

# Community garden project picks up pace after delays

Plans for a new community garden which will create a space for residents of an Edinburgh estate to grow their own fruit and vegetables are picking up pace after suffering a series of setbacks due to the pandemic.

The long-awaited project to transform a play area in Slateford into allotments for locals could get going later this year, after official plans were lodged with the council.

Edible Estates earmarked the plot, which is within a ring of tenements between Hutchison Medway and Hutchison Avenue, for its latest community garden in 2019. Plans were derailed by Covid lockdowns but revived in January.

If given the go ahead, Hutchison Neighbourhood Garden would provide space for “up to 50 growers” with a tool shed, rainwater harvesting system and a community orchard around the perimeter of the garden also planned.

The charity works with the local authority and other organisations to set-up community growing spaces in social housing estates across the city, having already launched neighbourhood gardens in Craigmillar, Lochend, Leith, Clovenstone and the Calders.

It said the Hutchison site was “particularly well suited” for the initiative “due to its size, location, solar aspect, and being over seen by a ring of tenements”.

Plans state: “The Neighbourhood Garden would include a large

community shed which would support the garden but also community green space projects across Hutchison, and provide a location for other community activities.

“There would be up to 35 raised beds which could be managed individually by growers, or as a group.”

Each household would have their own raised bed to grow whatever they like and the shed would come complete with tools – and could double up as a meeting room or venue for workshops and events.

Edible Estates said the garden would be developed “as a community asset, of value to the whole neighbourhood”.

They added: “Participation in the garden would be promoted to folk who live in Hutchison and nearby, based on levels of engagement so far, we anticipate easily being able to attract 30-50 active participants.

“Once the group of growers are well established on the site we support them to set up a Growers Association and then build their capacity to take on the management of their Garden for themselves.

“After two years the Growers Association should be independent of Edible Estates, and part of our network.”

*by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter*

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Hutchison Neighbourhoods Garden. Image: Edible Estates.