

**URBAN
ALLOTMENT
GARDENS**

**COST Action TU1201
Urban Allotment Gardens in European Cities
Future, Challenges and Lessons Learned**

Short Term Scientific Mission Report

Emerging forms of Urban Gardening in Geneva

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1. PURPOSE OF THE SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM)

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the STSM that took place in Basel, from 19/08/2014 to 19/11/2014, in the Institute for Social Planning and Urban Development (School of Social Work, University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland).

This STSM has been proposed by the host Institute in the context of the research project “Future Scenarios of Allotment Gardens in the context of increasing urban densification and urban open space policies” (duration: 02/2014 – 07/2016), which is conducted by the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (scient. responsible Prof. Dr. Matthias Drilling). This project addresses the question by analysing discourses on spatial policies in the context of social change and its implications for allotment gardens and new forms of urban gardening that are developed and promoted by planning actors. It analyses planning practices in Swiss metropolitan areas (Zurich, Basel, Berne, and Geneva) in order to develop future scenarios in densely-developed areas.

In this context, the special purpose of the STSM was to study these new forms of urban gardening that have arisen and to analyse new planning and governance practices on open/green space, by focusing on the case-study in Geneva. For this purpose, the research was based on fieldwork conducted in the municipality of Geneva by choosing one illustrative example of a community garden in order to allow a comprehensive analysis. The research focus was on the analysis of meanings, proposals and goals of the particular initiative as well as its linkage to current planning and governance practices and urban open space policies in order to understand how the local government deals with changes of demands and needs for urban open space.

The additional outputs of this STSM are summarised below:

- During the STSM, some preliminary findings of the research were presented on the 10th International Congress of the Hellenic Geographical Society (Session: “Agro-food Systems in Economic Geography and Planning: the New Research Agenda”) that took place on 22-23 October, 2014, in Thessaloniki, Greece.
- Participation in the next International Conference on “Local Government and Urban Governance Citizen Responsive Innovations in Europe and Africa” organised by the International Geographical Union Commission on Geography of Governance & the Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, 9 - 10 April, 2015. A comparative abstract has been submitted entitled “Urban Governance and

democratization of planning: new forms of urban gardening and green space governance in Germany and Switzerland”.

- One publication of the results in a peer review journal is in progress.

2. RESEARCH SCOPE AND METHOD

The study aimed at elaborating meanings of new forms of urban gardening, their capacities and powers and their influence on politics of urban planning and development. It analysed how new forms of gardening are recognized, supported and integrated by local authorities. It also aimed at highlighting how urban open space is negotiated and re-appropriated through the emergence of urban gardening projects in the city of Geneva.

At the beginning of the field work, five different gardening projects in the city of Geneva were visited. In order to get an in-depth understanding, it was decided to focus on one case-study the ‘*Jardins du Centre horticole Beaulieu*’. The case of the ‘*Jardins de Beaulieu*’ was chosen as an illustrative case-study that describes new trends on urban gardening projects in the context of densification and urban open space policies. The chosen site combines multiple forms of initiatives that are developed within the same place, involving multiple users and actors both from municipality and civil society. It depicts new forms of cooperation between civil society and political-administrative actors and has implications for new urban planning and green space governance. Hence, the selected case primarily represents and encompasses two current main trends in urban gardening in Geneva: municipal initiatives at the local scale of the neighbourhood developed in the frame of social policies (initiated by the Units for Social Action - UAC) and bottom-up initiatives that combine market-oriented activities towards CSA and short food chain networks (plants sold to cooperatives that work with CSA) that are supported by the public action. In addition, the case-study illustrates the combination of formal and informal practices in terms of land access and negotiation of urban open space.

Thereby, the research questions are:

- What are the meanings, proposals and goals of new urban gardening initiatives? How do these changing patterns of urban gardening influence the production and re-appropriation of public green space?
- How is this initiative linked to the current planning practices and urban open space policies in Geneva? How does the local authority deal with this initiative?

- What actors are involved in the negotiation process and how does the process take place? How do political-administrative actors cooperate and negotiate over open space with civil society actors and what are the shifts in their main roles and interests?

In order to answer these questions, data was collected based on the analysis of available qualitative data and a series of interviews. First, a systematic literature review and a document analysis were essential in order to understand the general context in Geneva. Therefore, a broad definition of documents was applied ranging from administrative documents such as legal acts and spatial planning documents to documents published by or circulated among the particular gardening initiative. Second, semi-structured face-to-face interviews with local authorities and representatives of the gardening initiative were conducted. An interview schedule was developed containing all the relevant themes and questions. The interview schedule was tested during the first visit which included introductory interviews. It was then revised in order to be more targeted according to the aims of the interviews. This data collection method allowed a high degree of flexibility and adaptability and enabled a high level of comparability of the collected material.

In total, 9 interviews (and various informal conversations) were conducted with a total of 8 public and private actors in the field. A purposive sampling strategy was applied in order to select participants for data collection based on certain criteria, ensuring that the sample was relevant to research questions. The sample consisted of 5 public actors which were representatives of the municipality of Geneva (Service of Green Spaces, Unit of Community Action, Agenda21 for Sustainable Development, Department of Urban Planning) and representatives of civil society organisations involved in several urban gardening projects as well as in the selected case 'Jardins potagers de Beaulieu' (UTOPIANA, Collectif Beaulieu/Association les Artichauts, Equiterre) (see appendix table 1).

A thematic analysis was conducted in order to analyse the collected data. In its simplest form it is considered to be a categorising strategy for qualitative data which is not tied to any particular epistemology or discipline. Thematic analysis displays a wide range of categorisation, including theory-driven codes, inductive codes, and bottom-up codes derived from the researcher's reading or previous analysis of data. It enabled the researcher to sort the data, to focus on each category, to review the emerging themes, and to develop explanatory accounts of the data. Emerging patterns were detected and meanings were assigned in order to move from descriptive to explanatory accounts. More specifically, the analysis of the interview transcripts was made by highlighting phrases and opinions, important key-words and concepts in order to

interpret processes and conceptualize if possible the underlying patterns concerning the research questions.

In order to present new gardening initiatives and the planning challenges in Geneva findings are further organized in 3 parts. First, Chapter 3 describes the general background and spatial context of urban densification in Geneva in order to highlight urban development process and scarcity of open space as well public action and planning orientations regarding urban gardening. Conceptual shifts and the terms used in the public discourse are also addressed. Second, Chapter 4 discusses field work findings on the '*potagers urbains*', by analyzing data that was collected through interviews and field observation. It also includes special data regarding the illustrative the case study of the gardens of Beaulieu.

3. NEW GARDENING INITIATIVES IN GENEVA: PLANNING CHALLENGES ON THE EVE OF URBAN DENSIFICATION

Introduction

In a context of urbanization and lack of open spaces in central areas, traditional forms of family gardens are highly threatened. In the midst of the most acute housing crisis, one of the top priorities for Geneva is the construction of new housing areas through urban expansion combined with densification of existing built-up areas. Thereby, family gardens that were traditionally spacious are either forced out of core-city or decrease in surface¹ in order to have more space for development of new residential areas (urban densification). Hence, they are seen as one possible form - but not anymore as the only and unquestioned form - to use open space. Especially size and location of allotment gardens as well as the consideration of new forms of urban gardening are part of the debate on open space policies in urban areas. In this context, new forms of small-scale urban gardening practices emerge, labeled as '*jardins potagers*', '*plantages*', '*potagers urbains*'. They arise as a new multifunctional way of management and revitalization of vacant open spaces while giving the right for re-use of public

¹ In Geneva today, two allotments are being moved (gardens of Plan-les-Ouates and Chapel) In the 50s, there were more than 4,000 plots managed by the Geneva-based Federation of home gardens while today there are only half of them remained (2,100 plots of 250 m² each). Moreover, plot surfaces are decreasing in size, measuring maximum 170 m², including the shed. (<http://www.asloca.ch/dossier-210-les-jardins-familiaux-se-font-d%C3%A9placer-hors-de-la-ville>).

space to citizens. They are based on new forms of horizontal collaborations, partnerships and governance patterns between public, private and civil society actors that are open to more population groups and the surrounding neighbourhoods as well as other user groups (schools, associations etc.).

General background: urban development process and scarcity of open space

Geneva City is part of the Canton of Geneva which encompasses 45 municipalities of different size. It is home to nearly 195,160 residents living in an area of almost 16 square kilometres (OCSTAT 2014). Compared to other big cities in Switzerland (Basle, Berne, and Zurich) Geneva City is the most densely populated² city and has therefore the highest percentage of settlement area in the urban perimeter³ and a relatively low portion of stocked and green spaces⁴.

Geneva City is part of the metropolitan area of Geneva-Lausanne, also called “la Métropole Lémanique”. As part of this cross-border conurbation (Wenger, 2004)⁵ of totally 1,234,000 inhabitants Geneva City is heavily connected to its adjacent Swiss and French municipalities and cities. So over the last 20 years much of the city's expansion took place beyond the borders of the canton and the country. According to the “Raumkonzept Schweiz” of the Swiss Federal Council (2012) the main objectives in terms of sustainable development is inward urban development in order to avoid further urban sprawl and environmental degradation of the rural hinterland. While this requires the protection and improvement of valuable landscapes the City of Geneva also focuses on the development of attractive open and green spaces within the urban fabric (Schweizerischer Bundesrat 2012:72-74).

Geneva City faces numerous **challenges** similar to the ones of other Swiss cities (Ecoplan 2012):

Geneva City and its central position within the metropolitan area is an important location for international organizations (e.g. UNO, WHO, UNHCR and others), the banking sector as well as luxury industry (Schweizerischer Bundesrat 2012:72). Its economic strategy aims to support its numerous location advantages for international enterprises and organizations and at the same

² Population density per km² (2012): Berne: 2 470,3, Zurich: 4 332,9, Basle: 6 924,6, Geneva: 11 866,5 (BFS 2014).

³ Settlement area in % (2000): Berne: 44,2%, Zurich: 60,9%, Basle: 86,2%, Geneva: 90,6% (BFS 2013a).

Settlement area in % (2004): Berne: 45,1%, Zurich: 61,9%, Basle: 86,3%, Geneva: 92,1% (BFS 2014).

⁴ Stocked and green spaces in % (2009): Berne: 39.6%, Zurich: 35.3%, Basle: 12.5%, Geneva: 18.4% (BFS 2013b).

⁵ The “Métropole Lémanique” encompasses the Swiss cantons of Geneva and Waadt and parts of the Swiss canton Fribourg and Wallis as well as adjacent French municipalities.

time offer attractive living conditions for existing and future inhabitants (Schweizerischer Bundesrat 2012:73-74). Located in such a globalized context Geneva is affected by global economic dynamics as well as global discourses about city competition. On national as well as on municipal level public actors assume a reinforcement of the international competition between cities (Ecoplan 2012:26). Under these circumstances the city seeks to attract not only capital and enterprises but also new inhabitants (vgl. Harvey 1989). As stated in the national paper about urban challenges in Switzerland (Ecoplan 2012) migration and population growth in the cities lead to pronounced changes on the housing market: Where new settlements (e.g. for expats) with relatively high rents arise housing options for middle and lower income groups are pushed outside of the city (centre) and/or in segregated city districts. Also the trend of increased single living will continue and reinforce the pressure on the housing market (Ecoplan 2013:20). In this context of "new built gentrification" (Ecoplan 2012:18) housing rents and building land value rise and so housing shortage and lack of affordable accommodation are the predominant features of the on-going housing crisis.

Another major challenge in this context is the imbalanced relation between the high number of jobs and the relatively low number of flats which causes a lot of traffic and consequently serious ecological and health problems (Quincerot et al. 2009:13-15). To reduce the commuter traffic into the city and at the same time generate new housing opportunities for the growing population Geneva along to many other cities in Switzerland and worldwide commits itself to the concept of urban density as general city planning paradigm (Quincerot et al. 2009:17ff). As a border city this task is especially important because Geneva cannot expand beyond its outskirts.

These controlled and uncontrolled developments lead to a significant scarcity of open space especially for public use in dense living areas. To keep living conditions in Geneva attractive the city is concerned with the quality of the urban environment in all of its areas. But socially segregated city districts which lack a social mixture on various levels and struggle with issues of social exclusion (Quincerot et al. 2009:31-33) are especially in need for more open spaces for playing, recovery and social encounter. The provision of open (green) spaces as an important factor for quality of life becomes therefore a high priority for the city's administration (Quincerot et al. 2009:91ff).

To deal with the mentioned challenges Geneva City follows various **strategies**:

In the context of the housing crisis, the recent master plans for the Canton of Geneva 2015 and the Greater Geneva Agglomeration 2030 as well as Geneva's 2020 Municipal Director Plan have placed an emphasis on creating plans that prioritize housing development in central districts,

with an objective to create 3,600 new residences in the city of Geneva until 2020, of which 1000 are intended to be built in old neighbourhoods and the rest in land development in new areas or in the context of urban renewal programs (Quincerot 2009:24).

In accordance to the planning paradigm of densification Geneva City seeks a balanced strategy of urban development: Termed as "qualitative densification" (Quincerot 2009:50) the administration wants not only more and higher houses but at the same time preserve the social mixture in the districts and maintain old and new open (green) spaces (Quincerot 2009:50ff).

Despite its high building density, Geneva City calls itself a "green city" and aims to build a network of green spaces through the city linked to adjacent municipalities. These open green spaces have in their view ecological as well as social functions to guarantee the quality of life for its inhabitants as stressed out in their strategic papers for sustainable development (Quincerot 2009:108). In a wider territorial context the concept of contemporary "Nature city" is being developed and new forms of territories and networks of open spaces can bring agriculture and urban development together (Daune and Mongé, 2011). Moreover, "territorial planning on a metropolitan level, through « landscape plan » is centered around the issue of agriculture, food sovereignty, cohabitation with urban areas, as well as sustainability" (Barthassat et al., 2011).

Public action and planning orientations regarding urban gardening: social dimension of public space, nature and biodiversity

According to the planning paradigm of densification, actors in urban development have started off a reorientation of open space policies. Local administration does no longer engage in traditional allotment gardens, while at the same time it discovers new forms of urban gardening. Over the last years, beside classical forms of allotment gardens, new forms of small-scale urban gardening practices supported from the local authorities emerge, labelled as '*jardins potagers*', '*plantages*', '*potagers urbains*'. They strongly differ in terms of land and cultivation management concepts, the access, and the organisation from traditional allotment gardens, and are considered to be a central element of city nature and open public space and an important aspect of a "new urban lifestyle".

Even though urban gardening projects are not at the centre of the policy agenda of the City of Geneva, urban gardening projects match with many of the above mentioned challenges and strategies in the context of urban densification. These new forms of urban gardening might rather be considered as temporal components of urban fabric that are created as an alternative to the more space consuming traditional family gardens. They are considered as more flexible

and less formalized forms of urban gardening that are adapting to the open space scarcity of the dense urban cores with a more temporal land-use dimension. In this context cities are addressing vacant use through urban gardening/greening. Therefore urban gardens are a means for the adaptive reuse of temporary open/green space as long as they can be removed for future development of the land. They serve as valuable green spaces in the neighbourhoods and help to foster biodiversity, healthy leisure activities and ecologically sustainable food production. In terms of social mixture they support social encounter and participation in the local context.

However, there is not a clear strategy that addresses this new trend in progress. The city supports the concept of urban gardening and there is some kind of political recognition. These new terms (*'jardins potagers'*, *'plantages'*, *'potagers urbains'*) are introduced by the strategic development plans and the policy agenda both at the cantonal and municipal levels in Geneva. These policy advocacy attempts grow from the city's broader efforts to improve sustainability and social inclusion in neighbourhoods. More specifically, the Strategic Cantonal Plan (Canton de Genève 2013) gives clear orientations in terms of public action concerning the *promotion of new forms of urban allotments-family gardens* in urban context (see A17) while there are certain references also in the *Plan Directeur Communal 2020* (Quincerot 2009) indicating the terms of *'plantages'* and *'jardins de poche'* (Quincerot 2009, Ref. 8b).

We can distinguish two main pathways at the city level's main discourse that link urban gardening projects with sustainable urban development: a) the first is via the promotion of the social dimension of public space, b) the other is by linking it with nature and biodiversity. Hence, they can be considered as parts of a double effort to provide more land for green space in core city as well as to promote social cohesion.

Thereby, the main domains of public action priorities with a particular relevance to new urban gardening trends at the neighbourhood level:

- a. **Social dimension and re-appropriation of public space.** The *potagers urbains* are promoted through the wider strategy concerning public space policy and are perceived as an element of the larger concept of social space. They are considered as part of the general development of collective spaces and re-appropriation of public spaces -together with recreational areas, playgrounds, squares, meeting areas in vicinity with housing areas that could contribute to improve the quality of life and enhance social interaction and cohesion among urbanites. These aim to foster proximity and conviviality diversifying the uses of public space (Quincerot 2009:94). In order to achieve this, the city

recognizes the educational aspects of urban gardening projects and often promotes participatory design and the citizen's involvement in the creation of gardens. In this way, they try to foster didactic aspects that address nature and civic ecology practices. These educational strategies enhance public awareness, knowledge and participation on nature conservation within the neighbourhood and may meet multiple learning, community and environmental goals (Dubbeling et al., 2009, Fritche et al., 2011). They encourage the collective practices that stimulate the use of public and private space in order to enhance urban environmental management and to facilitate the use of vacant lots.

- b. Integration of nature and biodiversity into city planning and development of a network of green public spaces.** Urban gardens can be seen as important potential areas in building areas that support biodiversity within the city. Among other aspects it is referred to as a tool for developing a network of green open public spaces (Quincerot 2009:157, affiche PL7), through green wedges which penetrate urban core areas (*pénétrantes de verdure*). As such, they might play a significant role in preserving and diversifying green spaces by enhancing biodiversity, retaining the protection and improvement of natural environment in a context of high density that will be increased in the inner-city area. Even though this aspect of 'nature in the city' (Canton de Genève 2013, affiche A12, and A16; Quincerot 2009:185f)⁶ is primarily intended to be integrated as a measure in the Neighbourhood Land Use Plans (PLQ⁷) still there is not such existing experience. There is mentioned the multifunctionality of green wedges as corridors for preservation of nature, agriculture and loisirs with a diversified manner.

Although the city is supportive of these initiatives, it has not yet taken significant steps to promote urban gardening through concrete policies or explicit regulations. Apart from the strategic orientations, the city of Geneva does not incorporate urban gardening projects into their zoning plans. This might be due to various reasons: a) firstly, because the land often tends to be used on a temporary basis. b) secondly, it seems to be the appropriate form that depends on urban density and adapts to a given situation of low land availability, so urban gardening projects are often created on constructible land c) thirdly, it is a new trend in progress.

Besides the ecological goals of Geneva's strategy of sustainable development, the city wants to increase participation in urban development projects. With so called "contrats de quartiers" (district contracts) and stronger collaboration with civil organizations, the city aims to implement

⁶ These give the legal basis (plus spécifiques par exemple la LALAT).

⁷ PLQ: plans localisés de quartier, are land use plans that specify the conditions for the construction of new buildings. <http://ge.ch/amenagement/plan-directeur-cantonal-2030#A.%20Urbanisation>

new forms of governance to better fulfil the needs of their inhabitants (Gillig et al 2010:15; Quincerot 2009:122-123). Hence, during the last years a shift has taken place in order to incorporate local communities as active partners. Concerning urban gardening projects, this means that future users (future gardeners) often participate actively in the design, implementation and development of the garden plots. A multitude of public and private stakeholders rely on each other in order to activate resources and develop urban gardening projects in unused public or private land. Multi-actor, group-sponsored projects and participative policies involving public, private and civil actors in the context of sustainable urban development are emerging as a new way of re-appropriation of vacant open spaces in central areas through the installation of community gardens (Fritche et al., 2011, Lossau and Winter, 2011). The *Units of Community Action* (UAC) which is part of the *Department of Social Cohesion and solidarity* (Département de la Cohésion Sociale et de la Solidarité), the *Service of Green Spaces* (SEVE) and the *Service Agenda 21 – Ville durable* are the three main public/municipal actors that support the establishment of urban gardens in Geneva.

Terms and conceptual shifts in urban gardening

There is a shift in the terms and concepts regarding new forms of urban gardening that put aside traditional allotment gardens. New urban gardening initiatives encompass many forms of gardening but differ in terms of characteristics, objectives and modes of governance from the classical forms of allotment gardens. They seem to be the response to the '*jardins familiaux*' or the '*jardins ouvriers*', that are often blamed as space consuming and generally inaccessible fenced areas not of general use (exclusive) situated within or in the outskirts of the city. In order to respond to the long waiting lists for the classical allotment sites⁸ as well to the scarcity of open space in central areas, new flexible forms of urban gardening arise as the alternative farming solution inside the dense urban cores. They are often developed as bottom-up initiatives while being encouraged by local authorities. With a plot surface that generally does not exceed 20 m², they are less space consuming initiatives, especially when compared to the traditional allotments where the tenant used to take possession of a real private space where it can accommodate relatives and friends. They are considered to be more open to general public access through the prevention of fencing and barriers that separate private and public sphere and the promotion of multiple functions. However, they have a more temporal and ephemeral dimension, hence they might disappear from one year to another. In terms of governance, planning and politics,

⁸ According to the former vice president of the *Fédération suisse des jardins familiaux*, there are 500 families on our waiting list (<http://www.asloca.ch/dossier-210-les-jardins-familiaux-se-font-d%C3%A9placer-hors-de-la-ville>)

they are often the outcome of horizontal collaboration between administrative and civil society actors (local communities, collectives, associations etc.) and depict less formalized and more participative forms of governance.

Special consideration must be given on how the term '*jardins potagers*' or '*potagers urbains*' is defined in the case of Geneva. Though inspired by the '*plantages*' (in Lausanne) and the '*jardins partagés*' in France, the '*Jardin potagers*', is not clarified as a term, concept or practice. It usually refers to small plots in inner dense areas, located on public or private land (vacant or unused plots or existing green/open spaces) that can easily and quickly be reused (Equiterre, 2011). The first '*plantages*' in Lausanne were initiated in 1996 by the Municipal Department of Parks in an effort to reuse open spaces at the foot of buildings and a significant number of abandoned or unused green space, by allowing residents of dense central areas to have a small plot of land close to home⁹⁹. One of the major differences between these new forms and the classical allotment gardens is in terms of accessibility and public-private sphere: access to the public sphere is open in principle to all citizens. This is spatially translated by more openness, for the gardens are designed in a more accessible way, with minimum infrastructure avoiding fencing or other types of barriers that could prevent general public accessibility. They might include collectively cultivated or individual plots and are usually addressed to all residents from the surrounding areas and they aim at promoting local neighbourhood relations, conviviality and self-sufficiency. The proximity is one of the major advantages, as participants must live approximately in a 5 minutes distance from the site. Even though the concept of the '*jardins potagers*' in Swiss cities is inspired by the '*jardin partagé*' in France, there are some differences. In Geneva these gardens are mostly associated with the concept of bringing nature, biodiversity and related leisure activities into the central urban areas. Therefore, the gardens are less associated with serving productive functions linked to alimentary question and self-provision. However, it seems that under the term '*jardins potagers*' a wide variety of aspects and functions can be included: municipal social initiatives, educational and didactic components and also entrepreneurial elements. Hence, it is not only a matter of growing food for personal consumption but the term may also encompass professional aspects of urban farming.

It is important to clarify that in general, the term "*jardinage*" characterises the non-commercialized production (production non-marchande) and occurs within the more dense urban fabric and built areas (zone à bâtir), in residential areas (according to the meaning of the LAT - loi fédérale sur l'aménagement du territoire). The term agriculture is also applied by

⁹⁹ <http://www.potagersurbains.ch/cueillette-dinfos/autres-projets/autres-projets-suisse-romands/>

different actors and refers to a commodity production. In the analysed case-study (See chapter 4, Jardins Potagers du Centre horticole Beaulieu), the combination of these two aspects can be observed, both of *urban gardening* and *urban agriculture* (fr. *production marchande*). The produced food (in the case of Beaulieu they grow plants – fr, *plantons*) is sold in cooperatives that work with CSA. Thus, it is linked with short chain urban food systems because the food production may be addressed to clients living at the cantonal level comprising urban and rural periphery. Or also the final clients may refer to another greater scale, also further away from the cantonal level (see Hepia 2012).

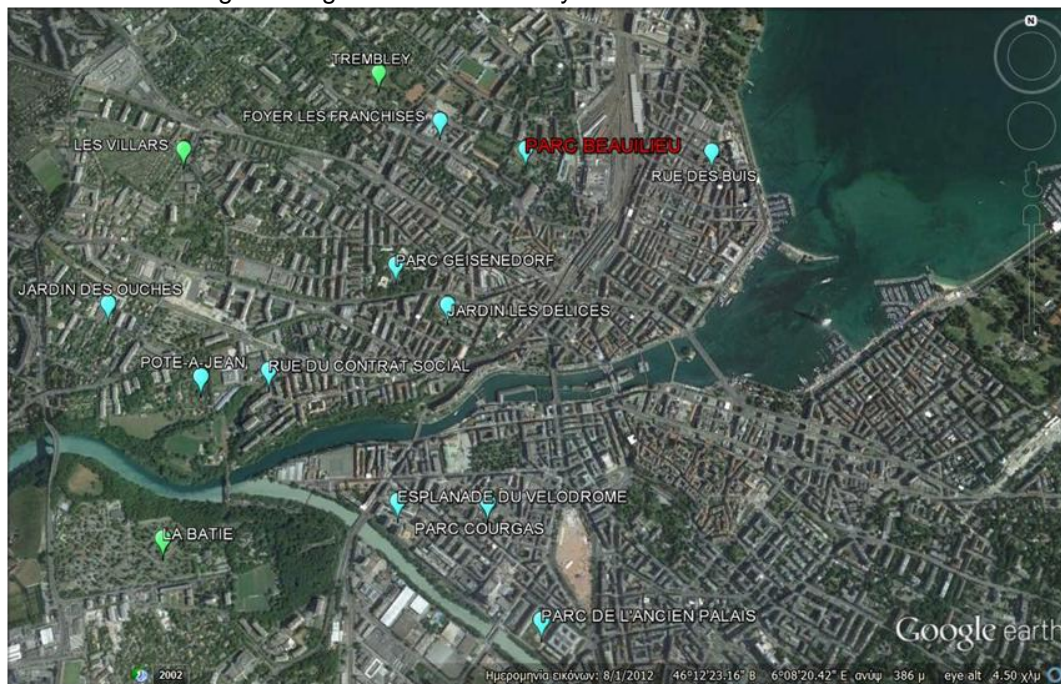
4. FINDINGS: THE CASE STUDY OF THE 'POTAGERS URBAINS' IN GENEVA

Emerging partnerships for negotiation and re-appropriation of public space: shifts in the roles of public and civic participation

There is a variety of urban gardening initiatives in Geneva that depicts new forms of collaborations and partnerships involving horizontal collaboration between public, private sector and civil society. As it is the case for various '*jardins potagers*' in Geneva, these partnerships usually involve public actors from different services of the administration at the municipal level as well as non-state actors such as non-profit associations, grassroots movements and other representatives of the civil society or private actors that express their interest and take part in political decisions. There are numerous urban gardening projects that have been reported in Geneva and neighbouring municipalities and about 11 new urban gardening projects¹⁰ are located within the Geneva municipality, most of them developed during the last 2-3 years (see the list on the table 2, Appendix). This list is not exhaustive, as it may not include some smaller community gardens or up-coming projects which were difficult to be identified and investigated in the short period of three months.

¹⁰ According to the interviews with the municipal services, one more new project that is approved is in progress in the '*Chemin Gilbert-Trolliet*' (private land) while there are some requests have been processed ('*Chemin du Champ D'Anier*' and '*Promenade de l'Europe*', both on public land)

Picture 1. Urban gardening initiatives in the city of Geneva



📍 Family gardens (*Jardins familiaux*)

📍 New urban gardening projects - *Jardins potagers*

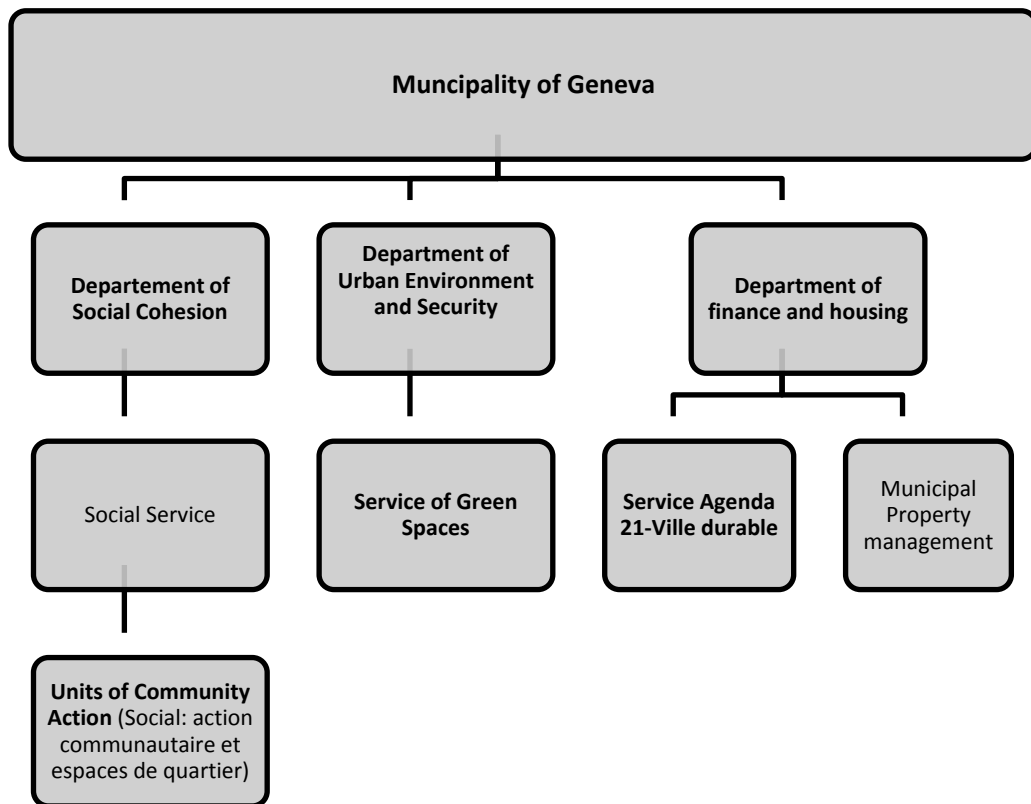
Besides the lack of a clear policy on the city level, the municipality is the active supporter of these initiatives. The emergence of new players and associations that develop new strategies are all components of the new emerging collaborative structures that are negotiated. However, motivation, interests and goals may differ among the involved actors.

- On the one hand, it is mainly the municipality of Geneva that takes action in structuring public involvement in the creation of urban gardening projects through three different departments and their several Services and Units (see diagram 1): a) the Service of Green Spaces (SEVE-Service des espaces verts, Département de l'environnement urbain et de la sécurité, b) the Units for Social Action (UAC-Unité d'Action Communautaire, Département of Social Cohesion), c) the Service Agenda 21-Sustainable City (Ville Durable) and the Municipal Property management (Gérance immobilière municipale) of the Department of Finance and Housing (Département des finances et du logement). The main approach requires the involvement of the Agenda 21, which has an overall coordinating role in relation to the implementation of sustainable development at the local level and SEVE in order to facilitate access to land, insofar as garden projects are created within parks or other green spaces. However, in most of the cases, the UAC is the Service charged with the main responsibility for the operation and co-ordination of the projects. They are the main 'intermediates' involved in a close

collaborative planning process between population, municipality and other stakeholders in order to facilitate and guarantee the social use of public spaces, to enable residents of the neighbourhood to reclaim public space, social inclusion and social connectedness. The role of the UAC is to mobilise and to facilitate the participation of the population target groups. They mainly emphasise on locality and social inclusion (e.g. parc in Geisendorf, Contrat Social). Initiatives of urban gardening are also implemented in order to meet the needs of social integration and social bonding around a friendly place, while at the same time promoting the re-appropriation of public space and neighbourhood revitalization.

Among these different units and services of the municipal administration, a variety of motivations and also different levels of involvement and engagement can be observed.

Diagram 1: Public actors involved in the creation of urban gardening projects - administrative levels within the municipality of Geneva



- On the other hand, aside from municipal initiatives, there are numerous Associations, NGO's, Collectives and Schools that emerge as 'new players'. One of the most important actors involved is the organisation *Equiterre*, which plays an important role in the emergence of urban gardening initiatives (mainly in the French speaking part of Switzerland, particularly in Lausanne and Geneva). *Equiterre* is a non-profit organisation that advises and supports local authorities and companies in order to promote sustainable territorial development. The organisation has certain influence on municipal actions. With over 40 years of experience, it has participated in a wide variety of projects regarding regional development, urban planning, health promotion, agriculture and food, consumption, etc. The skills range from the implementation of *Local Agenda 21*, the organization of events, awareness building, participation, development of tools, project evaluation and writing. They are usually engaged by the municipalities in order to develop and actively promote urban gardening projects. Their main aim is to foster participation and involvement of citizens usually during the stage of the creation of urban gardens. Hence, they organise a participatory approach, allowing participants to express their wishes, needs and demands. They support public authorities, owners or residents wishing to create urban gardens in front of their homes. It also proposes the creation of urban gardens near schools, recreation centres, community centres, and nursing homes, hospitals or prisons. Users are families and individuals.

Since 2010, *Equiterre* has been involved in the creation of 3 *jardins potagers* in the city of Geneva and 4 more in the neighbouring municipalities. *Equiterre's* work on urban gardening is funded by the *Loterie Romande* and the Swiss Landscape Fund has financed a portion of the production costs. Their usual strategic approach is to contact the local administrations in order to inform them about the planned project and to ask for available land that might be appropriate for urban gardening projects. If the land is private, they collaborate (intermediate) with the city in order to negotiate the land access with land owner and to improve the likelihood of success of implementation.

In this context, many of the city's urban gardening initiatives have been assisted by local groups (associations, collectives) while negotiation over open space in Geneva requires the city to partner with local groups. In a context of win-win situation, municipalities seek to create partnerships with organisations like *Equiterre* in order to assist interested groups with site selection and/or the negotiation process for the land access. Additionally, the organisation

supplies gardening information and materials (e.g the garden Pote-à-Jean was created in 2013 in collaboration with *Utopiana*, *Equiterre* and *Agenda 21*, *Gérance Immobilière* and *UAC*). Organizations like *Equiterre* are responsible for promoting participatory design process for the open space which usually includes three stages: a) the conference presentation, during which they inform local residents in order to motivate them to participate and respond to their concerns, b) participatory workshop, where interested future gardeners are given the opportunity to express their wishes, visions, desires and expectations related to the urban gardening project. This is one of the most interesting phases because it allows collective constructions of design plans expressed in drawings and models and the implementation of the project c) a debriefing session. The latter allows the formal registration of gardeners by signing the regulation ("The charter Urban Gardener"). Throughout this process they may provide knowledge (know-how) on garden planning; provide volunteers and training seminars for the future gardeners; and inform the neighbourhood.

The initiatives in which the City is involved are often developed at the request of neighbourhood residents. Geneva City argues that they do not want to impose these initiatives as top-down overall projects. They rather prefer to facilitate existing request and desires and meet the needs and interest of local groups instead of planning whole new projects. Municipalities preferably seem to adapt to the existing demand of citizens embracing a participatory approach in the process of re-appropriation of fallow land.

The municipalities aim at strengthening citizens' involvement and responsibility, while maintaining a certain degree of municipal control in the decision-making process. Through this prism these initiatives seek to combine the involvement of citizens and local volunteers and boost bottom-up capacity at the neighbourhood level. In this context there is an increasing participation in urban development processes as well as citizen participation in policymaking. These gardens represent a new form of citizen's participation. In other words, the strategy aims at the openness of the process by involving the population in the process of creation, use and governance of the spaces. In this way they engage users to rethink their roles in a co-modified collective space and they establish a cooperative structure among users. Designing the garden or organising activities with the future users implies increased commitment, responsibility and motivation from their part. Hence, in terms of governance they tend to gain more and more autonomy. Even though in most cases there are not many collective plots, there is however a collective infrastructure and a feeling of respecting collective rules. In other words municipality enables citizens to negotiate the land access and the proposed activities.

The case of the 'Jardins potagers de Beaulieu': collaborative planning and participatory spatial practice towards a hybrid form of public space

Where? Situated in the old horticultural centre (of a total surface of approximately 9,300m²) of the Municipal Service of Green Spaces - SEVE, which is part of a greater park in Beaulieu of a surface of 65,300m² (Ville de Genève, 1993). This formerly empty and unused space is located in a central and densely populated residential district of Geneva (between Cromptes and Grand Pré). Part of it has been converted to a highly productive urban garden, combining a number of ways to get involved with gardening also including beekeeping, chickens. There, some of the abandoned greenhouses and hotbeds of an old municipal horticultural centre are transformed for urban gardening, optimising the possibilities to install various urban gardening projects within the city. The land is allocated to several associations and citizens, all sharing the space of the site of the old horticultural centre (see pictures 2 & 3).

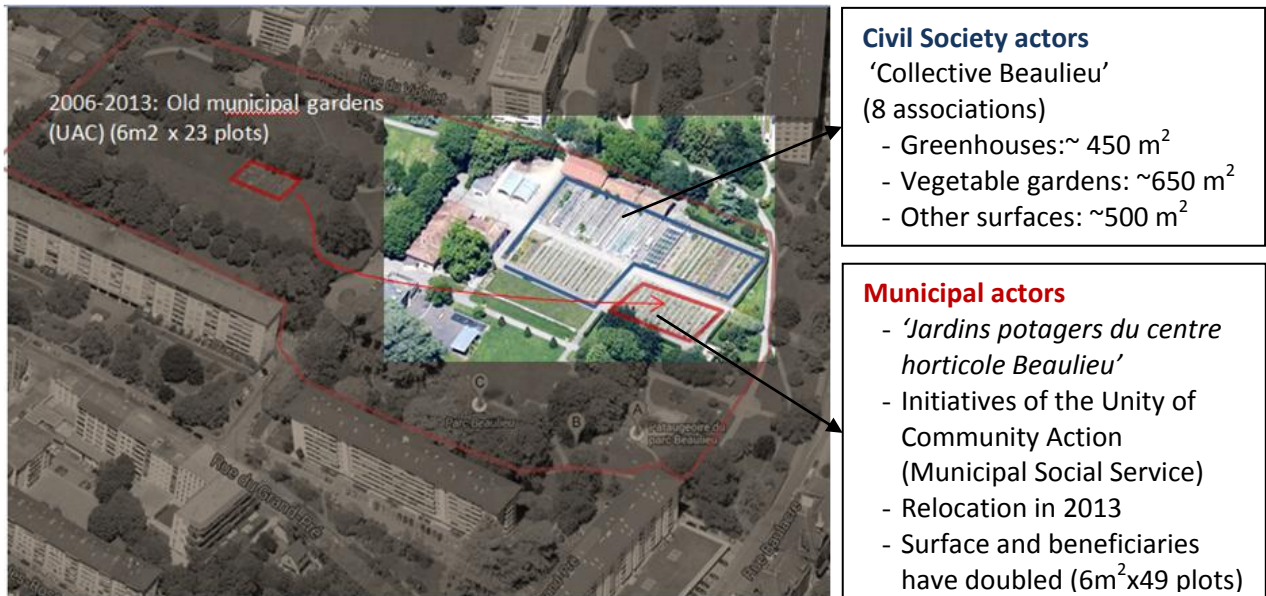
Brief description of the site. Since 2009, there are several actors deriving from the civil society that were involved in the development, all claiming the empty and unused space and performing their activities. They all coexist in the same place and each one of them has their own part of land, motivation, objectives and mode of governance/organisation. However, the first urban garden initiated by UAC Pâquis / Caves / Saint-Gervais existed in Beaulieu since 2006 and was situated in the middle of the park (just outside the horticultural centre). Since 2013 it has been alsrelocated inside the old horticultural site occupying some of the remaining empty hotbeds.

Why Beaulieu? The case-study is located in a central area within a surrounding environment that is predominantly affected by dense urban development. The urban gardening project represents a viable example of experimenting urban gardening in its various aspects and diverse functions. It encompasses a wide range of activities and fulfils social and economic functions of urban gardening and urban agriculture. It combines food provision (mainly through the Collective Beaulieu) within the city with social functions (social mixture, social contact in the neighbourhood, leisure, didactic activities with school gardens etc.). Additionally, the case of Beaulieu illustrates how different stakeholders, both from civil society and the Municipality of Geneva. These actors have different perceptions and motivations regarding urban agriculture and urban gardening as well as different organisational and governance models can be successfully related and share a collective vision. Even though the area consists of individual beds there, are a lot of plots that are collectively cultivated by associations that take part in the Collective and external users such as schools.

Picture 2. Location of the Beaulieu Park in the city of Geneva



Picture 3. Public and civic actors involved in the urban gardening project of Beaulieu



Brief history of negotiation processes in Beaulieu. Since the relocation of the horticultural site of SEVE, a discussion about the future planning, regeneration and reuse/revalorization of the park Beaulieu started. However, there were several unsuccessful efforts to propose new uses in the park Beaulieu, dating back to 1997¹¹. These proposals were mostly generated by local associations of the residents like '*Pré en bulle*' in collaboration with *Délégation à la Jeunesse (DEJ)* and combined leisure and other socio-cultural activities. In 2008, after the relocation of the SEVE horticultural activities into another area (Vessy), the park has been back in the news with an on-going discussion about the re-use of the old horticultural site.

In 2009, shortly after the relocation of the municipal activities, the non-profit association of '*Artichauts*' asked for permission to use some of the old greenhouses in the site in order to grow plants and a part of the area was allocated to them. Without any offer by the municipal authorities, '*Pré en bulle*' decided to invite the '*Artichauts*' and in cooperation also with some other cooperatives (union *Uniterre* and various other agricultural cooperatives), they got in contact and approached the UAC (which already had since 2006 a community garden in the other side of the park) and the City of Geneva in order to create the collective '*Beaulieu*' in 2010. Their main objective was to demand '*a green and versatile space for neighborhood residents*' ('*Un espace vert et polyvalent à la disposition des habitants du secteur*') and to propose a joint development project integrating relations with nature and promoting proximity farming activities and food sovereignty, in the context of sustainable food production and alimentation (Collectif Beaulieu, 2010, Pré en bulle, 2008).

Therefore, the *Collective Beaulieu* emerged in 2010 in order to foster urban garden development in an effort to reduce social inequalities and to increase social interaction through the use of public spaces and to meet the needs of local food production. In this context the project would provide garden-related and also diversified activities, preserve green space and enhance the

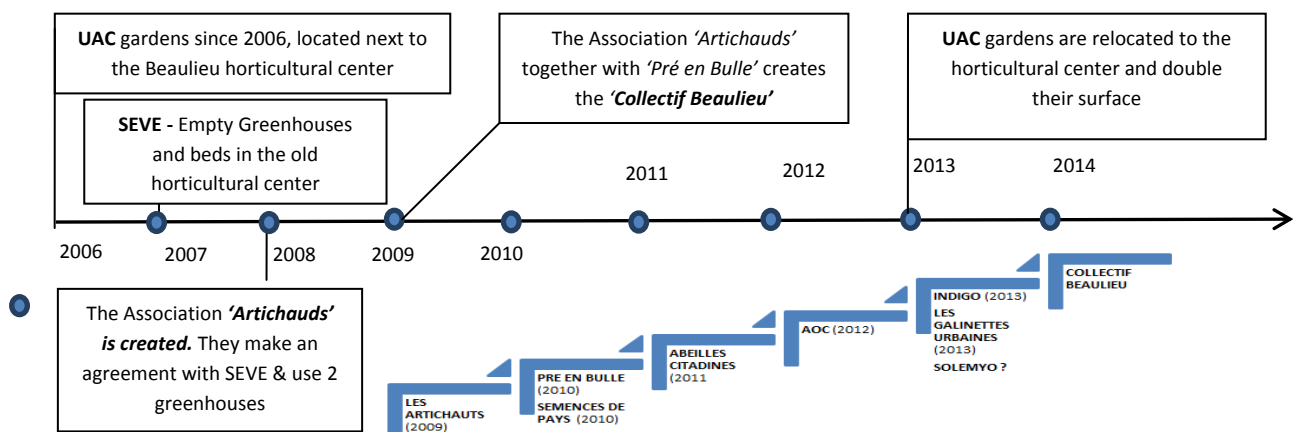
¹¹ The first proposal in the area of the old horticultural park concerned the creation of a leisure center. Five years later, in 2002 there was a project proposal related to the reuse of the Villa Beulacre which was close to the site, as a 'maison de quartier' proposed by the association of the residents of '*Pré en bulle*' in collaboration with *Délégation à la Jeunesse (DEJ)*. This plan suggested multiple sociocultural functions such as a multi-generational meeting center, artists residences, multifunctional uses and outdoor activities such as uses proposed by the association of the residents of '*Pré en bulle*' in collaboration with *Délégation à la Jeunesse (DEJ)*. The previous and unsuccessful socio-cultural project was presented again to the SEVE by the association of '*Pré en bulle*', also supported by other associations that were interested to participate, but it was also rejected due to the opposition of the inhabitants arguing the respectful use of the parc and the nature (noise etc.).

urban environment, and enrich the surrounding communities. In this way physical and social connectivity in the urban structure was preserved (continuity of urban green spaces of the city fabric). The project presented by the 'collective Beaulieu' was finally accepted by the City of Geneva in 2010 as it was consistent with the goals of preserving the agricultural history and the horticultural heritage (greenhouses) of the Park Beaulieu. Public actors embraced the idea because the proposed activities included the promotion of urban gardening located downtown while at the same time it gathers and engages the participation of residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods of the park. It offers the possibility of synergies, exchange platforms, meeting spaces while on-site sales at community gardens are not prohibited for the urban farming associations. The site allows for community gardens, where occasional on-site product collection and sales are permitted, and for market gardens that can sell products on-site at any time.

Since then Beaulieu is home to a number of garden plots re-claimed and re-used by multiple community and non-profit groups and organisations as well as citizens (see diagram 2). Stewardship and civic action combines both bottom-up and municipal advocacy efforts. Hence, two different projects coexist in the same area, bringing somehow together local food activists (associations of the collective) and municipal urban gardening projects allocated to residents of the neighbourhood.

The management of the space is done collectively by all the users depending on their needs and they are open for free access for the inhabitants even though these gardens are formed and regulated differently in each plot area. Administration of garden operations typically requires the city to partner with local community groups.

Diagram 2. The chronological emergence of 'Jardins de Beaulieu' (2006 - 2014)



There are three main public and civic actors involved in this project and each one's activities are associated with a specific spatial array of plots within this site. UAC and the Service of Green Spaces (SEVE) are the major actors that supported the establishment of urban gardening in the Beaulieu Park.

a. Public actors

The main public actor involved in the creation of urban gardening in Beaulieu is the municipality of Geneva through its several Services and Units:

Unit of Community Action. The UAC is a unit that has recently been created in the context of social policy efforts. Hence, it is part of the Social Service of the City of Geneva (SSVG), also part itself of the Department of Social Cohesion and solidarity (Département de la Cohésion Sociale et de la Solidarité). The unit emerged in the context of increasing urban poverty, growing social isolation and exclusion (especially of elderly people). Their actions may vary across a wide range of initiatives which are all neighbourhood oriented. Their main role is to implement projects that improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood and that strengthen social cohesion through the common use of public space, the integration of elderly or deprived social groups and that foster intergenerational and multicultural-, multi-ethnic relations and social diversity. In this context, they adopt initiatives to promote urban gardening projects at local level (*actions pour l'usage social des espaces publics* as it is mentioned in the general aims of the UAC). In Beaulieu, the first community garden was established on 2006 and was initiated by the UAC. This type of garden, also called citizen's gardens 'potagers citoyens', is open to all the inhabitants of the sector who are interested to apply for a plot. UAC has duplicated its surface and currently manages a total surface of 6m² x 49 (whereas in 2006, 20 plots of 6m² x 23). These plots are randomly allocated only to area residents with a contract of 2 years. There is not rent to pay but a participation fee of 70 CHF. The users have their own plot (size of 6m²) and receive the necessary water, tools and support to start and maintain their garden. There is no fencing and the plots can be used either by an individual or a family or can be even shared by more than one person. The UAC is responsible for animation and surveillance of the site.

There is a growing popularity of these projects. Hence, there is currently a waiting list of approximately 200 residents that wish to join. Even though application and selection are not based on socio-demographic criteria, according to the UAC representative they tried to keep a balance between diversified social groups (e.g. low-income residents, multi ethnic,

intergenerational etc.). Their main aims are to strengthen community life and create a social space for interaction, contact and creativity for the inhabitants of the nearby neighbourhoods. In this way the gardens help to maintain a connection of urbanites with nature and represent new ways of developing local solidarity in urban areas.

SEVE. This Service of Green Spaces is responsible for the management of green spaces in the town, the conservation of plant heritage of the city and urban flowering. The urban gardening project Beaulieu involves at an administrative level. They used to own the whole site located in the park Beaulieu, where the old horticultural fields used to be situated (municipal land). This horticultural centre (empty greenhouses and hotbeds) was not in use since 2009.

This unit is responsible for the consultation for the project Beaulieu, so that residents share their ideas for using the site. The plan is to renovate the park by keeping its historical value and by improving the quality of life of the surrounding neighbourhood. The site is considered to be part of the penetrating green zone in the city core ("pénétrante de verdure") that starts from Parc des Crêts to Petit-Saconnex until the Parc des Croupettes. Additionally, the creation of urban gardening projects is also a way to maintain and manage the communal land without cost.

Service Agenda 21 – Ville durable. In 1995 the administrative council has signed the Charta of Aalborg, in 2008 the Engagement of Aalborg. This engagement involved an internal consultation of the city's administration (April 2008 - June 2009), an external consultation of Geneva's inhabitants (April 2009 - September 2009) and the adoption of an action program in March 2010, the so called *Programme stratégique de développement durable de la Ville de Genève 2011-2014*. The unit Agenda 21 was implemented in the context of this program and serves as a center of competence constituted by representatives of every department of the city's administration. For implementing urban gardening projects in Geneva, Agenda 21 is mainly involved in the beginning of the process and takes over a leading role that brings the different actors together.

b. Civil society actors

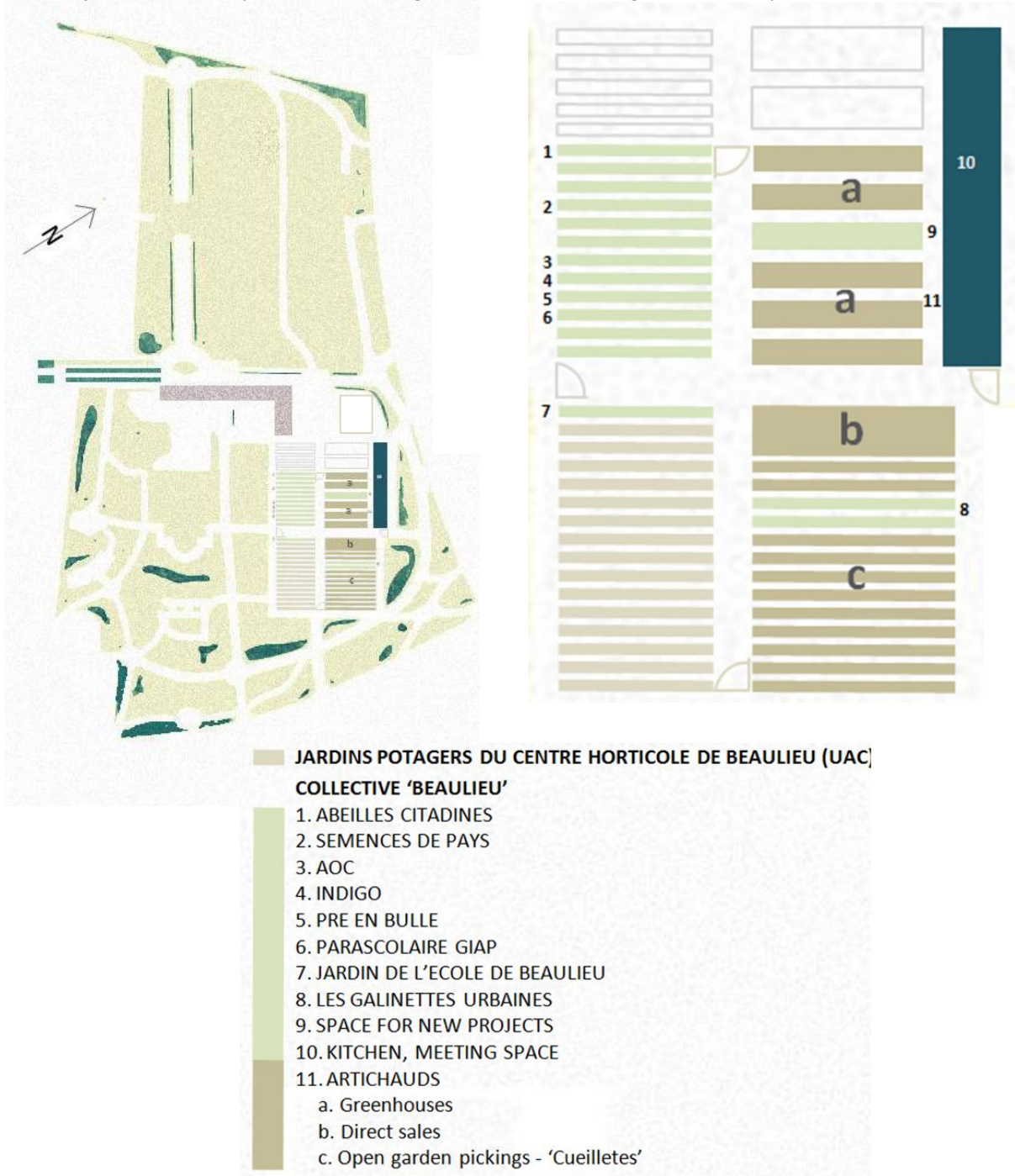
Collective Beaulieu. The collective of Beaulieu was created in 2010 and comprises 8 local Associations (see Map 1 below and table 3 in the appendix). The land available was allocated (without rent) to the associations that were interested and asked the municipality for the re-appropriation of this unused public space. Fresh bio vegetables, community poultry and honey are produced and in some cases are locally sold.

The main goals for the associations, as it is the case for the *Artichauts*, are a bit different and their effects are spreading far away from city or even the Geneva agglomeration borders. Their main motivation was driven by food sovereignty and local food production. Hence, they use practices linked with the emerging short chain distribution systems. Their activities are centred to:

- The production of vegetable planting (200,000 seedlings) of certified organic vegetables, for contract farming initiatives at the cantonal level
- Open Garden pickings by residents of the neighbourhood who can come themselves harvest vegetables and herbs.
- Collection of native seed varieties in collaboration with '*ProSpecieRara*' foundation and the project "Seeds of Country". They select, produce and offer local seed varieties Geneva. This project is fundamental to maintain the diversity and aims at making available all a lot of stable varieties threatened with extinction. These varieties derived from local breeders or *ProSpecieRara* foundation, have adapted to this land and its climate.
- The association together with *Pré en bulle* and other stakeholders associations co-founded the collective Beaulieu. The group proposed a project on the theme of local agriculture in the context of future renovation of Beaulieu Park. The City of Geneva has welcomed our proposals and joined the collective Beaulieu in the working group on the renovation of the park.
- The project planned for 2013 is considered as a way to penetrate greenery in the urban fabric. In this context, the association participates regularly in neighbourhood events and works with schools and community centres on educational events. They produce organic plants and work with Community Supported Agriculture ("CSA" - 'agriculture contractuelle de proximité-ACP) which sell the plants to 9-10 bigger farms and *Coopératives de culture de légumes* that also work with 'paniers Bio' - ACP. At the same time they provide local organic and fresh vegetables to all the residents as they have developed the direct sales at the farm where everybody is able to collect the vegetables directly from the plant, weigh them and leave the money in the box (prices are a slightly cheaper than in Swiss market). The garden also serves as a nature centre and

meeting space, where several activities are welcomed and also supplies gardening information and materials.

Map 1. Detailed map of the Beaulieu gardens: actors and organization of space



Source: Author's fieldwork, Ville de Genève, 1993, p.27

Picture 4. Images of the Beaulieu Park



The UAC gardens



Artichauds:gardens for 'cuillettes'



The meeting space/kitchen



Greenhouses ('Artichauds')



School activities*



Brunch*



Abeilles citadines



Les galinettes urbaines

Source: Author 's fieldwork, *<http://www.preenbulle.ch/>

5. DISCUSSION: NEW VISION ON URBAN GARDENING

Planning aspects and institutional context

Urban gardening initiatives might be a promising area for cooperation on the local and the policy level. Although there seems to be no official integration of these initiatives in the urban planning processes (in terms of land-use or zoning), there are still orientations at a strategic level (cantonal level) concerning concepts such as city nature, green spaces continuum, biodiversity, social interaction. In the context of the Strategic Program of sustainable development of the City of Geneva (Programme stratégique de développement durable de la Ville de Genève), there are numerous projects that focus on promoting urban gardening and urban agriculture within the city.

Even without explicit protection or coherent motivations, there is a public support of grassroots initiatives that are part of the local food movement. The practices may be driven from different conceptions of locality and proximity but are all reclaiming urban food production through community space and re-appropriation of urban space. This can influence policies at the local and national level and may be central to shifting new urban gardening and urban agriculture paradigms in central urban areas.

There may be informal and formal as well as participative modes of governance and management. From an institutional point of view there are orientations at the cantonal and municipal level in order to promote new forms of urban gardening inside the city.

From an urban planning perspective it seems that these new forms of gardening are adaptive with minimal support by the public action. There are orientations at the cantonal level for the promotion of new forms of urban gardening but gardens are not included in the planning documents as a special land-use category (not as a classified land use). There are informal practices of accessing un-built but often constructible land resources. This may exclude urban gardening projects from being a permanent urban function. In this way, initiatives are considered as sporadic projects that are multi-actor synergies, based on existing needs or demands by the civil society. These collaborations may also involve informal practices in terms of negotiation or access to land. However they can influence possible future landscapes and synergies.

To conclude, it seems that there is no strategy or an overall plan for the integration of urban gardening in the planning process, we could claim that initiatives are sort of sporadic projects

that are multi-actor synergies, based on existing needs or demands by the civil society. Nevertheless, these collaborations may also involve informal practices in terms of negotiation or access to land. However they can influence possible future landscapes and synergies.

Towards a collaborative and less formalized governing structure?

The case of Beaulieu shows that the mobilisation of various non-state stakeholders supported by public authorities might be a successful combination in order to create urban gardening projects. The inter-dependence between public and civic participation escapes from the dichotomy between bottom-up and top-down approaches and allows utilising the different potentialities and capabilities. The land is negotiated through the different perspectives of actors to achieve access to empty or unused land. Public actors (municipality) and NGO's play an important role as intermediates, they need to negotiate for mutual benefit if it is a private owner or activate public-state land. They also contribute financially. Moreover, they seem to cooperate in a win-win situation, while at the same time there exist "monetary connections because collectives are subsidized by the municipalities" (Ernwein, 2014). These projects would have small chances to be accepted without these synergies and the active support of government-municipal administrative actors.

Some of the initiatives driven by the civil society are extremely participative during their installation. Nevertheless, they are short-term projects due to their location on constructible land. Bottom-up approaches activate the participation of the local community in development initiatives - participatory processes-collaborative design (e.g. the case of garden Pote-à-Jean). NGO's are becoming major channels of development of urban gardening projects (Equiterre initiatives). Public actors such as municipality or canton are using the existing knowledge (know-how) of these bottom-up institutions.

The main approach by municipalities is that there are initiatives that 'steer' a society's demand for urban gardening. The process includes both, public and private actors. Civil society collaborates via informal processes based on mutual commitment rather than official contracts. It seems that there is an alternative governing structure that links several actors, interests and perspectives through improving multi-actor decision-making. The form of collaboration and the actors involved change from one urban gardening project to the other, depending on the needs and the potential access to land. In some cases of urban gardening projects, participation is recognized as a basic principle. For example the initiatives, where *Equiterre* is involved as an

'expert', are organised within a participatory approach in order to increase the shared responsibility and empower social interaction, inclusion and collaboration among the users.

Land access and funding: adaptive reuse of temporary open/green space

In the context of urbanisation, urban gardening projects can be seen as adaptive and mobile forms with the aim of re-using and re-vitalising small and vacant areas. The projects follow 'opportunistic' and short term strategies in order to reduce the risk of failure. They are created on land which is classified as constructible but which is still undeveloped. This land might still be assigned as agricultural in order to create short-term urban gardens (2-3 years). The land could be also constructible and can be used for a residential or recreational development projects. This seems to be an informal adaptive 'strategy' for rediscovering new forms of urban gardening as a means to recover unused land. The temporary character of the use means that permanent continuation of the use will not be permitted when plans change. This facilitates the future use of the property for more competitive uses.

Land can be either private or municipal. It seems that there are informal processes in terms of land access, in some cases there are no contracts and deals are based on new relations of trust between users and owners, new ways of land management without cost for the municipal services (trust deals with private owners, NGO's and/or municipalities as intermediates to guarantee that there will be no conflicts i.e. noise, dirt, healthy and safe living environment etc.). It is always a bit more difficult to access private parcels as negotiations-processes take more time and are more complex. It is more difficult to establish trust and achieve the agreement. This is mainly the case in the lawn front yards of flats. There the municipality intervenes as a mediator in order to guarantee the safe use of the space. In the case of municipal/state land, there seems to be a priority given to parks, foots of block of flats, and unused urban spaces (there exists an inventory of potential places, unofficial documents, potential vacant spaces inventories managed by the municipal property service - Gérance immobilière).

From the point of view of the municipal administration there is a potential in supporting urban gardening projects in the inner-city area in order to re-activate and maintain unused space. However, it is considered to be of temporary use, especially as it is seen as an on-going trend with still few experiences. The city examines each case separately because a) there is not an accurate policy document or an inventory of spaces available b) it is not easy to know the potential for every green space, because it varies a lot, e.g. Front Yards in front of the buildings

(pelouses). A long-term vision of these initiatives could be seriously obstructed by the lack of lack of cooperation within different services of the municipality and the fragmentation of the different departments that need to collaborate in the process.

Accessibility and usability of open space

New forms of urban gardening can be mainly described by the re-use and re-appropriation of open space and vacant land. This process raises questions regarding accessibility and appropriateness of public and private space leading to variable concepts of space. Given that negotiation over open space generally includes horizontal collaboration between public and civic actors, in most of the cases the transformation of waste/unused land into used space (urban garden) can be considered as a process of commodification/re-invention of the space among several actors and users. In this way, the new social space that is created can be perceived as a result of a social and collective production. On the one hand, giving the right for appropriation and participation implies increased commitment, responsibility and motivation. This enlarges the accessibility to multiple users and actors, to alternative uses and activities, and enables the development of collective group visions through inclusive practices. Therefore, open spaces with limited access (ex. the empty horticultural centre before the creation of the collective gardens) is transformed from a single-use (horticultural centre) and single-actor (SEVE) space to a multi-user, multi-actor and multi-functional space: a place of socialization and complex interactions establishing a cooperative feeling among the participants. On the other hand the interplay between private and public sphere of space is always an issue and there are questions of access and exclusion of certain groups of people. In general, these new forms of urban gardening are thought to be more open to general public access through the prevention of fencing and barriers that separate private and public sphere and the promotion of multiple functions. Especially when compared to the traditional allotments where the tenant used to take possession of a real private space where it can accommodate relatives and friends. However, 'decentralization' (or 'outsourcing') of power to non-state actors supports more informal processes which may also be very exclusive, temporary and adaptive as a short-term means to recover unused land.

Scale and scopes: proximity and diversity of users

Small-scale initiatives at the local neighbourhood scale (UAC) and pilot projects that have been implemented to improve social interaction and integration of lower-income groups and asylum seekers are successful (e.g Jardins du Contrat Social). The general goal is to enable meetings,

social contact between residents of the neighbourhoods, thus mixing up the people while there might also exist more particular and specific goals targeting more precarious groups of people. Even though a main goal of the initiatives by UAC is to preserve a balance among users of the gardens (to ensure social mixture), there is a contradiction in terms of maintaining socio-demographic diversity. There are no socio-economic criteria for the selection of users. The choice of new participants in the gardens e.g. in Beaulieu is done randomly, whereas there are no social criteria for choosing people. According to the interviews with representatives of the UAC, the socio-demographic diversity is guaranteed 'automatically' because the different neighbourhoods surrounding the park are already diversified and extremely heterogeneous in terms of socio-economic background, nationalities and ages.

However, there are different scales of actions and different perceptions of proximity activities according to the variable motivations of the actors involved. On the one hand the municipality seeks proximity with citizens and promotes social contact and cohesion. On the other hand associations in Beaulieu are linked with proximity agriculture networks, community supported agriculture farms, cooperatives and customers. All things considered, these different perspectives lead to a more variable context of uses and functions and increased diversification among actors and users.

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Appendix

Table 1. List of interviewed actors

| INTERVIEWS | |
|--|--|
| Actor | Date |
| UAC - Grottes-Pâquis | 27.08.2014 And a lot of information on the Beaulieu case by mails |
| UAC -Unité d'action communautaire de Servette / Saint-Jean / Petit-Saconnex | 27.08.2014 |
| Service des Espace Verts (SEVE) | 9.9.2014 |
| Service Agenda 21-Ville Durable | 17.09.2014 |
| Association <i>Artichauts</i> , Beaulieu | 27.08.2014 |
| Association <i>Artichauts</i> , Beaulieu | 17.9.2014 |
| Coordinatrice du jardin Pote- à -Jean | Short Discussion with the coordinator of garden of Pote- à -Jean on 27.08.2014 |
| Association <i>Utopiana</i> | 2.10.2014 |
| Association <i>Equiterre</i> | 23.10.2014 |
| Municipality, Géographe-urbaniste Service d'urbanisme de la Ville de Genève | 10.10.2014 |

Table 2. List of existing *Jardins potagers* and *jardins familiaux* in Geneva and neighbouring municipalities

| Nom | Date of creation | Propriété Private/public/municipal | Type de terrain (parc, fallow land, lawn, roof) | Acteurs associés | Vocation |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| JARDINS POTAGERS | | | | | |
| PARC DE BEAULIEU | (Collectif 2009) (UAC, 2006) | Municipal, public | Parc, Old horticultural center of the Municipal Service of green space | SEVE, UAC, Collective 'Beaulieu' | Production dans la ville, didactic, biodiversité, Mixité sociale Liens de proximité |
| CONTRAT SOCIAL (chemin Furet) | 2013 | Private | Pelouse, Au pied des immeubles | Hospice général, l'UAC, le SEVE | Requérantes d'asyle Mixité sociale Liens de proximité |
| POTE-A-JEAN | 2013 | Municipal | Terrain à bâtir | Utopiana, | Mixité sociale |

| | | | | | |
|---|------|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| (avenue des Eidguenots 21) | | (Gérance immobilière) | | Equiterre, UAC, Agenda21 | Liens de proximité projet participatif jardinage écologique |
| RUE DES BUIS | 2014 | Municipal | les bacs étant jusque là entretenus par le SEVE | SEVE, UAC, | |
| RUE DU VÉLODROME | 2014 | Municipal | DPBA qui a mis à disposition les bacs | DPBA, UAC | |
| PARC GEISENDORF | 2014 | Municipal | Part of public park | SEVE, UAC. | |
| PARC GOURGAS (Jonction) | 2014 | Municipal | | Maison de quartier de la Jonction. | |
| PARC DE L'ANCIEN-PALAIS | | Municipal | | organisé par l'école? GAPP- groupement genevoise des associations de parents d'élèves du primaire? | |
| JARDIN DES OUCHES | 2006 | Private (Fondation Emile-Dupont) | espaces extérieurs des immeubles HBM | Künzler, députée des Verts et membre d'une Fondation pour le logement social | |
| FOYER LES FRANCHISES | 2010 | Municipal | | UAC | mixité des utilisateurs mixité sociale et intergénérationnelle |
| JARDINS DES DELICES (Rue de Délices, Clos Voltaire) | 2014 | Municipal park | | UAC | Étudiants |

| | | | | | |
|---|------|--|--|---|--|
| PRESIGNE | 2014 | | | HEPIA | étudiants en agronomie et requérants d'asile |
| CHAMPEL | | | | | |
| ACACIAS / rue Simon Durant | | | | mis à disposition de la DPBA. | |
| THÔNEX | 2012 | | | Equiterre | Habitants et l'école du quartier de Marcelly |
| COMMUNE DE GRAND-SACONNEX | | Municipal | | | |
| «Les Délices du parc» | 2011 | | | Equiterre | Habitants, Processus participatif |
| "Le Pom'tager" du Grand-Sacconnex | 2013 | | | Equiterre | habitants des quartiers La Tour-Pommier |
| PETIT SACCONEX | | Private | | | |
| "PLOTager" Plan-les-Ouates (route de Saint-Julien et la route de Base | 2014 | Propriété de la Paroisse Catholique de Plan-les-Ouates-Perly-Certoux | | association Tripto-lem, commune de Plan-les-Ouates et equiterre, et réalisé avec le soutien de la Loterie Romande | |
| JARDINS FAMILIAUX | | | | | |
| PARC TREMBLEY | 1941 | Municipal | A remplacé la clôture et le réseau d'eau défectueux. Les vieux | attaché au Parc Trembley | 20 jardiniers |

| | | | | | |
|---|------|--|---|--|----------------|
| | | | cabanons à outils ont laissé la place aux petits chalets. | | |
| VILLARS, Avenue de Crozet, Vernier. | 1929 | Achete par la Société Copérative des Jardins Ouvriers de Villars | | | 305 jardiniers |
| SOUS-MOULIN Avenue du Petit- Senn, Chêne- Bourg | 1978 | | | | |
| LA TOUVIERE Chemin de Verdy, Avully, Switzerland | 1979 | Public | | | 150 |

Source: Author's research (this list is not complete, due to the limited length of the STSM)

Table 3: The Beaulieu Project: actors, users and activities (the surface is calculated approximately)

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| JARDIN POTAGER DE L'UAC (jardins citoyens) | ~6m ² x 49 plots | ~800 m ² (including walking paths) | Plots allocated to residents of the neighbourhood for the period of 2 years |
| COLLECTIVE BEAULIEU [8 ASSOCIATIONS] | | | |
| LES ARTICHAUTS (2009) | Greenhouses used for plant production | ~450 m ² | They produce plants and offer open vegetable pickings. Info: www.artichauts.ch |
| | Gardens open for vegetable pickings (cueillettes) | ~650 m ² | |
| PRE EN BULLE (2010) | ~20m ² x 1 plot | 20 m ² | Open animations, children care. Info: www.preenbulle.ch |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| SEMENCES DE PAYS (2010) | ~20m ² x 3 plots | 60 m ² | Produces and provides old and local varieties of seeds. Seeds available on : www.semences.artichauts.ch |
| ABEILLES CITADINES (2011) | ~20m ² x 3 plots | 60 m ² | Honey production and sales: abeillescitadines@gmail.com |
| AOC (2012) | ~20m ² x 1 plot | 20 m ² | Experimental garden and actions for bringing nature in the city : aocollective.ge@gmail.com |
| INDIGO (2013) | ~20m ² x 1 plot | 20 m ² | Research on the process of natural fermentation of certain dye plants |
| LES GALINETTES URBAINES (2013) | ~20m ² x 2 plots | 40 m ² | Community henhouse managed by local residents: galinettesurbaines@gmail.com |
| SOLEMYO | | | Construction and provision of solar cookers, solar dryers and creation of a training and solar cooking! solemyo15@gmail.com |

ACTIVITIES IN THE GARDENS OF BEAULIEU

"The school at the farm": participation in school visits (L'école à la Ferme)

"School" Wednesday of the Recreation Department.(Les mercredis "extrascolaires" du Service des Loisirs)

"Season Brunches" for new culinary and convivial meetings in spring and autumn. (Les "Brunchs de saison" pour de nouvelles rencontres culinaires et conviviales au printemps et en automne)

Neighborhood parties (Des fêtes de quartier)

The garden of children after school (GIAP Beaulieu) (Le jardin des enfants du parascolaire)

Citizens gardens (49 plots managed by the city of Geneva UAC, *Les potagers citoyens*)

The way to visit the 'Budé Farm' (Le chemin pour aller visiter La Ferme de Budé)

Source: <http://www.preenbulle.ch/40>