



Ley Hill and Birmingham Queen Elizabeth Hospital Sites
(c) examples of gardens developed by TCV Health for Life



Martineau Gardens, Edgbaston (c) www.martineau-gardens.org.uk

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Community gardens: UK, Birmingham

Growing Birmingham acts as an umbrella for the diverse community gardens, allotments, parks and open spaces which bring people together to grow. Mapping spaces is ongoing, as gardening and food growing become increasingly popular, and communities come together to transform land into productive sites. Benefits of gardening to mental and physical health, social wellbeing, social capital, and sustainable communities is increasingly recognised (www.sustainweb.org/growinghealth) **Martineau Gardens** is one such example, offering volunteering, therapeutic horticulture and schools events. They work closely with local GPs, mental health and rehabilitation teams to support full use of the gardens as a space for community wellbeing.

Case study: TCV Health for Life Programme

TCV's Health for Life Programme has been working since 2012 in some of the most deprived wards in South Birmingham. Funded by Mondelez International Foundation, the programme aims to develop and support garden spaces with community at its heart. It aims to increase physical activity, consumption of healthy food and develop food growing skills, responding to some of the persistent health issues in the city. June- Dec 2014 saw 261 Green Gym® physical activity sessions, and since the start of the initiative, 84% have grown their own food as a result of participation, 46% have become more active, as well as gaining a sense of community, meeting others, and learning new skills.

www.tcv.org.uk/midlands/health-for-life



www.growingbirmingham.org





Ideal for All; transforming derelict land with communities



Supporting wellbeing: using Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)

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UK: Sandwell, West Midlands

Sandwell, in the West Midlands, developed a co-ordinated approach to urban agriculture during the 1990's and 2000's. Driven by Public Health, the vision for a greener, healthier and more productive Sandwell underpinned the development of food growing and community gardening initiatives. This was linked into wider attempts to develop healthier local environments, resilient communities and a more sustainable food system. Led by local user-led charity **Ideal for All**, Malthouse and Salop Drive Market Gardens were developed with participative planning from derelict land. Sandwell's 'Growing Healthy Communities' A Community Agriculture Strategy for Sandwell 2008-12. (Sandwell Partnership 2008) led onto wider work with healthy planning and food.

Transformation of once derelict sites is an example of 'co-creation' of a resource for healthy activity, involving disabled, local people, health and other professionals. Ideal for All's gardens offer public health and therapeutic activities for all ages and backgrounds. These include schools programmes, urban food growing courses, healthy cooking, physical activity, therapeutic gardening and vocational training. Salop Drive Market Garden grows and sells fresh vegetables and fruit to over 70 local households a week, reducing 'food miles' travelled and providing fresh, local food. Fully accessible sites like this can provide a focus for community wellbeing, socializing, physical activity and healthy eating. Participants describe improvements in wellbeing, mental health, physical fitness and general outlook.

www.idealforall.co.uk (all photos)
www.facebook.com/growingopportunities

