

# Grove Community Garden – an idea to copy



## *Get into the Grove*

*Local Green councillor, Gavin Corbett, profiles the Grove mobile community garden at Fountainbridge, and calls on other landowners to follow the example.*

Everywhere I turn, it seems, there are new gardening projects in the area I represent. I've been involved in a couple myself, through Shandon Local Food Group and I am still looking for people whom might want to try their hand at mini-gardening at Slateford station.

Perhaps the most intriguing, though, is the Grove mobile community garden at the former brewery site at Fountainbridge. Bounded by the Western Approach Road to the north and Fountainpark and Springside to the west and east, the large gap site is owned by developer, Grosvenor. While plans to develop the site are becalmed, Grosvenor has supported a local community group to set up a new community garden. The unusual feature is that all the plots are inside large pallets. That means that when development takes place, in the future, the pallets can be loaded on the back of a truck and taken elsewhere.

The idea is not unique. Indeed, a few years back, my Green colleague, Cllr Steve Burgess, suggested similar "meantime" development on the longstanding "Caltongate" site in the Old Town. But what has been really gratifying has been how supportive Grosvenor has been, especially through Robin Blacklock, and how well the community gardening group, initially established by the wonderful local Fountainbridge Canalside Initiative, has harnessed community energy. At the time of writing, all the plots are allocated and a waiting list has already been established. Attending the launch, with Tollcross Primary School, the energy and goodwill was

palpable. Quite literally, seeds have been sown. This is not the only example of “meantime” development in the area. Across the road, at the even larger site bordering on the Union Canal, part of the land will host a circus this summer, for 4 weeks, as part of the international festival. And why stop there? There are plenty of gap sites, in both public and private ownership, which have been eyesores for years, as development plans ebb and flow. Let’s turn these sites into temporary gardens, BMX tracks, play areas or events for fields. It will create goodwill, build bridges, and help our city flourish.

*Gavin Corbett is Green Councillor for Fountainbridge-Craiglockhart and one of the main founders of Shandon Local Food Group.*