** – Who has the group been set up to help? (If relevant.)
- 4 **Powers** – How is it going to achieve its objectives? How will it raise funds to help meet its objectives?
- 5 **Membership** – Who can join? Are there subscriptions to be paid? What are the grounds for terminating a membership?
- 6 **Office bearers/Management Committee** – Which posts should be elected and how long should the bearer hold office for? What powers will the Management Committee have?

- 7 **Meetings**, for example, Annual General Meetings (AGMs) – How often? How much notice will be given before the meeting takes place? What will happen at each AGM?
- 8 **Procedures** – How will decisions be made? By consensus? How will records of meetings, events etc. be kept? Who can vote?
- 9 **Finances** – How will funds owned by the group be looked after and used? When will financial statements be produced/audits happen? How many account signatories will there be?
- 10 **Property** (heritable/moveable) – Will any titles acquired by the group be vested in its name?
- 11 **Amendments** to the constitution – When/how can these be made?
- 12 **Dissolution** – When would this happen? How will it be done? What happens to the group's remaining assets?

Remember! You don't always have to be too prescriptive and tie yourself down. For more guidance, see our sample constitution on p25.

Example Project Association Constitution

1) Name

The name of the association shall be EXAMPLE PROJECT Association, hereinafter referred to as the Association.

2) Objects

- a) to manage the cultivation of EXAMPLE PROJECT
- b) to manage and supervise EXAMPLE PROJECT for the benefit of the Association, in accordance the Association's General Rules and Conditions of Let.
- c) to provide, by whatever means agreed by the Membership, support for the plot holders.

In pursuit of these Objects, the Association will be non political, non-sectarian, non-homophobic, non-sexist, non-racial and will not discriminate on any grounds.

The objects of the Association shall be to advance the education and promote the welfare of the members by supporting and assisting in furthering the charitable activities of EXAMPLE PROJECT and in furtherance thereof but not otherwise the association shall seek:

- to support the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation in EXAMPLE PROJECT for members of the Association
- and to protect the environmental amenity of EXAMPLE PROJECT and its precincts.

3) Powers

In furtherance of the above objects, the Association may:

- a) employ and pay any person or persons to supervise, organise and carry on the work of the Association;
- b) engage and pay fees to professionals and technical advisors/consultants to assist in the work of the association;
- c) work in liaison with representatives of voluntary organisations, Government departments, local and other statutory authorities and individuals;
- d) take out membership of organisations that are considered to be in the interest of and compatible with the objects of the association;
- e) promote and carry out or assist in promoting research survey investigation and, where considered appropriate, publish the results;
- f) arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures, classes, seminars and training courses;
- g) collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the objects and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objects whether in this country or overseas;
- h) cause to be written and printed or otherwise reproduced and circulated such papers, books, periodicals or other documents as shall further the objects;
- i) subject to such consents as may be required by law, borrow or raise money for the objects and accept gifts in such terms and on such securities as shall be deemed to be necessary;

- j) raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons provided that the association does not undertake to undertake permanent trading activities in raising funds for the said object;
- k) invest the monies of the Association not immediately required for the said objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law;
- l) do all other lawful things as necessary for the attainments of the objects.
- m) ensure that the Association has appropriate Public Liability Insurance.
- n) the association shall ensure that risk assessments and health & safety audits are carried out on the site

4) Membership and Subscriptions

- a) Membership of the Association shall be open to all interested persons aged 16 years or over who live within our defined boundaries on completion of a missive form in such form as the Management Committee may require and on payment of any subscription which may be determined from time to time at a general meeting, at least 4 weeks prior to the AGM.
- b) Membership will be confined to persons who are resident in the INSERT THE AREA YOU SET OUT TO BE RELEVANT , whose subscription and fees are fully paid by the due date, and who undertake to cultivate their Plot in accordance with the Rules, Regulations and constitution of the Association.
- c) The due date for the payment of Association Subscription is SET DATE YOU WANT. Payment should be made, in one single payment, YOUR NAMED ORGANISATION and sent only to the Treasurer. This payment should reach the Treasurer before the deadline of SET YOUR DEADLINE DATE
- d) Honorary members may be elected at the discretion of the Management Committee but these members shall not be entitled to vote at general meetings.

5) Plot Leases

- a) If a plot holder wishes to introduce a second eligible person to the lease, he/she will inform the Secretary. After a period of three years, or at the discretion of the Secretary, the second person may assume continuity rights.
- b) The Association's Waiting List will be maintained in a strict, consecutive, manner by the Secretary. In adding names to the Waiting List, the Secretary will employ an equal opportunities policy.
- c) The Secretary may refuse to add to the Waiting List any person known to have been expelled from an Allotment Association elsewhere.
- d) The Management Committee shall have the right for good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any individual provided the individual concerned shall have the right to appeal.
- e) No member of the association shall become an employee of the Association.

6) Management

- a) The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Management Committee shall consist of 4 office bearers namely a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and not less than seven or more than eleven other members. One-third of the committee shall form a quorum.
- b) The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and two member auditors shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting and the term of office shall not exceed 5 consecutive years.
- c) The Management Committee shall have powers to co-opt members to serve on the Committee until the next Annual General Meeting but at no time, shall there be more than 2 co-opted members.
- d) The quorum for meetings of the Management Committee shall be one third of members of the committee present in person.
- e) Every member of the committee shall have one vote which (whether on a show of hands or on a secret ballot) must be given personally.
- f) In the case of an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a ballot, the chairperson of the meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote in addition to any other vote he/she may have.

7) Meetings of the Association

- a) The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held each year within three months of the end of our financial year (SET DATE). At least 3 weeks' notice of such meeting shall be given by the Secretary who shall dispatch copies of the agenda to members. The business to be conducted at the Annual General Meeting shall include consideration of the Annual Report to be submitted by the Chairperson, the Treasurer's Annual Account and the election of Office Bearers and Committee Members. Additional items for consideration may be raised, by any member giving not less than one week of written notice or at the Chairperson's discretion at the meeting itself.
- b) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be summoned at the request of any ten members. Notice of such a meeting shall be sent by the Secretary to all members, not less than 3 weeks before the date of the meeting.
- c) The quorum for General Meetings shall be ten members present in person.
- d) Every member shall have one vote which (whether on a show of hands or on a secret ballot) must be given personally.
- e) In the case of an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a ballot, the Chairperson of the meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote in addition to any other vote he/she In the case of an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a ballot, the chairperson of the meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote in addition to any other vote he/she may have.

8) Finance

- a) The funds of the Association shall be managed as the Management Committee direct.
- b) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the association.
- c) A bank account shall be opened in the name of the association with such bank

as the Management Committee shall decide. The Management Committee shall authorise named members of the Management Committee (one of whom shall be the Treasurer) to sign cheques on behalf of the association. All cheques must be signed by not less than 2 of the authorised signatories. None of the signatories should be related to each other.

- d) The annual accounts shall be subject to an internal audit in advance of being presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- e) All moneys raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the objects of the Association and for no other purpose.
- f) The financial year shall be the fiscal year, 1st April - 31st March.

9) Property

The title to all property, heritable and moveable, which may be acquired by or on behalf of the association shall be vested in the name of the Association.

10) Amendment of Constitution

This Constitution may be approved or amended at an Annual General Meeting or at any Extraordinary General Meeting specifically called for that purpose, with the support of two-thirds of the members present and voting provided one month's notice has been given to the Secretary of the proposed amendment. The notice of such meeting shall state the terms of the proposed amendment to the Constitution. The quorum for such a meeting will be 20% of the membership. No alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the association to cease to be recognised by the Inland Revenue as a charity.

11) Application of Funds

- a) Membership or affiliation will not entitle any person, society or group to any share in the income or assets of the Association which shall be expended only on the objects set out in Article 2 of the Constitution.
- b) If the Association is wound up, any funds remaining after liabilities have been met shall be given or transferred to such other charitable organisations or organisations having objects similar to the objects of the association as the Management Committee may determine.

This Constitution was agreed and accepted on
DATE YOU HAVE DRAWN THIS AGREEMENT UP

Chairperson (Print Name):

Signature.....

Treasurer (Print Name):

Signature.....

Secretary (Print Name):

Signature.....

Finding funding

Whatever your plans for a stalled space, the chances are you'll need some money to make it happen. The good news is there are lots of ways to raise funds. One of the most common is to **apply for a grant**.

Grant funding – where do you start?

Many organisations provide this type of funding – for example, The Voluntary Action Fund, The Climate Challenge Fund, The Scottish Community Foundation, Awards for All, The Big Lottery Fund and the CSGN Development Fund. **Each fund has its own set of objectives** that may be relevant to your stalled space project.

You can **find out more about funds available at your local library** (access the Big Lottery Fund Finder tool and find books like The Directory of Grant-making Trusts). There are also **some fantastic online resources such as the Foundation Scotland, Sustainable Scotland and Greenspace Scotland** websites.

Good to know

Most funders will require you to apply as a constituted group.

Keep records of when you receive grants; this will be useful for any future applications.

How to write a successful funding application

When applying for funds, you'll have to write an application letter, or fill out a form, describing how much money you need and how it will be spent. **The following tips will help you to get your application right.**

- 1 **Read each fund's guidelines carefully and make a list of the ones that are the closest match to your project.** Questions? Call the organisation before completing your application.
- 2 **Check the deadline dates.** Do you have enough time between the decision time and the proposed start of your project? And don't submit your application late!
- 3 **Get your documents together – constitution, project plan, budget, copy of accounts, case studies/evidence for support.** Funds are more likely to support your project if it's been well thought-out.
- 4 **Be concise when describing your organisation.** You'll need to include aims, objectives, the date the organisation started, your legal status and charity registration number (if applicable).
- 5 **Use the 'five Ws' to describe your project.**
 - **What** [will be delivered]?
 - **Why** [is the project needed]?
 - **Where** [is the stalled space]?
 - **When** [will the project be complete, or is it ongoing]?
 - **Who** [will be delivering the project/will benefit from the project and how]?
- 6 **Be specific.** Funders want to know what difference their money will make. If your project is big, it might be worth dividing it up into smaller chunks to secure grants from smaller funders.
- 7 **Use the funder's guidelines to write your application.** What are their specific key points of interest? How does your project fit those?

What about crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is popular at the moment, but it's not right for every group or project. **Here are some things to be sure of before going down this route:**

- **Can you create a buzz and keep it going?** Will other people care about your project? (Even those not afraid to disagree with you!)
- **Who IS your crowd?** In addition to the local community, who has similar ideas/values and can help you spread the word or bring in other contributors?
- **Will people see a real tangible result?** (i.e. how their money has been spent). Could you break your stalled space project down into stages?
- **Can you offer a rewards programme?** For a community garden, this could involve anything from a 'free' plant to the ability to dedicate a fruit tree, depending on the amount donated.
- **Is your target figure realistic?** Can it be achieved with the support and capacity your group has?
- **Do you have the time to run a crowdfunding campaign?** A successful campaign will involve a lot of work!

Building passion with community shares

If your stalled space project will provide a **longer-term social benefit**, and involves a **community asset rather than an event**, **community shares could be a powerful way to raise funds**. By offering your community the opportunity to own shares, **you'll gain not only investors, but real supporters and advocates of your project**.

7 classic fundraising ideas

Don't forget the old favourites when it comes to drumming up funds ...

1. *Shake those buckets – have a collection*.*
2. *Host a bake sale – everyone loves a cake.*
3. *Hold a quiz, bingo or race night – people like to win something.*
4. *Take part in a sponsored activity – run/walk/litter pick-up/skydive!*
5. *Do something people will pay for – car washing, bag packing etc.*
6. *Organise an event – show people what you're doing with your stalled space as well as raise money with an entry fee.*
7. *Get local businesses to sponsor your project – all round publicity.*

*You will need a public charitable collection permit, see www.gov.uk for details.

Contact your local council for information about available funding in your area.

A rough guide: Project plan outline

Preparing the perfect project plan

A project plan is nothing to be scared of; it's just a description of what you hope to achieve and how. But it's a **vital tool when it comes to securing funding**. Here's an idea of what to include in your group's plan.

Why?

- **Clearly state why your project is needed.** (All funders want to know this.)
- Gather documentation to **demonstrate this need** – case studies, quotes, statistics, news stories, surveys, etc.

Timeline

- **Draw up a calendar with all your proposed project activities** for the year/each year. Plans typically cover 1–3 years for small projects.
- Will you have time to do them all? Think about whether the activities can all happen at once, or one after the other – then plot this in the calendar.
- Activities could include development and maintenance (for example, of a garden), admin, finance and budgets, outreach, marketing and planning.

Basic budget

- **Write down a list of all of the costs involved in your planned activities.** What equipment will you need? Will there be insurance costs or travel expenses?

Staffing needs

- **Set out what support** you will need to deliver your project activities. Who is already committed (staff/volunteers), and what are their skills? Will you need more hands on deck? Do you need other people with specific skills?

Resources

- **Identify the resources you already have and any additional ones that you will need.** This could be **funding, physical space, equipment or materials** (for example, seeds and compost for a community garden).
- Where will equipment and/or resources be stored? Onsite?

Link-ups

- **Pinpoint any external agencies, communities or individuals that you'll need to liaise with.** For example, funding bodies, your Local Authority or council, health or education bodies, charities, etc.
- What things will you need to negotiate with them?

The impact

- **Describe the difference(s) that a grant would make.** How many people would benefit? What will change as a result?
- Think about how you will measure the success of the project – during and after.

The end

- **Outline your exit strategy.** What will happen at the end of your project? Will it actually end or will others take over? Will additional funds be added to the project to extend or enhance it? How will all of this happen?

Creating a budget

Good financial management is a must if you want your stalled space project to succeed. Even if it's just a small initiative, writing a budget should be one of your group's first priorities, and here are the reasons why.

Creating a budget will help you to:

- Understand, in monetary terms, what your group is going to do
- **Estimate how much your project will cost**
- **Identify the funding** you need to raise
- **Avoid unexpected costs**
- **Keep track** of when payments need to be made
- **Make financial decisions.**

Where do you start?

Your budget is a **fundamental part of the planning process** and, therefore, should be prepared early on. Think about it this way – your project plan is your 'to-do' list and your budget tells you how much each item on the list is going to cost. Pulling it together doesn't need to be complicated.

There are two key steps to building a budget:

- 1 Write down all of the items you will need to pay for (**expenditure**). These are your overheads and could include equipment; paid workers' salaries; travel costs; communication costs (phone, postage, meetings); insurance; leases; and publicity costs. Some of these will be known costs and some you will have to estimate.
- 2 Write down any **income** you are expecting – membership fees, donations, grants you've already received or are likely to be awarded.

Top budgeting tips

- **Keep the format simple.** A basic Excel spreadsheet, or table with columns and rows will suffice.
- **Be precise.** Get quotes for each item listed in your budget. Funders may ask what you've based your budget on.
- **Be realistic. DON'T underestimate** in a bid to keep the figure down because this could lead to all sorts of financial trouble down the road. And **DON'T overestimate** because this could cause a funding application to be rejected.
- **Split your expenditure items into Capital and Revenue.** Capital items are expected to have some resale value for up to 2 years, for example, expensive equipment. Revenue items are your day-to-day or running costs, for example, rent, admin, postage and volunteer expenses.
- Be sure to **include 'hidden' costs** such as insurance, travel and volunteer expenses or phone credit.
- **Keep your budget up to date with any changes** to costs or sources of income. Once a quarter the treasurer should present a finance report to the group, showing actual income and expenditure to compare against the budget's figure. You can then make any adjustments to your plan accordingly. (The Management Committee must agree changes.)
- **Include a small contingency fund** within your budget, in case of emergencies. This is often set at 10% of the total budget.

Remember! Your budget is always an internal document for your group's use. Funders or other external bodies won't hold you to it. For more examples of things to include in your budget, see our sample budget for a community garden on page 38.

Good to know

- Costs for **the purchase or rental of equipment and materials can be balanced against income from sources of funding**. For temporary projects, you may be able to sell on some of the equipment you purchase, which can be factored into your budget.
- **Keep your costs down by sourcing sponsorship or donations 'in kind'**. For example, a local printing business may donate their service in support of your project, rather than make a monetary contribution. Or a local garden centre may provide you with certain materials in exchange for putting their logo on your promotional leaflets.
- **Put your key documents online to keep printing and distribution costs down**. You'll still need to ensure there are some hard copies available for people who don't have access to the internet.
- **The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) offers loads of general information about how to manage your project's finances** – from preparing project budgets to simplifying accounting procedures. You'll find 'How to' guides and even cheap video training courses on their website.

Sample community garden budget

Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Income/Revenue			
Membership subs			
Grants			
Fundraising events			
Donations			
Balance from previous year			
Total Income			

Expenditure/Costs			
Lease			
Planning permission application fee			
Licence(s)			
Liability insurance			
Volunteer expenses (e.g. travel/training)			
Storage (e.g. shed)			
Tools			
Running cost of tools (e.g. petrol)			
Raised beds			
Fencing			
Plants/seeds/bulbs			
Compost			
Feeder			
Bulletin board			
Printing (e.g. leaflets)			
First aid kit			
Event costs (e.g. entertainment, prizes)			
Communication (e.g. phone calls, postage)			
Total Expenses			
NET INCOME (Income minus expenditure)			

Finding out who owns your site

If you don't know who owns the stalled space you hope to make use of, you must find out before going forward with your plans.

Why you need the landowner's permission

- You will need a lease agreement with the owner.
- You may need to get planning permission or other consents to use the land.
- You need to know if there are any particular controls on the land, for example, listed buildings or whether the plot is a Site of Specific Interest.
- You're unlikely to receive any funding without the owner's consent.

Good to know

Can you go ahead without formal consent anyway?

Yes, but it's risky. You could find your project coming to an abrupt halt if the owner decides to remove you from the site half way through your plans. All of the time and money already invested won't be reimbursed, and the landowner could keep all of the produce, tools and any structures on the land.

5 ways to search for the owner of your stalled space

- 1 **Start with the locals.** Ask those at neighbouring properties for the owner's name and contact details. **Tip:** This is also a great way to gauge local support for your project and to get the neighbours on board!
- 2 **Contact your local council.** Most councils will have a Land and Property Portfolio, or something similar, that you can search. For example, Glasgow City Council enables you to make a Land Ownership Enquiry. **This service is free** and you can complete a form online, or contact them by phone. You'll usually receive an answer within 20 days.
- 3 **Apply to the Registers of Scotland** for a formal search for the landowner. There is a small fee for their Ownership Search, however, the results are with you within 2–5 working days.
- 4 Search **the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Register.** **You can find this register on the Scottish Government's website.** It lists each urban vacant and derelict site surveyed by local authorities in the 2015 Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey. If your site is listed but the owner is marked as unknown, contact the local authority where it is situated as they may be able to provide details of the landowner.
- 5 If all else fails, you could **put up a notice on the land** stating that you'd like to use the space for a particular project and provide contact details for the landowner to get in touch. Or post notices in local newspapers or on public notice boards requesting information on the site owner.



Thinking about buying the land?

- If your stalled space project is a long-term initiative, you may wish to consider purchasing the land, rather than leasing it. This will **give your community group full control of the space**, which could lead to financial self-sufficiency and give you access to different types of funding. However, before going down this route, **you should always take legal advice**. The Law Society can provide you with a list of local lawyers.
- If a local authority or public agency owns the land that you want to buy, you may be able to acquire it via a community asset transfer. To do this, you will need to set up a community-based organisation, have some funding in place and a plan for nurturing the ongoing success of the land ownership. For more information on the benefits of community ownership and how asset transfers work, contact the Development Trusts Association of Scotland.

Creating a formal land agreement

As covered in the previous section, you **MUST** get written permission from the landowner before you begin any work on your stalled space site.

This should take the form of a document that states exactly when your presence on the land will begin and end. It doesn't have to be complicated; **it only needs to be a couple of pages long.**

First of all, however, you need to get the owner to agree to you using their land.

How to negotiate with the landowner

From the beginning, you need to think about the land from the owner's perspective. **What are their main needs, aims and concerns?** If you know what these are and address them, you've got a much better chance of securing a lease with the landowner. You'll also be able to write the most appropriate formal agreement.

12 things landowners want to know

- 1 **Are your plans realistic?** Show the landowner your project/business plan and your budget.
- 2 **Will you take care of the land?** Ensure they're confident that you can handle the practicalities, for example, fence maintenance and weeding. And reassure the landowner of the temporary nature of the project. One of the conditions may be that you cannot break the surface of the ground or fix anything to it.
- 3 **Will you pay the rent on time? (If applicable)** Reassure them by setting up a standing order or direct debit.

- 4 **What will the neighbours think?** Demonstrate that you've thought about and addressed any concerns they may have such as parking.
- 5 **What will the site look like?** Be prepared to limit the number of certain structures. (Polytunnels are not everyone's cup of tea!) And don't be afraid to point out if your project will improve the land's appearance.
- 6 **Will you be easy to deal with?** Provide the landowner with trustworthy references, and choose one point of contact for them to deal with (a good communicator with a pleasant manner). The last thing a landlord wants is the hassle of a tenant who's unreliable and disorganised!
- 7 **Are you committed?** Reassure the landowner that you'll carry out your plan to the end, even in the event of setbacks.
- 8 **Will you be professional?** Instil confidence that you'll comply with regulations and agreements without any hassle.
- 9 **Do you share the landowner's ethos?** Demonstrate that what's important to them is important to you.
- 10 **Will you leave when you say you will?** Agree specific dates.
- 11 **Will you support future development of the site?** Agree not to undermine the landowner's chances of getting planning permission later on.
- 12 **Can you help the landowner meet their policies, aims and objectives?** If your Stalled Space is council owned, you could help deliver on their social inclusion policy.

Once you've got the landowner on board, it's time to get things down on paper...

What type of land agreement will you need?

A formal land agreement (usually called a lease) is a contract between you and your landlord, stating what you've agreed to. At the very least, this should cover who the landlord and tenant are; a description of the area to be used; the length of the lease; and the cost or rent.

Although basically the same thing, leases of land are often called different names. These various lease 'types' simply reflect the different provisions included in them. Generally, the longer a lease is for, the more complicated it'll look and the more responsibilities the tenant will have. **But it's up to you to decide what's included.**

Will it cost to get a lease?

By using lease templates and the heads of terms suggested in our guide, you could minimise the amount, and therefore cost, of legal advice required. However, **you should always get a solicitor to check your lease and to ensure you're clear about your responsibilities and any financial consequences before you sign.**

In addition to solicitor's fees, there are other fees to think about, such as ownership searches and lease registration. It's also reasonable for the landlord to ask your group to bear their legal costs, although you should try to cap this in advance.

Remember: The cost of a formal lease will be preferable to the cost of the loss of everything on the site and the threat of being sued by the landowner for damages. (Group members could be personally liable!)

Find a local legal firm via the Law Society of Scotland.

What about rent?

Some landowners will let community groups use their land for free or for a nominal amount to cover costs; others will want a market rate. **Check with your Local Authority for restrictions on rental rates for community land uses.** Or head to your local library to access the Valuation Roll for the assessed annual rental value for similar sites to yours.

Good to know

- **The Community Land Advice Service (CLAS)** is a fantastic resource. It provides guides to help you work out things like which type of lease you need, agreement templates to download and the answers to lease FAQs.
- **Grants may be available to help with the legal process** of formalising your lease.
- **Ask around! Someone in your local community could help.** (Although this may save money, don't expect professional time for free.)
- **You can cut costs just by giving clear instructions and the right documentation to your solicitor.**

To draft your land agreement, follow our rough guide on p48.



A rough guide: Points to cover with your land agreement

Most leases contain similar points, known as 'Heads of Terms'. This handy guide will get you thinking about what you need to include in YOUR agreement*, and help you to flesh out those terms.

*This list of terms isn't exhaustive. You may need to include other points for your stalled space project.

Top Tip

Only include items in your agreement that are relevant to your stalled space project and site.

Term/ condition of use	What to talk about
The landowner	State the landowner's name and address.
The tenant/occupier	State your group or organisation's name.
Location	Note the address of the site being used. Ideally, attach a plan of the area and mark the site in red.
Term (or length of lease)	State the start and end date of your project. Is there a chance it could go on longer? If so, add that the agreement will be reviewed on a [monthly] basis thereafter.
Rent	State the agreed rent, when it will be paid and how. Annually? Monthly? On a specific day of the week? In advance or arrears? By direct debit? Will there be a rent review?
Notice period	State the length of notice period the landowner should give before you have to vacate the site. Does the site have to be restored to pre-entry condition? Will there be a joint inspection at the end of the lease?
Permitted uses	State exactly what the tenant can use the site for.
Liability	State which types of insurance will be required. (For example, public liability, accidental damage, theft or vandalism, employers' liability, etc.) What will the landowner insure? What will the tenant insure?
Access and parking	State where your group/the intended users of the facility will access the site by vehicle and/or on foot, and where parking areas will be. (Mark these on an attached plan for clarity.)
Maintenance	State which things on the site will be the landowner's responsibility to maintain and which will be the tenant's responsibility to look after. (For example, fences, weeds, ditches, taps, water pipes, locks and keys, hard-standing structures/buildings.) What will happen if the site isn't maintained to the landowner's satisfaction?

Term/ condition of use	What to talk about
Protected items	Does the landowner wish for any existing trees, plants, shrubs, etc. on the site to be protected? Does the tenant need the landowner's consent before certain items are maintained (pruned) or removed?
Erection of hard-standing structures or buildings	Do you need landowner's consent to erect hard-standing structures, or is he/she happy for you to do what you want?
Electricity/Gas etc.	Are these utilities included in the rent, or will they be charged by the landlord, or directly, to the tenant?
Compensation for improvements	State what will happen to any improvements or additions to the site when the lease ends. This could specifically include a last harvest for a community garden group.
Responsibility for legal costs in finalising the agreement	State whether the tenant or landowner will pay all the costs. Or will each party meet their own costs?
Assignment & subletting	Can the tenant assign or transfer their rights to another party? Do they need the landowner's consent first?
Break clause	Is there an option to end the lease at any set point? If so, by the landowner or by the tenant? How will this be exercised?
Option to renew	Will there be an option to renew the lease? If so, by which party? How will this be exercised?
Grounds for termination	State any situations where the landowner will have the right to terminate the agreement during the lease period (e.g. vandalism/other nuisances or abuses occurring on the site as a result of the project).

Who can sign the lease?

Your constituted group's current office bearers.

Use our sample formal agreement on p51 to create your own lease.

Draft Lease of Land or Permission to Use

Landowner:
Location:

Organisation:
Project:

Main Terms & Conditions Of Use

- 1) The agreement shall subsist from *28th of February 2018* until *31st of December 2019* and monthly thereafter.
- 2) The rent shall be £1 per month, if asked.
- 3) The occupier shall use the said ground solely for the purposes of environmental education and/or forest schools initiative purposes for the benefit of nursery school pupils.
- 4) The occupier shall free and relieve **Insert Owner's Name** of all liabilities for any accidents or damage caused through or by, the occupier's use and occupation of the ground. Public Safety for the above area will be the occupier's responsibility in all matters relating to the application and use. The occupier shall free and relieve **Insert Owner's Name** of all claims arising as a result of said works.
- 5) All Service wayleaves will be identified and protected within the site boundary and **Insert Owner's Name** reserves the rights to grant further wayleaves as landlord.
- 6) The occupier must ensure all trees are fully protected. This condition applies at all times. No existing plants, shrubbery or trees will be removed or pruned without prior approvals from **Insert Owner's Name**.
- 7) Details of plant material to be used to be agreed prior to the date of entry and thereafter reviewed on request by either party.
- 8) No storage of debris, rubble and works materials to be permitted on site without prior permission of **Insert Owner's Name**.
- 9) Spillage of any toxic or contaminated materials must be avoided on site in the event of an accidental spillage **Insert Owner's Name** must be advised immediately.
- 10) **Insert Owner's Name** must be notified of proposed entry date on the site and termination of lease by occupier at least 1 month's notice in advance. On termination the site to be fully restored to pre-entry condition and a joint inspection meeting held following reinstatements – contact details below. *
- 11) The site must be maintained to the satisfaction of **Insert Owner's Name** in the event of failures the lease will be terminated and reinstatement costs claimed if applicable.

- 12) All site services must be protected including drainage.
- 13) All maintenance liabilities within and on the boundaries of the lease will be the responsibility of the occupier and must be of a high standard complying with the surrounds.
- 14) The LEASEE will be responsible for insurance against all aspects of use including but not exclusively, fire, vandalism, personal accidents of Nursery staff and pupils. Insurance documentation to be inspected by **Insert Owner's Representative Name**
- 15) The occupier should ensure they have a Health and Safety Plan and identify emergency procedures for users of the site.
- 16) Contact names to be provided to **Insert Owner's Name** and a named deputy in case of emergencies.
- 17) The occupier shall at the end of this agreement, however determined, without warning or process of law remove from the said ground all items belonging to the occupier and clear the ground of all refuse material.
- 18) **Insert Owner's Name** shall reserve the right to terminate this agreement in the event of recurring vandalism on the site or other abuses and nuisances arising during the period of the agreement.
- 19) This agreement shall be terminable by either party on giving 1 calendar month's notice in writing.
- 20) It is the responsibility of the occupier for the reinstatement of the area to its former condition to the satisfaction of **Insert Owner's Name**. For the purposes of reinstatement, the occupier must undertake a photographic survey of the site prior to occupation. A copy of which must be forwarded to **Insert Owner's Name** and will be attached to this agreement.
- 21) On termination of this agreement **Insert Owner's Name** shall inspect the occupied area and provide a schedule of required works and estimated cost for reinstatement to the occupier. Thereafter the occupier has 14 days to reinstate the ground to the satisfaction of **Insert Owner's Name**. If the works are not completed by said date then **Insert Owner's Name** shall undertake the necessary reinstatement works and recharge the occupier for all appropriate costs.

CONTACT DETAILS: *insert contact details i.e. community group contacts, owners*

Signed on behalf of **Insert Owner's Name**

.....

I hereby confirm acceptance to the foregoing terms of occupation in respect of the above site.
(Leasee to sign)

This Constitution was agreed and accepted on **date you have drawn this agreement up**

Chairperson (Print Name):

Signature.....

Treasurer (Print Name):

Signature.....

Secretary (Print Name):

Signature.....

Planning permission

Planning permission may be required even for the temporary use of a site. Whether it is or not will depend on the land's current use, existing permissions and regulations, and the details of your specific project.

It's important to know in the early stages of your project if you're likely to need planning permission so that you can factor in any related costs to your budget, and start the application process as soon as possible.

Remember: Anything you build on the site will need to be cleared or removed when the time comes to vacate the space.

What do you need planning permission for?

Permission may be required for **things like fences, sheds, polytunnels or tree removal**. However, for these types of structures, it will probably only be necessary if what you propose falls outwith the acceptable criteria stipulated by your local council's planning department. Criteria can include things like height, location of the proposed structure on the site and whether or not the site is in a conservation area.

The website www.doineedpermission.co.uk lists the criteria for various types of 'permitted development', which will help you to figure out if you'll need planning permission for your project.

BUT, speak to your local council's planning department to be sure. Advisors will also guide you to the right application forms. Councils and Planning Aid for Scotland don't charge for pre-planning advice.

Top Tip

To reduce the likelihood of objections being made to your planning application, try to get local residents and relevant public bodies on board by addressing any concerns BEFORE you apply. Typical concerns include traffic, parking, building location and how the site will look.

What will you need to submit a planning application?

- The address or location of your stalled space.
- A description of your plans.
- The applicants' details (your constituted group and key office bearers).
- A certificate showing who the landowner is and that you have their consent to apply for planning permission.
- Drawings and plans (including materials to be used and their colour).
- Any other relevant information to support your application (for example, a copy of your constitution).
- The planning application fee. (The size of this will depend on what you're proposing to do.)

What happens after you've submitted your application?

When the council receives your application it will tell your site's neighbours about your proposal and advise them how to have their say, and by when. A planning officer will then make the decision about your application. (If your proposal is more complex or controversial, it will go to the councillors).

Decisions for local development are usually made within two months of receiving ALL of the information needed for your specific application.

There are three possible decision outcomes:

- 1 You'll be granted planning permission without conditions.
- 2 You'll be granted planning permission with conditions.
- 3 You'll be refused planning permission.

Can you appeal against a decision?

Yes. If you don't agree with the council's decision, or a condition attached to the granted permission, ask for a review or appeal of the decision. Here are some things to bear in mind:

- Appeals against a decision made by a planning officer are made to the Local Review Body – a group of councillors.
- Appeals or reviews must be asked for within three months from the date of the decision.
- Appeal forms are available from your local council.
- Remember to include all of the supporting information for your application with your appeal.

What happens if you build without planning permission?

The local council has a few 'enforcement' options when it comes to what action it can take against those who've built without permission or without following the conditions attached to the permission granted.

- 1 If you've built something that probably would've been granted permission, you may be asked to submit a **'retrospective' planning application**. The decision will then be made in the same way as all other planning applications. (**Be aware:** conditions may be attached to permission granted!)
- 2 You could be **served with a notice asking for more information** about the developments you're making.
- 3 Your development **could simply be stopped**.

- 4 You could be **issued with a fixed penalty or prosecuted** if you carry on developing without permission.
- 5 Your development could be demolished and you'll be liable for the cost of the demolition.

For more information on how your council's enforcement system works, **read its planning enforcement charter**.

Good to know

- **Planning Aid for Scotland (now known as PAS)** offers a planning advisory service to communities and has published a series of useful information sheets about the planning process. Call their helpline on **0300 323 7602** or find them at **www.pas.org.uk**
- **You can submit your planning application and supporting documents online** at **www.eplanning.scotland.gov.uk** and use this website's fee calculator to work out the right fee.
- **If your stalled space is in a conservation area or National Scenic Area**, you may need to submit a 'design statement', demonstrating how you've considered the design of a proposed structure.
- **Some developments need specialist reports**, for example, on noise. Or, if a significant impact on the environment will occur, an Environmental Impact Assessment or Appropriate Assessment might be needed. If you think your planning application could be affected by any of these things, ask your local council for advice.
- Even if planning permission isn't required, **you may still need a building warrant for some structures**. Check with your local council.

Contact your local council with any planning enquiries.

Insurance and licences

Do you need insurance for your group's activities?

Even voluntary groups have to comply with insurance regulations so it's vital that you have adequate coverage to protect your organisation's money, people, property and its reputation.

There are many types of insurance, but they won't all be necessary for your group. You have to decide what you'll need based on your group's aims and objectives and the activities you'll undertake to achieve them.

Make enquiries into what insurance cover you'll need while you're negotiating the lease. This will give you time to consider the risks and whether the landowner or the tenant will need to take out the policy.

Top Tip

Find out what insurance the landowner already has. Will it cover your activity?

4 reasons to get insurance cover

- 1 It's legally required. (For example, Employer's Liability insurance, or, if you're a charity, your trustees are legally obliged to keep your money and property safe.)
- 2 Your lease requires you to have certain policies in place.
- 3 Your funders require you to have certain policies in place.
- 4 In the event of an incident, you'd stand to lose more money than you can afford.

Top Tip

Carry out a risk assessment to help you pinpoint which insurances you'll need and which risks can be reduced through simple precautions. Some insurers will want evidence of your risk assessment and any relevant policies (for example, Health & Safety). Have a look at our 'Managing risk' section for help with this.



Common insurance types

Employers' liability insurance

This protects your group against any claims made by workers for illness, injury or death. It's compulsory if you employ paid staff or volunteers.

Example: A volunteer injures him/herself while digging with a pitchfork.

Motor insurance

This is a legal requirement for organisations that own or operate motor vehicles (3rd party cover is the minimum requirement).

Example: A volunteer crashes the organisation's car on the way to pick up gardening supplies.

Public liability insurance

This cover is wise to have if you provide activities or services to the public. It will protect you against injury, loss or damage caused to others through your organisation's negligence.

Example: A visitor is injured tripping over audio equipment at your pop-up cinema event.

Professional indemnity insurance

This protects your group against claims for negligence resulting from information or advice you have provided.

Example: You give out the wrong advice at a gardening workshop which results in the participants killing their expensive plants.

Property (building & contents) insurance

This protects your group against the damage or loss of your premises or its contents.

Example: Expensive gardening equipment is stolen from a shed on the site.

Event insurance

This covers you for any costs if you have to cancel an event.

Example: You have to cancel an outdoor concert event due to poor weather and you lose the deposit you paid for the band.

Legal expenses insurance

This covers specified legal costs that your group could face as a result of defending or pursuing specific types of action.

Other relevant cover could include money insurance; product liability insurance; business interruption insurance; pluvius insurance; accident and sickness insurance; and fidelity (employee theft) insurance.

There's also **trustee indemnity insurance**, which protects your Management Committee from being held personally liable for any loss the group suffers as a result of their, or their fellow trustees'/employees' negligence or mistakes. But there's some debate about whether these policies are worthwhile.

Top Tip

Ask the insurer whether the liabilities that your trustees are likely to incur are covered by their policy and what sorts of claims they've paid out for.

Top Tip

Unsure whether it's worth getting a certain type of insurance? Weigh up the cost of the premium against the potential costs arising from an incident.

How to choose the right insurance policies

To ensure your group gets the most appropriate cover in place, shop around. You can either do this yourself (contact insurance providers directly/use price comparison websites) or get a broker to look for you.

Before you start:

- 1 Be clear about what you will need insurance for.
- 2 Draw up a list of activities, their potential risks and types of cover you might need.
- 3 Be sure of anything you might do to reduce risk.
- 4 Find out where other community groups get their insurance.
NOTE: There are brokers out there who specialise in the insurance needs of charities or voluntary organisations.
- 5 Find out if your membership to any voluntary sector organisations gives you access to discounted insurers.

Always get and compare several quotes; not all insurance policies cover the same items/activities, and some have higher excesses than others which could determine whether it's worth getting the insurance.

Stalled Spaces Scotland does not endorse any particular insurers.

Top Tip

Planning to use external contractors to provide food or entertainment at an event? Check they have insurance and that it's in force!

Good to know – insurance

- **Keep your cover up to date!** It's good practice to review insurance policies annually. They should always reflect the activities you're undertaking and the associated risks. If things change, policies can be altered at ANY time.
- Many insurance providers or independent brokers provide free advice.
- **Remember, you are responsible for implementing risk management measures** to reduce the likelihood of claims being made or losses occurring. (These actions could reduce your insurance premiums.)
- Always fill out insurance forms carefully and disclose ALL relevant facts to your insurance provider. Inaccurate information could mean an insurer will refuse to pay out.
- You may get a better deal if you agree to pay by Direct Debit or automatic bank transfer.
- Read the small print – check everything's covered that you think is covered!
- Ensure you've got the right amount of cover. Being underinsured could result in your insurer not paying out for a claim.
- Keep two copies of your insurance documents; one offsite.
- **Never admit responsibility for an accident!** A lot of policies enable the insurer not to have to pay out if you have accepted responsibility without their knowledge or permission!

Will you need any licences?

A licence is simply a permit from an authority (usually your local council or Trading Standards) to own or use something, do something, or to trade in something.

You will need a licence for things like holding a collection, providing entertainment or selling alcohol. Examples of licences include:

[Public Charitable Collection Permission](#)
[Cinema Licence](#)
[Public Entertainment Licence](#)
[Theatre Licence](#)
[Market Operator Licence](#)
[Street Trader Licence](#)
[Occasional Licence \(to sell alcohol\)](#)

Warning! You could be fined up to £20,000 or go to prison, or both, if you allow alcohol to be sold without a proper licence.

Top Tip

If you need a licence from your local authority, you may be asked to ensure you have public liability insurance for your event.

Check with your local council's licensing board which licences you'll need for your project's specific activities.

Main insurance types at a glance

Insurance type	Compulsory	Highly recommended	Optional
Employers' liability insurance*	✓		
Motor insurance**	✓		
Public liability insurance		✓	
Professional indemnity insurance		✓	
Legal expenses insurance		✓	
Trustee indemnity insurance		✓	
Events insurance			✓
Fidelity insurance			✓
Accident & sickness insurance			✓
Property & equipment insurance			✓
Hirer's public liability cover (for village halls & community buildings)			✓
Money (cash) insurance			✓

* if your organisation/group pays any full- or part-time staff

** if your organisation/group owns or operates motor vehicles

Managing risk

There are various risks that community groups of any size can face – from health and safety issues to losing funding sources. Sensible risk management can help you to deliver your project even when there are bumps in the road.

What is risk management?

Risk management is simply identifying, assessing and controlling situations where things could go wrong. For the most part, it just involves using common sense.

Known risks can be listed in a risk assessment document, alongside details on how you plan to manage (or avoid) them. You don't have to eliminate risks, you just need to reduce the risk to a level that your group is comfortable with.

The key is to strike a balance between the level of risk and still being able to get on with the activity.

How to conduct a risk assessment

- 1 Identify the risks** You'll need to do this for each activity, piece of equipment or event and the stalled space itself, but you'll also need to list the overall risks to your project's aims and strategy which will generally come under the headings of governance, external factors, regulation and compliance, finances or operations.

For example, governance risks could include the Management Committee not having the right skills to see the project through; and financial risks could include your project being dependent on one source of income (what happens if that source falls through?).

At this point, you should note if any of the risks have specific legislation attached. It's important to understand what your responsibilities are in areas such as health and safety.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides general advice as well as guidance on drafting health and safety policies for voluntary organisations. **Visit:** www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/ or call 0300 003 1747.

- 2 Categorise the risks** This is the process of looking at how likely it is that a risk will occur and how serious its impact would be on your group's activities. A simple way to do this is to mark likelihood and impact as High, Medium, or Low. Higher priorities risks will require greater planning.

For example – regarding your group's finances – what's the likelihood of your funding coming to an end? If it's high, the impact will be probably be high, too, as you might not be able to achieve your aims.

- 3 Manage the risks** You must decide what action you will take to deal with the risk – avoid it (if it's too high), control it, finance it or transfer it.

Controlling risk is the most common approach and involves following good practice, policies and procedures. Transferring the risk will either entail getting a third party to carry out the activity or taking out insurance (for example, public liability insurance).

- 4 Review the risks** Once you have identified how you're going to manage your risks, go back through them all and review their categorisation. Are they still a high risk?

The good news is that there are lots of risk management templates available to download online; it's just a case of finding the best one for your group's purposes.

Top Tip

To identify as many risks as possible, involve everybody in your group in the assessment.

Have a look at our sample risk assessment document on page 69.



Five reasons to write down your risk assessment

1. It'll help you to think through the risks properly.
2. It ensures that your group takes joint responsibility for the risk. For example, a volunteer can enforce a rule with the knowledge that they have the backing of the group.
3. It saves time. You won't have to make the same decisions about certain activities again and again.
4. Funders may want to see it.
5. Insurers may want to see that everything was done to avoid an incident happening before paying out a claim.

Example risk assessment

Hazard	What could happen? (the risk)	Who's at risk?	Likelihood of risk occurring (High /Med /Low)	Impact of risk (High /Med /Low)
The soil	Irritated skin, soil getting into eyes, toxoplasmosis, tetanus	Volunteers	L	M
Composting	Flies, vermin or airborne particles	Volunteers/ visitors to the garden	M	L
Lifting	Injury	Volunteers	L	H
Tools	Injury, falls, cuts.	Volunteers / visitors to the garden	M	H
Water	Slips, falls	Volunteers / visitors to the garden	M	H
Hoses/water butts/ ponds/water features	Waterborne bugs, drowning	Volunteers / visitors to the garden (especially children)	L	H
Plants	Allergies, ingestion, thorns, stings, etc.	Volunteers / visitors to the garden	L	M
Fire	Danger from smoke, heat, flames	Volunteers / visitors to the garden	L	H
Weather	Dehydration, sunburn, hypothermia, slipping when wet	Volunteers / visitors to the garden	L	H

Risk assessment for: Community garden | Date: 11 October 2016

Action to minimise the risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure volunteers are aware of safety precautions to avoid risk (e.g. checking garden for animal mess before starting work/ opening compost bags carefully/wearing gloves while working with soil/washing hands after gardening session is finished). Check whether volunteers have had a tetanus vaccination before they begin work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't put cooked food into compost heaps. Don't turn compost heaps when others are around. Wear gloves and face mask when turning compost heaps.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell volunteers not to lift heavy objects or overfill wheelbarrows. Train how to lift properly. Transfer risk – get appropriate employer liability insurance policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain tools properly. Train volunteers how to use certain tools correctly. Store rakes with teeth facing down or against a wall. Keep tools in one safe place when not being used. Ensure adequate working space when using tools. Have a fully stocked first aid kit on site. Ensure a first aider is on site for each gardening session. Transfer risk to public - take out a public liability insurance policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show volunteers how to correctly water plants without soaking any walkways. Don't leave hoses where they could be a trip hazard. Put procedures in place to help keep water spillage/waste to a minimum. Transfer risk to public – take out a public liability insurance policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure any water butts have childproof lids and are kept in as cool a place as possible. Don't wash hands or produce with water from the butts. Scrub out water butts annually. Empty hoses after use. Supervise children near ponds or water features & warn their supervisors that these things are in the garden. Transfer risk to public – take out a public liability insurance policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide gloves to volunteers handling certain types of plants. Wash all produce in tap water before eating. Label potentially poisonous plants (e.g. rhubarb). Ensure children know not to eat anything without asking an adult first. Make volunteers aware of any thorny/stinging plants or fungus. Give volunteers safety masks/glasses if they're allergic to any specific plants.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw up and communicate emergency evacuation procedures. Keep emergency exits clear at all times. Ensure someone is in charge of a bonfire for its duration. Thoroughly put out any bonfires before leaving the garden. Make sure there is an easy-to-access water source in the event of a fire.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure volunteers wear appropriate clothing for weather conditions. Ensure drinking water is available in warm weather. Keep a spare supply of sun cream for those who forget their own. Close paths if too slippery or put hazard signs up.



Nine things to consider when holding an event

1. *Is your event outside? Will bad weather affect it? If so, do you have a Plan B in place?*
2. *Will your venue cope with the number of people you plan to invite?*
3. *Are you organising games/sports for children? How will you ensure their safety?*
4. *Will you have a first aid kit at the event? (Is anyone trained in first aid?)*
5. *Will you be cooking or providing food? How will you ensure food hygiene and safety?*
6. *Will alcohol be available? How can you avoid the risks of excessive drinking?*
7. *Will you be using temporary structures such as generators/lighting etc.? Do event volunteers/staff understand how they work?*
8. *How will you help people get to safety in the event of an emergency? What about those with limited mobility?*
9. *How many volunteers will you need? Who is available/qualified?*

Looking after children and vulnerable people

Many stalled space projects are, of course, as much about the local people as they are about the land – for example, community gardens, sensory gardens, natural play areas and pop-up events. **If children or vulnerable people are at the heart of your plans, it is important that your space is safe.**

Implementing a child protection policy will demonstrate that you've thought about the ways in which children or young people could come to harm in the context of your project and that you've put measures in place to protect them, such as conducting legal checks on volunteers or providing training.

Management committees have a legal duty to keep the site safe for children and young people; to offer any workers support to implement relevant procedures; and to implement practices that promote safety for young people and workers. This could, for example, involve ensuring that the ratios of staff to children are appropriate.

Local authorities and some funders will require you to have a child protection policy in place.

For guidance on developing a child protection policy, take a look at the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens website, contact the NSPCC or look at the Scottish Government guidelines.

Good to know

- You are not expected to anticipate unexpected risks; you can't predict everything that might happen! Just include what you could reasonably be expected to know.
- Make sure that everyone in your group (from the Management Committee to volunteers) is aware of your risk document and uses it.
- **Keep your risk document up to date**, reflecting current activities.
- **Review and update your document regularly** to take into account any changes in your group's activities.
- **Keep an accident log** in case any injuries need to be reported to HSE. You should also record any 'near misses' to help avoid future problems. An up-to-date log could help in the risk review process.

How to attract (and retain) volunteers

Volunteers are **the lifeblood of community group initiatives**. Whether they provide an extra pair of hands or valuable skill sets, your project's unlikely to succeed without the time and energy of a reliable group of people.

But before you start drumming up help, you must be clear about what you need your volunteers to do and what skills or qualities they should have.

So, make a list! List all the things any current volunteers do (for example, the Management Committee's tasks); the things that must be done (setting up the seating for your pop-up cinema); and the things that would be nice to do but aren't a priority (hanging fairy lights to enhance an event's atmosphere). Then note the time and/or skills required for each task. This process should give you a good idea of who you need to attract.

Top Tip

Hold a community engagement event about your proposed project BEFORE it starts. You'll find out what people really want (maybe a play area instead of a garden!) but also who's keen to get involved.

6 ideas for enlisting volunteers

- 1 **Put up posters/flyers** in local shops, libraries, leisure centres, doctor surgeries, schools, places of worship or on community boards.
- 2 **Hold a meeting or event to tell people about your project and ask for help.** Collect contact details and note the skills and experience each person has to offer. (Don't promise any roles at this stage!)
- 3 **Go to existing clubs and organisations.** Sports club members may be willing to help with the more physical jobs. Local youth groups like the Scouts or Girl Guides might help with clearing litter.
- 4 **Use social media.** Start a Facebook page, blog and/or Twitter and Instagram accounts. Use these platforms to promote volunteering opportunities.
- 5 **Contact parent and toddler groups.** There's a wealth of skills in these groups and these people will benefit if your project will positively impact their children's lives – for example, a natural play area.
- 6 **Advertise online** – Volunteer Centre Finder, Do-it, ivo, Reach and Volunteer Centre Network Scotland are just some websites that can help you find local volunteers.



Top Tips

Ensure that anyone who's interested can volunteer. To reach different kinds of people you need to go to them (they won't all turn up at a meeting).

Be prepared to inspire! People often have preconceptions of what, for example, a community garden is. You need to present variations and get them to use their imaginations.

Should you have a formal volunteer recruitment process?

As well as giving you the peace of mind that you've got the most appropriate people for your project, a formal recruitment process can help the volunteer decide if the role is for them.

It's important to have an interview procedure, and to gather references/disclosure checks, when volunteers will have responsibilities such as dealing with the group's assets or working with vulnerable people.

Do you need a volunteer policy?

If you just need casual volunteers, a simple overview of the task and some health and safety advice will probably do. However, if you're going to use volunteers on an ongoing basis then you should ideally have a policy and/or agreement.

A volunteer policy is a written statement containing your group's aims and values and the role that volunteers will have in achieving those aims.

What your policy should cover:

- The time that the volunteer is required to commit to (including time for training).
- A description of the volunteer's role/tasks.
- The personal attributes required and expected behaviour.
- Any training your group will provide.
- Health and safety issues and whether or not volunteers are covered by your group's insurance policies.
- Your group's policy on expenses.
- The volunteer's investment in your group and the scope for representation.

Do volunteers have legal rights?

Depending on how formally your group organises volunteering, volunteers can qualify for legal protection under employment law. (See 'Insurance and licences' for information on employers' liability insurance.) More and more volunteer agreements are covering grievance and disciplinary procedures as well as equal opportunities.

Formal recognition of your volunteers' role is good practice, but be aware that the more formal your arrangement, the more likely it is that legal interactions will occur.

Top Tip

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), Volunteer Scotland and Volunteer Edinburgh have lots of guidance for groups that want to recruit, manage and retain volunteers.

Keeping volunteers engaged

Signing up volunteers and allocating tasks isn't where it ends. You've got to find a way to keep your volunteers onboard while getting the best from them. And this is where good management comes in.

If you make it as easy, comfortable and rewarding as possible for a volunteer to do his or her job, they'll be far more likely to stay passionate and committed to your project. Have a look at page 81 for ways to go about doing this.

Keeping volunteers engaged (cont.)

- **Make your volunteers feel welcome and valued.** This could be done simply by providing food and drink, listening to their ideas or involving them in making some decisions.
- **Be organised.** Create a task list for your volunteers to help them know exactly what they've to do on any given day and what they're responsible for. This also gives volunteers a sense of purpose and achievement.
- **Don't micro-manage.** Volunteers should be able to complete a task that you give them any way they like as long as it's within health and safety guidelines (and it's legal!).
- **Provide training.** This will give both volunteers and the Management Committee peace of mind that tasks are being carried out correctly, particularly those that are challenging or technical. But training may also provide volunteers with a new skill – something worth donating their time and effort for.
- **Ensure that your volunteers know who to contact** in the event that they come across challenges while carrying out their duties, or they need some support. If your volunteers work at different times, organise group events to bring them together and reinforce the common cause.
- **Ensure that no volunteers are out-of-pocket.** Always reimburse expenses that are a direct result of volunteering. This also makes sure that no one is excluded from volunteering on the basis of income.

Why won't people volunteer? (Breaking down the barriers)

The problem	How to solve it
'I've never volunteered before.'	Allow people to try out volunteering for your group; offer an initial 'taster' period. Offer training.
'I don't know much about your community group.'	Organise events to introduce and inform people about your project. Promote your group/project whenever possible. Ensure that information is accessible to the public in various formats (on & offline).
'I had a bad experience when I last did some voluntary work; I felt like I was taken advantage of.'	Highlight all of the benefits of volunteering for your specific project. Clarify how volunteers are managed and any policies/procedures that you have in
'I don't really know anything about [gardening].'	Be clear about all the skills and abilities that you are looking for. Offer training.
'I don't want to find myself working on my own.'	Give volunteers the opportunity to work in groups or pairs.
'I'm not sure I can give you the time you need. I've got a lot on my plate'	Be clear about the length of time involved during the recruitment period. Enable people to try out some tasks before they commit.
'The times that you need volunteers don't really suit me.'	Be more flexible. Could certain tasks be done at another time?
'I can't afford to volunteer.'	Ensure that out-of-pocket expenses are reimbursed in a timely manner.
'I've got two children under the age of 5.'	Provide a crèche. Reimburse childcare expenses.
'I use a wheelchair; I might find it difficult to get around the site.'	Enhance the physical access to your site. Facilitate volunteers working from other locations, for example, from home.
'I don't have transport to get me to the site'	Organise car pools.
'I'm worried that I'll be discriminated against because of my [race/culture/gender/sexual orientation].'	Put in place policies to promote equal opportunities etc. Specifically look for volunteers from under-represented groups.

Promoting your project

To build awareness, community support and excitement about your stalled space project, you will need to promote it. And there are a number of ways you can do this.

Top Tip

Give one person or a small team responsibility for the promotion of your project. (Ideally someone with experience.)

Top Tip

Think carefully about who you want to attract and the best way to reach them.

Top Tip

Remember to check with your local authority if you need permission/licences to carry out promotional activities.

Use the old favourites

Offline publicity is still vital to many community projects. It ensures your plans are accessible to those who don't use, or cannot easily access, a computer.

- **Leafleting** – Hand out flyers about your group or project. Put them through letterboxes, or target areas where the people you want to attract will be – for example, outside schools and nurseries.
- **Put up posters** – Some local organisations and businesses may display your posters for free. GP practices or health groups may promote your project if it might improve the physical or mental health of community members. And have a notice board on site!
- **Contact local radio/TV stations and newspapers** – Send out a press release linking your project to the local area or a 'current' issue to attract interest. (Be sure to give phone and postal contact details as well as online information.)
- **Set up a display about your project/group in your local library** – Or take up a stall at local school fairs.
- **Newsletters** – Send out newsletters through the post as well as via email. Note: Closely manage your mailing list to keep costs down. Alternatively, put an ad in your local community newsletter.
- **Networking** – Ask larger organisations to promote you through their networks. For example, the Girl Guides, Age Concern, MIND, religious groups, local schools, the WI etc.
- **Hold an event on the site** – Show what your project is already achieving to inspire new supporters.

Top Tip

Team up with a local printer. Offer publicity (or garden produce!) in exchange for their services at a reduced rate.



5 things to remember when designing promotional literature

- 1 Ensure the design is eye-catching with bright colours.
- 2 Make it clear what the benefits of your project are.
- 3 Keep text concise and to the point.
- 4 Include photos (where possible) of people engaged in the activities you're promoting.
- 5 Provide clear contact details.

Top Tips

Educate yourself on all things digital!

The Digital Garage offers free online tutorials from Google. Or get in touch with your local authority or Business Gateway for access to free workshops.

When creating your e-newsletter, think about the '5 things to remember when designing promotional literature'.

Set up a website

A website, or even an online blog page, is one of the best ways to tell people about your group or project, and it's a place to store ALL of the information they might be looking for.

Nowadays, **there are lots of free, easy-to-use website-building tools available.** Even if it's just the basic need-to-knows – such as a photo of the stalled space, a description of your project and contact details – you should have an online presence. At the very least, it'll prove your group's authenticity.

If you have time, keep your website updated with blog posts. Use your blog to tell the story of your project through its different stages. For example, what does your community garden look like in each season? You can also use it to promote events and profile volunteers to attract more supporters.

Email people

Sending out emails or e-newsletters is a fantastic, cost-effective way to reach people. Free software like MailChimp enables you to set up contact lists, design templates and send out emails in bulk. You can even track who reads and clicks through from your newsletter. You can collect email addresses at events or get people to subscribe via your website. Remember to always ask people's permission before you add them to your mailing list, and always give them the option to unsubscribe from it.

Use social media to get the word out

Social networks may sound daunting, but they can be a great way to spread your message. These websites or mobile apps enable individuals, groups and businesses to communicate with each other (sharing information, photos, videos and web links). They're usually simple to use and, even better, they're free!

Popular social networks include:

[Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Instagram](#)
[Linkedin](#) / [Pinterest](#) / [YouTube](#)
[Vimeo](#) / [Google+](#)

To join a network, you need to set up a page, or profile, for your group. Usually, this includes a photo and some basic information. Each social network has its own how-to guides to help you get to grips with their platform.

Social media is NOT just for the young! Between 2011 and 2013 the largest gains in use were among 55–64 year-olds!

Top benefits of using social media

- It's cost effective.
- It's a fantastic way to get 'word of mouth' support.
- You can reach new group members and volunteers.
- You can quickly promote events and meetings.
- You can build support for fundraising.
- You can stay connected to the community you're working within (gather feedback).
- You can support and link-up with other local groups/projects.

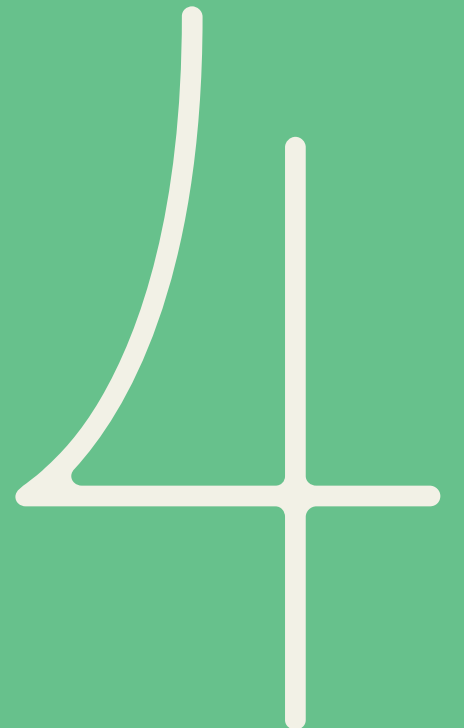
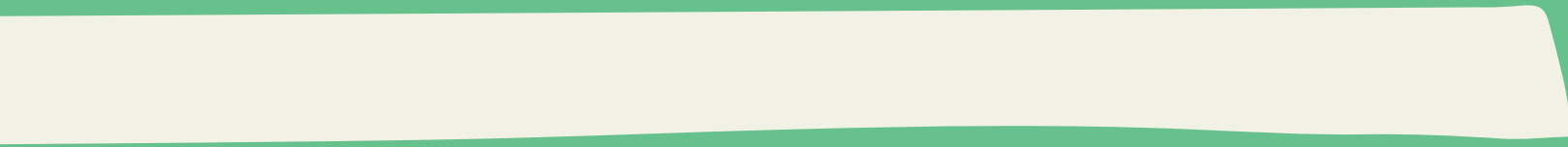
How to use social media effectively

- **Put one or two people in charge of managing your accounts.** They need to be able to login regularly, respond to comments and post updates in a timely manner.
- **Interact with your followers.** If you don't, you'll lose their interest.
- **Link back to your website** within your posts.
- **Share your group's page with your friends and family.** Then ask them to share it too!
- **Always keep your social media accounts up to date.** There are tools like Hootsuite to help you schedule posts in advance.
- **Be sensible and safe.** Think through how to deal properly with any complaints or inappropriate posts. Always be friendly, helpful, honest and fair. Never publically post personal details and always act appropriately when dealing with children on social media.

Good to know

- The National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) offers **practical guidance, case studies and useful how-to guides** on marketing and communication issues. Have a look at www.knowhownonprofit.org
- **There will probably be marketing / communication experts in your local community.** Ask around for web developers, graphic designers, printers and copywriters who would be willing to help your project.

Inspiration





Introduction to inspiration pages

The following section gives just some of the examples of the type of projects that you could use as inspiration for your own stalled space. Some of these are very short projects, like a one-day pop-up cinema event, while others are designed to fill your site with activity for much longer, like a community growing space.

Each section provides some advice on how your group can go about creating something similar, as well as where to go to find more information.



What can you do on a stalled space?

The possibilities for your stalled spaces project are nearly limitless. With the right amount of time and resources, community groups of volunteers have been able to achieve a huge variety of temporary projects on stalled spaces. These have ranged from one-day performances involving local community members, through to longer-term installations, like community gardens.

The following are just some of the ideas you might want to make use of in your own project. These are just a small sample of the types of projects that have been developed by groups all over the world in the past.

Food-growing projects

A food-growing project could be an activity for a community group, a school, or perhaps a group of local restaurants wanting to grow their own produce.

Rain gardens

A rain garden is an environmentally friendly and attractive way to deal with rainwater runoff by creating natural drainage and filtering out pollutants. This can ease flooding and erosion while providing a habitat for wildlife.

Community gardens

Community gardens come in a variety of forms. It may be a place in which community members can take a plot to grow their own plants, food or flowers, or just a landscaped green space for the community to enjoy.

Market places

A temporary market place could include mobile market stalls to be used on a variety of occasions by members of the local community to sell produce or crafts.

Solar farms

Solar farms can provide energy and income for a community and contribute to combating climate change.

Wild flower garden

Wild flower gardens provide habitats for wildlife and access to nature in urban locations, they also improve the appearance of vacant land with very little outlay or impact on the site.

Performance spaces

A performance space could be a landscaped temporary amphitheatre or something even more informal, to be used by theatre groups or for community events such as galas or outdoor ceilidhs.

Event spaces

An event space can be used for temporary or pop-up events run by the community such as bike maintenance workshops, book and toy swaps, or a local-services road show.

Temporary public art

With public art, the only limit is your imagination. Vacant plots have been used for large-scale sculpture, temporary exhibitions and lighting projects.

Outdoor gym

An outdoor gym can have a positive effect on the physical fitness of community members of all ages. Apparatus can be as low tech as necessary and made from natural materials to create less impact on the site.

Green gym

A green gym offers local people an opportunity to take part in outdoor physical activity while learning about environmental conservation and improving the local environment.

Natural play area

A natural play area for children can have a very positive effect on an area, encouraging physical activity, outdoor learning and providing social space. Natural materials, like timber logs, willow arches and grassy mounds can be relatively cheap to provide and easy to look after.

Community garden

A community garden is a garden shared by members of a community group who take responsibility for management and maintenance. Members can generally apply to take on a plot or container, usually smaller and more manageable than an allotment, and grow whatever they like, whether that's flowers or vegetables.

Community gardens offer a great use of stalled spaces, transforming a vacant site into a beautiful green space, as well as a fantastic community resource and centre of activity. In addition to gardening activities, all kinds of community events can take place around a garden.

If you would like to start a community garden here are a few tips.

The site

The number of people who can have a space in your community garden will depend on the size of site you have available. Gardens can range from tiny gap sites through to large stalled-buildings sites. If you wish to grow food in your garden, you may want to seek a site located away from roads and other sources of air pollution.

What you need

Plants and seeds
Gardening tools
Construction materials

Top Tips

1. You should have a committee to be responsible for the management of the garden.
2. Think about how you will secure the garden and how members will access it.
3. You might want to have a shared supply of tools and somewhere secure to store them.



Natural play area

A natural play area is an area for children to play, designed and built from natural materials. Children love to play outside and natural environments provide great play and learning opportunities. Natural play areas can connect children to nature, develop creativity, develop risk management skills and encourage independence. They are also more attractive than a standard playground.

If you would like to create a natural play area, here are a few tips.

The site

Natural play areas can often make use of existing natural ground and the materials that are already to hand, including tree stumps and logs. A well-designed natural playground will offer plenty of freedom for children to explore while still allowing adults to safely supervise them.

What you need

Large rocks and stones
Tree stumps and logs
Plants and seeds
Gardening tools



Top Tips

1. Use natural materials.
2. A big mound is great fun for climbing, rolling, lying and hiding.
3. Loose materials like sticks, logs and rocks are great for experimentation and building.
4. A natural play area should encourage building, balancing, hiding, climbing and digging.
5. It should also include seating, pathways, plants and hiding places.



Pop-up cinema

A pop-up cinema event is a one-off screening of a film in a unique or unusual setting. You may have a film of your own to screen, or you may wish to show a classic film or take part in a nationwide premiere event. It could be part of a larger community festival, or a one-off screening.

A pop-up cinema event can be a good opportunity to clear and renovate a derelict or unused site, opening opportunities for further temporary use in the future.

If you would like to set up a pop-up cinema, here are a few tips.

The site

Gap sites next to buildings are perfect locations for pop-up cinemas, offering large building walls as screens for your projector. If you hope to provide audio along with your film, you might want to choose a site away from roads or other sources of loud background noise.

What you need

- A projector
- Speakers or a PA system
- A nearby power supply
- A licensed film to screen
- A white wall or large screen to project onto
- Seats or benches to sit on



Top Tips

1. An exciting or unusual setting can help to attract attendees.
2. It is important to check if the film you want to screen requires a licence. The British Film Institute should be able to help you find the right licence.
3. Pop-up cinema events can be fun and social, so if you like, you can encourage talking and activity.
4. If you don't have the budget to hire a screen to project on to, a painted wall or white sheets can be used instead.



Public art

Temporary public art can take a variety of forms, from one-off events to sculptures and installations, designed to make use of a site before a permanent use is found. The development of public art can be a great way to engage the creativity of local groups and people, offering opportunities for educational activities.

A temporary public art project might be led by a professional artist, a local school, or any other community group who have an interesting idea. If you are not an artist yourself and would like help to realise your ideas, you might be able to find someone locally with the skills needed to develop and produce your artwork.

If you would like to create public art, here are a few tips.

The site

Public art could be located almost anywhere your imagination takes you. It might be a mural on the wall of a gap site, a sculpture in a prominent public place, or a one-day event on an open, underused patch of land.

What you need

An interesting idea

Top Tips

1. Local schools and community organisations can be involved in developing ideas and creating artwork.
2. You may be able to make use of recycled or donated materials.
3. Many local authorities have produced their own guidance on public art, advising on best practice and recommended approaches.
4. A launch event or guided tour of your finished artwork can help to celebrate and promote your group's hard work.



Rain garden

Rain gardens are specifically designed to absorb rainfall and help reduce flooding. They are made by digging a shallow ditch in the ground surface, filling it with absorbent soil and planting with species that tolerate lots of water. Rain from hard surfaces, like pavements and roofs, flow in to the rain garden rather than into sewers. This helps to reduce flooding and improves the quality of groundwater.

While they are designed to meet a specific function, rain gardens can also be an attractive use of small gap sites in urban areas, bringing in an area of greenery. Local schools and community groups can be involved in helping to create the garden.

If you would like to create a rain garden, here are a few tips.

The site

When planning a rain garden, it's important to understand how water moves across your site. A rain garden should always be located at a point where water from surrounding buildings and surfaces naturally drains towards. It's also very important that the rain garden drains adequately, so that it doesn't flood and water doesn't stay there for too long and become stagnant.

What you need

Plants and seeds
Absorbent drainage materials
Pebbles and stones
Gardening tools



Top Tips

1. Rain gardens should be located where downpipes from roofs can run into them.
2. Where fast running water enters the rain garden, pebbles and stones can help stop soil from washing away.
3. Creating your rain garden on a slight slope can help any excess water to run away from buildings and towards a drain.
4. Planting your rain garden with a variety of species helps to create a strong and stable root system and create an attractive garden.

Sensory garden

A sensory garden is designed to provide a range of sensory experiences to visitors. These gardens can provide therapeutic activities for people with sensory impairments and a range of disabilities. They can also provide learning and educational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Sensory gardens include features that appeal to all five senses, from colourful and fragrant flowers, to paving and stones that provide texture and noise.

If you would like to create a sensory garden, here are a few tips.

The site

It is important to consider the needs of the people who will use the sensory garden when choosing a location. Locations close to roads may pose a risk to children and distract from the enjoyment of the sensory activities in the garden.

What you need

Seeds and plants
Ground materials and landscaping
Interesting and interactive materials

Top Tips

1. In choosing materials, consider who will use the garden and the experiences you want to share with them.
2. Consider plants and materials that appeal to all five senses.
3. Access for visitors in wheelchairs or with mobility impairments should be a key consideration in the layout and design of the garden.
4. Shelters from both the rain and sun can help to provide a more comfortable experience.



Wild flower garden

A wild flower garden is an area planted with wild flower seeds and left to grow naturally. They can significantly improve the look of unused land and if you choose a perennial meadow it will grow flowers every year. A wild flower garden is low maintenance and can also be used as an educational resource.

Planting your wild flower garden could be run as a community event, encouraging people from across the community to take part and get their hands dirty, while offering learning and a chance for different groups to come together.

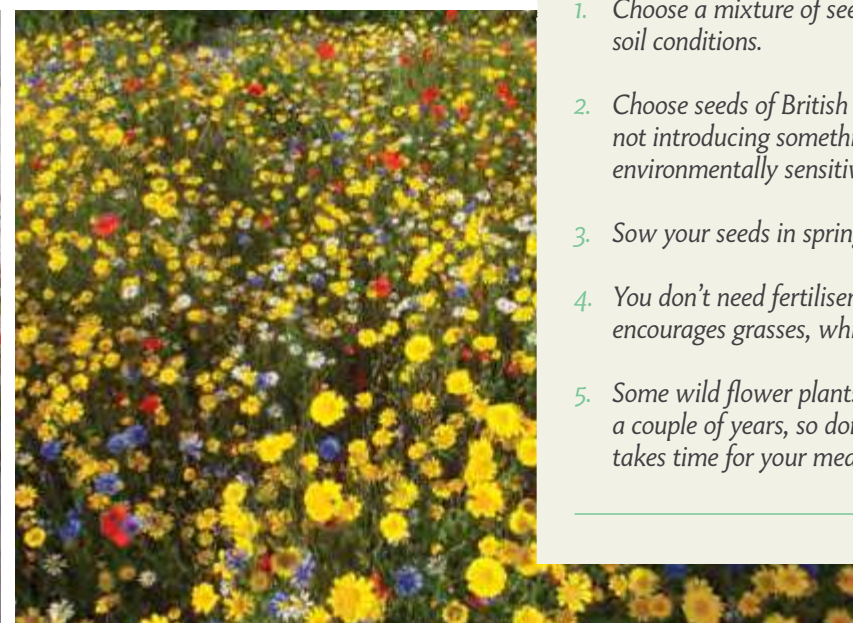
If you would like to create a wild flower garden, here are a few tips.

The site

Wild flower gardens will take root on sites with plenty of soil. Different types of wild flowers will grow in different types of soil and conditions, so your choice of plants will be linked to what type of site you can find.

What you need

Wild flower seeds
Gardening tools



Top Tips

1. Choose a mixture of seeds suitable for your soil conditions.
2. Choose seeds of British origin so you are not introducing something non-native to an environmentally sensitive area.
3. Sow your seeds in spring or autumn.
4. You don't need fertiliser as soil that is too fertile encourages grasses, which can swamp the flowers.
5. Some wild flower plants will not flower well for a couple of years, so don't be disheartened if it takes time for your meadow to bloom.

Wildlife garden

Wildlife gardens are designed to encourage animal species including birds, insects, amphibians and mammals, attracting them with a variety of habitats. This environment can help these species to flourish, and can assist in helping threatened animals, like bumblebees, using plants that provide food for them and space to nest and reproduce.

Wildlife gardens are a great way to increase biodiversity in urban areas and can offer learning experiences to school children and people of all ages.

If you would like to create a wildlife garden, here are a few tips.

The site

Wildlife will take up residence in just about any location, however, some animal species may be discouraged by loud traffic noise from nearby roads. Different animal species will be attracted to different habitats, so it's best to base your garden design around what types of animals you are likely to attract.

What you need

Plants and seeds

Animal-specific materials (e.g. bird boxes or bee hotels)

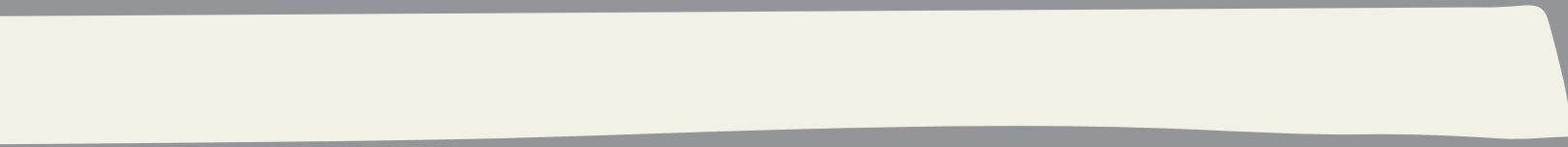
Gardening tools



Top Tips

1. Choosing plants that bloom at different times can encourage animals throughout the year.
2. Native plant species are the best for encouraging local wildlife.
3. Weed killers and pesticides can have a harmful effect on wildlife and can be avoided with careful plant selection.
4. Bird boxes and insect hotels are an effective and easy way to attract wildlife and can be easily made or purchased from garden centres.

Appendices



5



Contact details for Scotland's Local Authorities

Council

Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeenshire Council
Angus Council
Argyll and Bute Council
Edinburgh City Council
Clackmannanshire Council
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Dundee City Council
East Ayrshire Council
East Dunbartonshire Council
East Lothian Council
East Renfrewshire Council
Falkirk Council
Fife Council
Glasgow City Council
Highland Council
Inverclyde Council
Midlothian Council
Moray Council
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council)
North Ayrshire Council
North Lanarkshire Council
Orkney Islands Council
Perth & Kinross Council
Renfrewshire Council
Scottish Borders Council
Shetland Islands Council
South Ayrshire Council
South Lanarkshire Council
Stirling Council
West Dunbartonshire Council
West Lothian Council

Website

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk
www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk
www.angus.gov.uk
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www.edinburgh.gov.uk
www.clacks.gov.uk
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www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk
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 03456 08 12 08
 03452 777 778
 01546 605522
 0131 200 2000.
 01259 450000
 030 33 33 3000
 01382 434000
 01563 576000
 0300 123 4510
 01620 827827
 0141 577 3001
 01324 506070
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 0141 287 2000
 01349 886606
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 0303 123 1015
 01786 404040
 01389 737000
 01506 280000

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The information in this document is not exhaustive. We recommend that you use this toolkit as a guide to understand the possible procedures and processes in developing community-led projects. If you're in any doubt about any aspect of your project, check with your Local Authority for further details and advice, as well as the recommended agencies listed in this toolkit.

Stalled Spaces Scotland > Toolkit

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