

Get down to the Botanic to learn about growing food

✘ Edinburgh's would-be garden enthusiasts have a perfect excuse to come to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) this month. The Garden is hosting a series of drop-in sessions to encourage visitors to cultivate their own produce at home.

The Edible Gardening Project, which is entirely supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery, is holding a number of events including the Edible Gardening Weekend Activities starting Saturday 21 February, which will feature activities for children, advice on how to grow produce and the chance to ask questions to the team of volunteers.

There will also be opportunities to 'Meet the Edible Gardening Team' throughout the year, giving visitors the chance to speak to the volunteers in the Demonstration Garden. The RBGE volunteers can offer suggestions on how to improve chances of successful growing at home and ensure that gardeners' labours prove fruitful. Visitors will be given the opportunity to learn about vegetable varieties, sowing seeds, composting, pruning, harvesting, storing and preparing produce, and more.

The Edible Gardening Project began in 2011 and has been growing ever since. The project teaches people the horticultural skills they need to grow their own food. It works with Garden visitors and community groups and has a team of over 20 volunteers who help to deliver the project.

Last month the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh was awarded an extra £25,000 from players of People's Postcode Lottery – meaning over half a million pounds of players' support has now helped Edinburgh residents learn how to grow their own fruit and vegetables in the heart of the city.

Edible Gardening Project Manager Jenny Foulkes commented: "Funding from players of People's Postcode Lottery allows us the great opportunity to encourage budding gardeners to come and learn new skills. We have a number of other events lined up over the next few months where we hope to engage with visitors and extol the values of fruit and vegetable gardening at home."