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Reconnections in the City

Exploring the Drivers of Community Garden Participation

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Reconnections in the City:
Exploring the Drivers of Community Garden Participation

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Abstract

There has been a substantial rise in the number of community food growing activities in urban environments at an international scale. This is situated in a context where social isolation, loneliness, poor health, decreasing levels of wellbeing and neighbourhood belonging are experienced across the population, heightened by city life. The link between community food growing activities and the positive outcomes associated with wellbeing and community life are increasingly being demonstrated, however little is currently known around the processes of participation in these spaces particularly from a UK perspective. 'Participation' in general is thought to be a good thing for individuals and society as a whole, and given the rise of community gardening as an everyday practice, and the recognised benefits it produces, further understanding around why people participate is required. This study contributes new knowledge to research on community gardens, by applying a unique conceptual framework informed by literature on community development and regeneration. In responding to calls to better contextualise explorations into community gardens, this thesis proposes an explanatory framework centred on understanding participation as a person-centred situated practice, and identifies influences across various scales. In doing so, a number of key drivers underpinning people's participation in community food growing projects have been identified. The framework is applied to the case study of Lambeth, an inner-city London borough, where a mixed methods approach combining interviews, a survey, and observations, was employed, which generated data from key organisational actors and participants from a number of food growing projects located on estates and community spaces.

The data reveal the presence of internal drivers, through the exploration of individuals' motivations which show how project participation enables people to be more connected to, or embedded in various aspect of society. Moreover, participation creates the ability

for an expression of care for others and place, revealing how projects can be a conduit for empowerment, the (re)building of community, and informal, local participation in society, based on a desire for local change. The 'food' benefits of community food growing are realised once participation has taken place, through the experiential and expressive aspects of such activity. Exploring the external drivers of participation shows how progressive arrangements, involving partnerships including the public sector, and founded on a knowledge and appreciation of local participatory cultures, can provide the necessary resources and conditions to foster participation, where local key actors are a central factor. The provision of sufficient resource such as project infrastructure, knowledge, space, permission and kudos, is key in enabling people to participate in projects and promotes empowerment for change at the personal and neighbourhood scale. By providing new insight into the reasons why people participate in community food growing projects, the research contributes towards a better understanding of how the development and sustainability of such projects can be supported, thus increasing their potential to alleviate some of the negative effects of city living.

Key words: community food growing, community gardens, participation, progressive-empowerment, London, governance, public sector.

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List of Acronyms

AFN – Alternative Food Networks

BOS – Bristol Online Survey

CFN – Civic Food Networks

CG – Community Gardens

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

EL – Edible Living

GCCO – Green Community Champions Officer

GiGL – Greenspace Information for Greater London

GLA – Greater London Authority

IEL – Incredible Edible Lambeth

LFB – London Food Board

LFP – Lambeth Food Partnership

LFS – London Food Strategy

MFP – Myatt's Fields Park

ONS – Office for National Statistics

SFC – Short Food Chains

TFPC – Toronto Food Policy Council

TRA – Tenants and Residents Association

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Chapter 1

Cities and Community Food Production

1.1. Introduction

Cities are significant spaces – with over half of the global population currently residing in them, cities are paradoxical in the sense that they offer many opportunities, but also pose numerous challenges to society. With the population of cities predicated to grow to 66% of the world's total population by 2050, a major concern of urbanism is to do with sustainability (United Nations, 2014). Currently there are mounting problems and pressures around resource depletion and public health which are exacerbated by contemporary living and consumption patterns as a result of a consumer driven society. For example, although covering only 2% of the world's surface, cities consume 75% of the world's resources (Steel, 2008). As well as concerns over how unsustainable they are, cities are also becoming increasingly known as unhealthy and unequal spaces, due to issues of loneliness and social isolation despite more people than ever living in a concentrated space, and the ill effects resulting from the lack green space, poor air quality, pressurised work cultures, and low levels of physical inactivity.

Such urbanisation has also resulted in a disconnection between populations and the origins of food, with most developed countries accessing their food from the global industrial food system, which dominates the way in which food is produced, sold and consumed. This food system comes at a cost to the environment and to society; its contribution towards climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, waste, and soil degradation for example, has damaging environmental effects (Vermeulen *et al.,* 2012). Moreover, the lack of traceability of food raises ethical concerns around animal welfare and workers' rights, and poses threats to food safety (Barling *et al.,* 2009; Allen 2010). This disconnection not only means that people do not know where their food comes from, or how it is produced, but it also means that knowledge and skills associated with food production and consumption is dwindling (Kneafsey *et al.,* 2008; Tansey and Worsley, 1995). Furthermore, the rise of convenience food and indeed lifestyles, has resulted in

diet related ill health and obesogenic environments, causing a public health crisis, often associated with urban environments, relating to wider issues of inequality and linked to food poverty and insecurity (Foresight Report, 2007).

It is within this context that initiatives and solutions are being fashioned to respond to some of these challenges associated with unsustainable urban living, including urban and community-based food related activity, as a strategy for improving urban sustainability and quality of life. This reflects how cities expose complex and interconnected issues around sustainable living, inequality, and food system sustainability, but that they are also knowledge hubs and key spaces of innovation where responses and solutions are being formed (see Rossi, 2017; Reed and Keech, 2016; Nesta, 2016). Therefore, a range of initiatives concerned with (re)establishing community food production in cities are becoming more apparent, in particular, community gardening activity is increasingly popular in developed countries. Moreover, urban food governance formations are developing, and gaining influence in some cities, examples include the international Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), and the Sustainable Food Cities Network in the UK[1]. Such networks have a commitment to working towards sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse (MUFPP, 2017), and to promote healthy and sustainable food through cross sector partnerships (Sustainable food Cities Network, 2016).

It is therefore more important than ever to concentrate research efforts on cities and the interwoven and complex issues affecting people's lives, to contribute towards a practice-orientated knowledge base concerned with sustainable change. The aim of this thesis is to examine community-level activity taking place in the context of urban life, and to focus on community gardening by using a case study in London - a city which has seen an

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[1] The MUFPP has been signed by 159 cities, and the Sustainable Food Cities Network comprises 48 member cities.

increase in the number of people growing their own food in communal and shared spaces. Literature on community gardening to date has identified many benefits of community gardening however there has been less attention given to conceptualising why people participate in community garden activity, and the drivers that enable people to participate, such as the influence of wider governance arrangements. This thesis argues that such an understanding is necessary to enable community gardens to become a more sustainable feature of cities, thus allowing the benefits of community gardening activity to be extended.

This thesis aims to develop a better understanding of the reasons why people participate in community gardening, and the factors that enable them to participate. It argues that a better understanding of participation is achieved by considering causation through a focus on the 'internal' and 'external' drivers of participation, and provides empirical data to illustrate what these drivers are. It does this by using the in-depth qualitative case study of Lambeth to explore community garden participation, one of London's most densely populated, deprived and 'food active' boroughs. This study proposes that 'radical' and 'progressive' ambitions of those involved in community gardens can be usefully combined and argues that public sector support is a vital ingredient in the success of community gardens, on the condition that partnership working is based on key principles associated with 'successful' participation and community empowerment. Given the above, this thesis is concerned with answering the following research question and subsequent objectives:

Research Question: How can we better understand the factors that influence people's participation in community food growing activities, to in turn, support people's involvement in community gardening, thus extending its benefits?

Objectives:

1. To identify informal, neighbourhood community food growing projects within a case study context.

2. To critically evaluate the governance arrangements and processes in which community food growing projects operate.

3. To disentangle and analyse the motivations of people participating in urban community food growing.

4. To extrapolate and examine the external drivers influencing people's participation in community food growing.

The rest of this opening chapter provides a more comprehensive review of the context within which participation in community gardening takes place. The chapter firstly provides an insight into contemporary city life in London, and introduces the case study borough of Lambeth to provide a broader background to the case study. The rise of urban and community based food production is then introduced, which outlines the phenomenon of study – Community Gardens (CG). The chapter then reviews several inter-related trends which form the wider 'food' context, and have contributed towards generating momentum for community food growing out of a concern for more sustainable, healthy and democratic, localised (urban) food systems. The following seven chapters of the thesis are then briefly summarised.

1.2 An insight into city life: The world city of London

London is a world city, at the centre of a complex set of interwoven factors negatively affecting its communities and environments. It is within this context that a number of local level, 'bottom up' innovations, including CG are taking place across the city. Studies focused on CG in London show how CG generally provide important opportunities for local community development and empowerment, environmental improvement

particularly in neglected urban neighbourhoods, and access to greenspace (Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Metcalfe *et al.*, 2012). These opportunities are important in a city where space and housing are major issues. There are particular concerns around the availability and affordability of housing for rent and purchase, with some communities being displaced as a result of development and gentrification. Exacerbated by the 2008 global financial crisis, property prices have grown by 47% between 2011 to 2015 (ONS, 2016a; GLA, 2016b) putting a huge strain on London residents. Although London remains an internationally attractive and unique city, 76% of Londoners are dissatisfied with the housing in the city (GLA, 2015); London's capacity to support new developments, and the extent to which new developments meet the need of existing residents, is a concern for London residents. As such, issues around sustainability and land pressures are some of the biggest priorities, and challenges, for London's future (GLA, 2015).

The rise in community-orientated food growing activities in the city is at a time when, despite being home to a growing population which currently stands at over 8 million people, London is reported to be the loneliest place in the UK. In 2013, over half of the London population reported feeling lonely, with 1 in 5 people stating they are lonelier now than 10 years ago (BBC, 2013). These issues of isolation and loneliness are present right across the population. Although social contact and conversations can increase wellbeing and sense of belonging to a community, there are fewer opportunities for meaningful social relationships within city life, despite more people than ever in a given place, and the rise of social media, enabling instantaneous 'connection'. There is also increasing awareness around the loneliness experienced in urban, over rural environments and a number of studies are starting to show a link between urban living and poor mental health, where anxiety and depression rates are higher than rural settings (The Guardian, 2014). This is in line with how the most dissatisfied people are found to be in London, and the most satisfied in the rural south west of England (ONS, 2012). London is not only home to the least satisfied people in England but also the most

stressed. In terms of satisfaction with life, how 'happy' and 'anxious' they felt yesterday, London ranked the worse across England, and came out second to bottom on the fourth measure around feelings of 'worthwhile' (the West Midlands fared worst) (ONS, 2012). Moreover, data shows that those in the inner city suffer more than those living in the suburbs, particularly regarding anxiety (ONS, 2012).

Despite being the largest city in the UK and comprising a high population density, London has a relatively large proportion of greenspace – in fact it is considered as one of the greenest cities in the world (GLA, 2017a). The London Mayor dedicates funds to support the improvement and enhancement of London's green spaces, including green roofs, trees, and parks, which makes London an 'attractive place to live, work and invest' (GLA, 2017b). Although food growing is not a key feature of the Mayor's commitment to developing 'green spaces', the Mayor's Capital Growth programme (discussed further in section 1.3) is an initiative specifically dedicated to supporting community food growing. However, as previously indicated, there are competing demands on space generally, which includes green or open space; as shown by Table 1.1, green or open space serves a variety of functions from recreational park use, to attractive green corridors to increase biodiversity, and allotments. Currently, 0.62% of land regarded as open space (with amenity or potential amenity value) is officially recorded as food growing spaces through allotment, community gardens and city farms (GiGL[2], 2015). It is uncertain whether this takes into account the rise in informal, innovative food growing activities such as roof top gardens, vertical growing, or community gardens (or provides an indication into the access of open / green space), however, it does highlight how open and green spaces also have a variety of competing demands and uses. This is important to consider given the accumulating evidence base showing links between green space, food growing and

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[2] Greenspace Information for Greater London.

wellbeing (Forestry Commission, 2012; Sustain, 2016b, Davies *et al.,* 2014; Bos *et al.,* 2016, Bragg *et al.* 2014; Brown *et al.,* 2016; Kneafsey and Bos, 2014).

Land use	Area (HA)	Percentage
Parks and Gardens	9207	5.77%
Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	8859	5.56%
Green Corridors	5671	3.56%
Outdoor Sports Facilities	10781	6.72%
Amenity	6575	4.12%
Children and Teenagers	72	0.05%
Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	995	0.62%
Cemeteries and Churchyards	1390	0.87%
Other Urban Fringe	12893	8.09%
Civic Spaces	74	0.05%
Other	3063	1.92%
Unknown	2601	1.63%
Total	**62118**	**38.96%**

Table 1.1: Breakdown of 'open space' in London (GiGL, 2015)

At the food production level, there is a growing number of innovative projects across the city displaying alternative examples of producing food, including, 'Growing Underground' - a business using hydroponic systems in disused Tube tunnels to supply local restaurants, and 'Kings Cross Skip Garden' - a community project growing food in skip containers (Growing Underground, 2018; Kings Cross, 2018). These are examples of the ways in which urban innovators are producing food in the city and reflect the creative ways in which urban space is being used for food production. There is also a diverse range of organisations, networks and projects in London concerned with food, food system sustainability and change, some of which the chapter will discusses in more detail further on (e.g. Growing Communities, Capital Growth). At a 'food governance' level, London also exhibits a unique food governance structure – the London Food Board (LFB) - inaugurated in 2004 to implement the Mayor's Food Strategy. It is made up of an advisory group comprising

independent food policy organisations and experts from across London, and seeks to influence food related policies, created by the Mayor, and to support food related projects (GLA, 2016b). The LFB is further discussed in Chapter 5 along with other significant networks and organisations in the city.

Although there is much activity taking place across London, the borough of Lambeth (described in more detail in Chapter 5) is a very active borough in terms of its CG activity, and has been chosen to further explore CG participation through this study. Although part of a world city, Lambeth has its own unique food governance structure in the form of the Lambeth Food Partnership. It also has a number of active organisations within the borough particularly concerned with community food growing (such as Incredible Edible Lambeth), and it has an impressive number of community food growing spaces – over 200 are now present (IEL, 2016), as well as other innovation within the realm of community and food (e.g. the Crystal Palace Food Market, Edible Bus Stop). This, in part, is reflective of the strong community spirit in Lambeth, which has, for example introduced an alternative economic system through the local currency of the Brixton pound. Moreover, Lambeth council (a strong Labour council) is based on principles of 'co-production', and is active in its endeavor to develop community engagement in the borough with its diverse population.

Being an inner-city borough, Lambeth is not immune from stark disparities, and food related issues such as food poverty, and health related illnesses for example. Therefore, Lambeth is reflective of wider issues of inequality and deprivation which are intensified within this inner-city context. Moreover, being a highly active 'food' borough, Lambeth makes an ideal case study to explore participation in CG, and some of the ways in which CG activity is developed and supported throughout the borough to contribute towards more sustainable living. Lambeth was also the focus of the EU funded-project Foodmetres,

concerned with exploring Short Food Chains (rather than CG) which commenced at a similar time to this study. Therefore, not only was Lambeth an ideal case study for the exploration into CG, through Foodmetres, there was also some degree of relationship with some key organisational actors within the borough which provided a way in to empirically explore the phenomenon of CG - this is further discussed in Chapter 4.

1.3 Introducing the rise of urban and community food production

Food production in an urban context is not a new phenomenon, however, it is now much wider in scale, scope and diversity than it has ever been, given its ability to alleviate some of the pressures associated with urban living. Urban food production can therefore take many forms; for example, CG activity is different to forms of urban agriculture and allotment gardening although sometimes these concepts are used inter-changeably. Many definitions of urban agriculture (UA) emphasise that it is an industry, an economic and professional activity within a town, city, or metropolis (Van der Schans and Wiskerke, 2010; Smit *et al.*, 2001) and there is general agreement that UA includes horticultural crops but does not include more landscape horticulture at the parkland or home-garden scale (Pearson *et al.,* 2010). As such, it cannot be assumed that UA is necessarily concerned with creating or contributing to an alternative food system, although despite its broad definition, it is regarded as a form of food system localisation, at the urban scale.

In the UK, there has been a longstanding tradition of 'grow your own' which, following a steep post-war decline, has experienced a renewed interest. There are approximately 330,000 allotment plots in the UK but, to meet the current demand a further 90,000 plots are needed, reflected in long waiting lists - up to 40 years in some areas of London. This is despite the statutory obligation on local authorities to provide allotments where there is a demand (The National Allotment Society, 2015). Allotment growing is understood as personal food growing for private cultivation and consumption, which is governed by

various rules and regulations via Allotment Acts dating from 1908. As such, there is a clear distinction to be made between food growing on allotment sites, and community food growing with differences in ownership, work input and the distribution of produce (Pearson and Firth, 2012).

Although UA is not a new practice, there has been a substantial rise of more contemporary, 'informal' urban agricultural practices, which may possess a radical dimension (Hardman and Larkham, 2014; Hardman *et al.,* 2017) and which challenge more traditional economic interpretations of UA. Small scale, innovative and informal UA activities – such as CG - are becoming key features across cities worldwide reflecting the new and diverse ways in which food production is being approached and undertaken by people who are not traditionally 'farmers', in spaces which are not traditional food growing spaces. Nationally, and internationally, the number of community-based food growing initiatives has substantially risen (Derkzen and Morgan, 2012). There is general agreement around the *collective* or *shared nature* of community gardening activity, where gardeners work together to manage the garden for either personal use or the shared benefit of other gardeners / members (Lovell *et al.,* 2014; Glover *et al.,* 2005). Traditionally regarded as local grassroots initiatives, and reflecting the needs of the communities in which they are based, CG are now a diverse phenomenon and aspects such as their organisation, activity, or degree of external support for example, now vary across projects (Glover *et al.,* 2005; Greenspace Scotland, 2011; Crossan *et al.,* 2015; Firth *et al.,* 2011); such diversity and variability reflects a growing societal interest in community-based food growing activity.   Although given further attention in Chapter 2, the study adopts the following understanding of CG: **informal[3], local communal food growing activity in urban neighbourhood spaces, involving people from the area in**

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[3] Where participants are not necessarily involved in the initiation / day to day organisation of community garden management, or where CG are not a formalised activity, such as a business.

which the activity is based (Greenspace Scotland, 2011; Lovell *et al.,* 2014; Crossan *et al.,* 2015).

Although there are no current methods in place to measure the number of community food growing projects, there is some data which indicates the extent of CG activity in London. For example, 2,553 growing spaces across London were recorded in 2016 by Capital Growth - a London-based food growing campaign which successfully created 2,012 growing spaces by 2012. These spaces engage 100,123 volunteers, and produce 40 tonnes of food harvested, worth an estimated £2.4 million annually (Capital Growth, 2016).   Moreover, CG in London have surged over recent years (CPRE, 2012) and the Federation for City Farms and Community Gardens (FCF&CG) indicates that London has the largest concentration of city farms and community gardens of any UK city (FCF&CG, 2015). Given this surge, and in recognition of the positive benefits associated with CG, particularly the social benefits for city populations, this thesis is concerned with exploring some of the drivers behind why people are taking part in informal CG activities, and what kind of CG project they are involved in.

1.4 Factors contributing to the rise of Community Gardening

Drawing on existing research on this topic, this section discusses three inter-linked trends, identifying the main causes of, or contributing factors to, the growth of CG activity. These include responses to general dissatisfaction with the unsustainable food system, the development of urban food governance structures at the city level, and the role of the public sector in CG development. As such, this section provides a general overview of key developments within the realm of food system sustainability to contextualise the rise (and span) of urban and community related food activity.

1.4.1 The global, conventional food system

In many cities, CG is promoted by campaigns and activists advocating for food system reform as one way to reconnect people with fresh, local and healthy food. Support for changes to the food system is based on a dissatisfaction with, and growing awareness of the problems associated with the conventional food system. As well as proving inadequate to meet the global population's needs and preserve natural resources, the global food system has resulted in numerous public-health emergencies, such as the BSE and foot and mouth crises in the 1990s / 2000s, and has detrimental environmental effects caused by food industrialisation and globalisation (Sodano, 2012). Such concerns have been gaining momentum since the 1980s which was reflected in part by the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms to take into account increasing consumer dissatisfaction with the food system, and its damaging environmental impact. However, much of the food consumed today is still produced and distributed by vast conglomerates, controlling all stages of the food chain / system. A focus on profit maximisation and the consumer contributes largely to an unsustainable food system, underwriting natural resource deterioration, loss of resilience of agricultural systems, and climate change disturbances (Sodano, 2012).

Supermarkets, and the industrial food systems that supply them, dominate grocery trade, which has not only affected independent retailers, but has enabled the year-round availability and convenient consumption of a huge range of food stuffs (Steel, 2008). A global supply of food, sold largely in supermarkets, makes this food system vulnerable to global trends, including urbanisation and climate change, as well as economic shocks such as the global financial crises of 2008 which impacted food prices, and affected consumers (Sonnino, 2009). Whilst a global food system is not necessarily wrong, there is wide recognition that change is required to stop the damaging environmental and social impact of current food production and consumption.

For many, the answers to such 'big issues' are concerned with shifting from how food is viewed as a commodity; such debates argue that food is a basic human need which should be available and enjoyed by all (Vivero Pol, 2013). Smaller scale, local responses are part of this paradigm shift based on principles of (re)localisation, sustainability and ethics, such as organic farming and local food economies, which movements such as the 'Transition Town' movement[4] are concerned with (Steel, 2008; Friends of the Earth, 2007). One example of this is 'Growing Communities' – a London-based community led organisation, 'which is providing a real, practical alternative to the current damaging food system - changing what we eat, how we eat and how it's farmed'. Their food zones concept (shown in Figure 1.1) proposes an alternative food system and suggests a re-balancing of the type and amount of food sourced from various scales, including community food production.

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[4] Starting in 2005, and now spread across 50 countries, a movement of communities coming together to address big challenges they face by starting local. Practically speaking, there is a concern for reclaiming the economy, sparking entrepreneurship, reimagining work, reskilling, and weaving webs of connection and support (Transition Network, 2016).
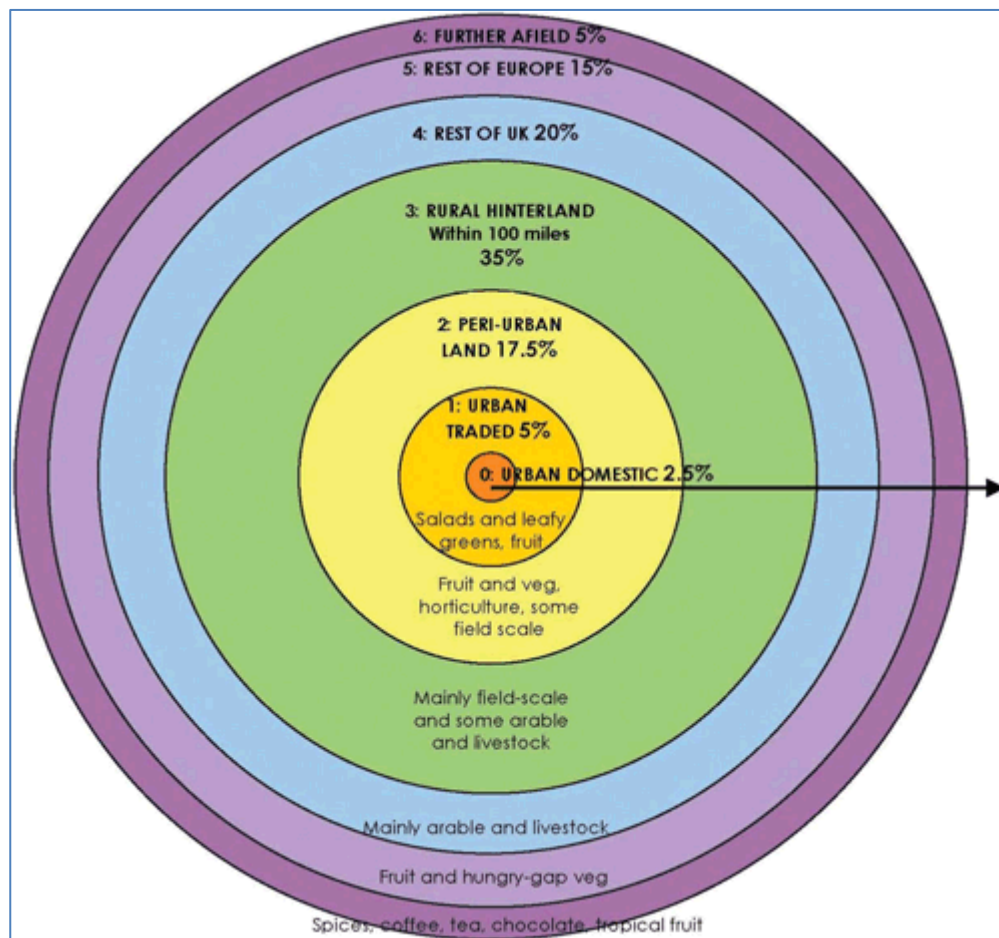
Figure 1.1: Food zones (Growing Communities, *n.d.*)

Literature conceptualising these 'Alternative' Food Networks (AFNs) has recently witnessed a development to reflect more community/urban based initiatives. Emerging in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the AFN concept was significant in starting the process of critically exploring some of the issues associated with the way food is produced and consumed. AFNs, arose partly out of "a consequence of consumer reactions to a range of environmental, ethical, and health concerns which are associated with 'conventional' food supply systems that have become increasingly industrialised and global in reach" (Ilbery and Maye, 2005: 823). The formation of new relationships around food production, consumption, place, and decision making (DuPuis and Goodman, 2005) redefined and 'shortened' relations between producers and consumers, pointing towards more sustainable modes of production. These 'Short Food Chains' (SFCs) such as box schemes, Farmers' Markets, and Community Supported Agriculture schemes (CSAs), are founded

upon trust, transparency, quality and provenance (Marsden *et al.,* 2000, Renting *et al.,* 2003; Sage, 2003; Goodman, 2004; Ilbery and Maye, 2005; Morris and Kirwan, 2010; Jarosz, 2008; Kneafsey *et al.,* 2013).

Concepts of AFNs, and SFCs, are often synonymous with the notion of 'reconnection', which brings together the different elements of the food system and constitutes the inter-related dimensions of the biological, the moral and the social (Dowler *et al.,* 2010). In this context of reconnection, Kneafsey *et al.,* (2008) situate alternative practices within an ethical framework, drawing on a broad 'ethic of care' understood as a consideration of, and a preparedness to take action about the needs of others (not just human others), as central to the identities, motives and practices of AFN producers and consumers. Reconnection is thus regarded as a central 'restorative' process that serves to strengthen and consolidate place-based food systems (Kneafsey, 2010) showing that having close connections to where and how food is produced has numerous positive outcomes. These 'place-based' connections and relationships are significant and cannot be substituted or replaced by newly 'extended' online spaces, for example (Bos and Owen, 2016).

To account for the limitations associated with AFN framings in encapsulating contemporary agri-food dynamics, there has been the emergence of concepts such as Renting *et al.'s* (2012) 'Civic Food Networks' (CFN) where principles of 'reconnection' remain, and may even deepen. This, for example, attempts to 'widen out' framings, which have been somewhat limited by a traditional rural development focus and market orientated perspectives; moreover, their alterity in terms of being alternatively positioned to something else limits their ability to be 'mainstreamed' (Kirwan, 2006; Guthman 2008; Marsden *et al.,* 2000; Renting *et al.,* 2003; Sage, 2014; Psarikidou and Szeraznski, 2012; Jarosz 2008). Therefore, new ways to conceptualise and understand contemporary agri-food initiatives include focusing on their contribution to sustainable urban/city contexts and the inclusion of more 'players' within the food system (DuPuis

and Goodman, 2005; Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015). This reflects the rise of collective and more participatory forms of organisation, including the more active role played by citizens in the initiation and operation of new forms of consumer–producer relations with such dichotomies increasingly becoming somewhat redundant or blurred (Renting *et al.,* 2012; Veen *et al.,* 2012; Venn *et al.,* 2006).

Initiatives at this 'community scale' include consumer co-ops, solidarity buying groups and collective urban gardening, focusing on the *re-localisation* of production and consumption; studies have also included Farmers' Markets and broader social movements such as La Via Campesina[5] (Renting, 2012, Brunori *et al.,* 2012; Lamine *et al.,* 2012; Zagata, 2012). Whilst many initiatives captured within this conceptual shift are not new, it is apparent that their scale, diversity and ability to gather momentum as a movement is. Through this lens, new active 'food citizens' (or 'urban intellects') involved in shaping and changing the agri-food system are key players in contemporary food production, and governance, taking place within urban geographies (Renting *et al.,* 2012; Psarikidou and Szerszynski, 2012; Balaz, 2012). The following section will discuss the relocalisation of food governance at the city level, which for Renting *et al.,* (2012) reflects more 'balanced' food governance formations where power is more equally distributed between the market, the state and civil society.

1.4.2 Relocalisation of food governance at the city level

In part driven by this 'new food equation' or 'geography' (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010) featuring the city scale, several studies have explored new food governance formations at these *localised* scales (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010; Renting and Wiskerke, 2010). Food governance is concerned with decision making, and power and politics of the food system

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[5] Formed in 1993, La Via Campesina is an international movement originating from the global south (translated as the peasant's movement) which coined the term food sovereignty. Concerned with agrarian reform and control of the food system (including mechanisms and policies), it is regarded as a radical approach to food system change, to shift control from corporations and market institutions to the people (rural farmers) that produce, distribute and consume food.

(Marsden, 2000); moreover, it is about 'understanding how power is shifting within the food system and improving public accountability' (Food Ethics Council, *n.d*). In the past, national and global food policies attempted to promote food security focusing on food production and availability, rather than access to food (Sonnino, 2013; Haysom, 2015). The UK Government's 25 year food strategy focuses on a push for more exports and high tech developments in farming[6] but food policy scholars and activists are calling for a different approach that moves beyond the merging of 'food' and 'farming' as an industry. This is to allow for changes based on healthier and more sustainably produced foods, where health and environment are at the heart of a revitalised food system (Lang and Schoen, 2016; Lang, 2016). Emergent networks and initiatives at the city level concerned with food system reform are actively engaging in the policy spheres to influence change, as well as promoting sustainable alternatives, such as community food growing[7] (Lang and Schoen, 2016; Midgley, 2010).   This shows how cities are a hub of activity with overlapping webs of activity seeking to inform change on a practical and governance level.

Cities are now regarded as new spaces and key food policy actors for new ways of thinking which incorporate an ethic of care, realisation, and vision (Sonnino, 2013). Here, cities are taking different paths to fashion more sustainable 'urban foodscapes', where "themes of sustainability and justice can help to mobilise progressive forces and open up a range of new political possibilities" (Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015: 1158).   In this regard, changing the current food system demands a 'transformative orientation', which "requires understanding and addressing the root of current challenges through the interrelated perspectives of social justice, ecological sustainability, community health and democratic governance" (Levkoe 2011: 687). For many, it is too early to tell how effective these new urban initiatives will be but, for Sonnino (2013), they will require far more

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[6] The Government's current food strategy is awaiting publication by Defra.
[7] For example, the Sustainable Food Cities Network (2016) views food system sustainability by 6 key areas, which includes community projects, knowledge, skills and resource, as well as a focus on waste, the economy, procurement, food poverty, and healthy and sustainable food.

innovative institutional support at higher governance levels to become more mainstream and sustainable over time. Nevertheless, there is consensus that:

> "[c]ities are becoming key transition spaces where new food governance systems are being fashioned, creating spaces of deliberation that bring together civil society, private actors, and local governments" (Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015: 1158).

These new collaborative arrangements are situated within a governance framework that, for Lang and Heasman (2004), is based on the notion of 'food democracy' which provides scope for a more inclusive, bottom up approach to food policy, which assumes that that the public good (ecological and public health) will be improved by the democratic process. Levkoe's (2011), 'transformative food politics' framework also reflects more collaborative arrangements through 1) the transition to collective subjectivities, 2) a whole food system approach and 3) a politics of reflexive localisation. For others, these are 'post-political' activities which are about seeing the transformation of politics from being an outcome of parliamentary activity to negotiations by large networks of actors around common matters of concern, linked to the establishment of more fertile relations and to broader contemporary processes of social change (Morgaus-Faus, 2016; Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015). Therefore, such 'democratic participation', in part, reflects the limited power of local authorities in the UK over food provision, but also how this area has been traditionally marked by private governance and technocratic procedures (Reed and Keech, 2016).

Cities across the Global North and South are devising place-based solutions to the current global food crisis, through these strategic governance arrangements, as well as more informal, grassroots, sustainable food networks (Reed and Keech, 2016; Sonnino, 2013). New governance arrangements largely involve a range of actors and include emerging food policies, strategies, partnerships and boards, which reflect more inclusive ways of

working, comprising a more shared and equal distribution of power (between civil society, the state, and the private sector) (Renting *et al.,* 2012; Lang *et al.,* 2009; Morgan, 2009). For example, the Toronto Food Policy Council, created in 1999, was one of the first attempts at achieving more equity and sustainability in the food system (Welsh and MacRae, 1998; Koc *et al.,* 2008; Friedman, 2007). The processes for new food governance formations are however, not quick and easy solutions. In Toronto, it has taken years to raise and refine standards of sustainability, leading to the opening of a 'virtuous circle' where the individuals involved have acquired "crucial skills, insights, experiences, resources, and relationships of trust over 20 years within the Toronto "community of food practice", located in a supportive municipal, NGO and social movement context" (Friedman, 2007: 389). Likewise, Curry and Kirwan (2014), also found the importance of tacit (intuitive) knowledge, which cannot be formalised, but is assimilated, or experienced from being embedded in such processes, in relation to the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership.

Recent empirical studies therefore reflect examples of emerging food governance formations in other geographical contexts where citizen involvement in food policy formation and participatory planning feature (e.g. Curry and Kirwan, 2014; Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015; Jones *et al.,* 2016; Haysom, 2015; Reed and Keech, 2016). For Reed and Keech (2016) such developments in the UK represent the transpiration of a 'civic social movement', which is particularly orientated towards food and the city, some of which have been more successful in their influence of local authorities than others. The significance and intricacies of these new 'localised' food governance arrangements involving multiple stakeholders deserve further exploration. Initial indications reveal how the food system is a 'highly contested battle ground' (Friedman, 2007; Morgaues-Faus and Morgan, 2015) and as such, just because they are a good idea and are concerned with reform, does not automatically suggest they are without their challenges. Moreover, the ability of urban food networks to influence change at the policy level may not also be

as smooth and direct as anticipated (Reed and Keech, 2016). Therefore, in considering the socio-political context in which CG participation takes places, and the range of drivers underpinning participation, this study reveals insight into new partnership arrangements.

1.4.3 The public sector and Community Garden development

As well as having a key stake within food governance structures, it is also emerging that the public sector is starting to have a more prominent role within CG activity. The positive outcomes and benefits of CG activity means that they are a common feature of various campaigns and advocacy activity not only aimed at food system reform but also public health and community development. As such, the role of the public sector in CG development has started to receive attention within the literature, with mixed views emerging as to whether it can genuinely support CG, given their traditional 'bottom up' ethos. Nevertheless, given the multiple outcomes associated with CG there are emerging examples considering public sector support for CG activities (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Crossan *et al.*, 2016; Franklin *et al.*, 2016; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015). This is because CG have the ability to fulfil a wide range of policy goals particularly in areas of health, wellbeing and social capital and are becoming particularly valued by public health sectors for the overall wellbeing benefits they provide, particularly social inclusiveness and education (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Franklin *et al.*, 2016) (further outlined in Chapter 2). For example, some Public Health authorities are commissioning the provision of community driven and based food production for promoting health and wellbeing which can be seen in the case of the Master Gardener programme[8] in England (Kneafsey and Bos, 2014; Bos and Kneafsey, 2014; Brown *et al.*, 2016; Kneafsey *et al.*, 2017).

Scotland is an example of how CG are represented in policy at a national and local levels (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Crossan *et al.*, 2016) however, learning shows how there

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[8] A charitable programme aimed at mentoring and supporting households, schools and community groups to grow food (Garden Organic, 2016).

are still opportunities for CG activity to be 'normalised' as their 'alternative' positioning hiders their full potential (Witheridge and Morris, 2016). In developing understanding of the social aspects of CG, the way CG activity is framed politically is of interest to this study which recognises the importance of CG participation within the wider context of city life. Given the presence of multiple stakeholders within new sustainable food activities and the rolling out of CG activities to meet public health objectives, it is necessary to consider and explore the wider processes of participation including the motivation of those involved in CG, who given the widening out of CG activity, may not be considered typical 'food citizens' or overt food activists. This is important to unpack as it resonates with recent notions of 'quiet sustainability' where gardening motivations did not necessarily directly relate to environmental or sustainability goals, but such 'unforced' practices were appealing and socially inclusive (Smith and Jehlička, 2013). Similarly, Kneafsey *et al*., (2016) uncovered depolitised motivations regarding participation in community-based food growing initiatives; these subtle processes of reskilling and awareness raising, they argue, have transformative potential.

The focus on the public sector progresses political-economy centred discussions of CG, featuring debates around the extent to which CG activities - and UA more widely, reproduce or resist neoliberalism. They are critiqued by some as 'underwriting neoliberalism' as they fill the void left by the 'rolling back' of the social safety net, and within this context, the creation of more competitive environments is also seen to constrain CG development (McClintock, 2014; Barron, 2015; Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014a). However, due to their collective nature and search for more equitable and sustainable activities, CG are often viewed as simultaneously contesting and reinforcing neoliberal policies, making them neoliberal whilst challenging neoliberalism at the same time (Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014b; Rosol, 2012; McClintock, 2014). Situated largely within US contexts, this shows the need for more geographically diverse case studies, embedded with broader frameworks, which considers the extent to which such activities

promote social equality, socio-environmental justice, poverty alleviation, or community participation (McClintock, 2014; Tornaghi, 2014). Moreover, in recognising these 'inherent' and 'internal' contradictions, for McClintock (2014), can help actors to better position activities not as 'standalone', but *within* 'coordinated efforts' for structural change.

Although there is potential to further explore CG from within economic framings, given the extent of food production activity, there are at present questions over their limited impact on and contribution to urban food systems (Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Milbourne, 2012). As Chapter 2 will further show, community-based food initiatives incorporate multiple benefits, and are therefore not solely regarded for their food production aspects, but more so for their positive community or social effects. In appreciating the multifaceted contribution of CG, this thesis primarily develops social understandings of CG activity. It does this by exploring CG participation taking place within a broader and fertile paradigm concerned with responding to some of the unsustainable aspects of contemporary urban society.

1.5 Summary of Chapter 1

This introductory chapter has provided an overview of some of the challenges associated with city living by focusing on the city of London, which provides a broader background to the case study area of Lambeth. The integration of food within the city scale was discussed, including various forms of production and governance activities. This includes innovative urban and community based food activity, which CG are considered part of. A focus on some of the wider trends influencing the rise and scope of urban and community based food activities firstly identified evolving conceptualisations of the responses to the unsustainable conventional food system, including more civic and urban initiatives. Secondly, the presence of innovative food governance formations at new localised city

levels concerned with more 'balanced' power relations in creating more sustainable and healthy urban food scapes was explored. Thirdly, the more prominent role of the public sector not only in new food governance formations but in CG development was outlined. This chapter has shown the CG activity is part of a wider paradigm considering the relationship between food and society. As such it is necessary to explore CG within a more holistic context of city living and to consider people's participation in them to contribute to healthier and more sustainable urban environments.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Figure 1.2 visually demonstrates the chapters comprising the remainder of this thesis, and a summary of each of the seven chapters is then given.

CHAPTERS 1 + 2: INTRODUCTION & LITERATURE REVIEW

Phenomena – rise in community food growing within unsustainable and unhealthy city contexts, but at a time where new 'solutions' are being fashioned.

A need to understand the drivers underpinning participation in CG, to support CG development and people's involvement in them, thus extending their benefits.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Participation as a person centred and situated practice, rooted in space and place, influenced by drivers across a range of scales.

- Individual
- Relationships & social networks
- Groups & organisations
- Local environment & place
- Wider societal & global influences

CHAPTER 4: METHODLOGY

Mixed methods approach to data collection. Primary data collection with project participants, & city & borough level key organisational actors.

CHAPTERS 5, 6 + 7: EMPIRICAL DATA

CHAPTER 5: Context and Governance

Outline of two community gardening models and a discussion of the wider context in which they are situated.

CHAPTER 6: Internal drivers of participation

Focus on the individual scale and the internal drivers of participation through the exploration of motivations.

CHAPTER 7: External drivers of participation

Focus on the external drivers of participation across various scales of influence.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION + CONCLUSIONS

CG participation as reconnection to people, place and food, out of a response to experiences of urban negativities.

Processes of partnership working, drawing on principles of progressive empowerment approaches.

Figure 1.2: Overview of the thesis structure (Source: Author)

Chapter 2 focuses on a review of the literature on the diverse phenomenon of community gardens and outlines the development of community garden research. It then presents the multiple benefits associated with community garden activity, and particularly focuses on the social outcomes they deliver. Approaches to community garden organisation and governance are explored, revealing the emergence of studies focusing on the more pro-active role of the public sector in community garden activity. A focus on the motivations for community garden participation then takes place. This chapter shows how more English studies are needed, and approaches which draw together a more holistic understanding of people's motivations to participate in community garden activity in recognition of contextual influences which includes emergent approaches involving the public sector. This chapter provides the justification for the study's research question and subsequent objectives.

A critical review of the literature identified a number of gaps regarding knowledge on participation in community food growing projects. **Chapter 3** outlines the conceptual framework designed to progress understandings of community garden participation and to contribute new knowledge on the subject. The changing nature of participation, and approaches to promoting participation within a UK socio-political context are discussed revealing how more informal types of participation – such as community gardening - are emerging, outside of more traditional, formalised 'top down' interventions. Participation, in this study, is regarded as a person centred, situated practice, rooted in space and place, recognising the importance of context. The conceptual framework has been built on various concepts from literature on community development and regeneration, specifically from a UK perspective, and incorporates different scales to explore the *internal* and *external* drivers of participation.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodological design of the study. The philosophical positioning of critical realism is presented, justified by its concern with causation and the explanatory

how and why questions of occurrences in the social world. The chosen methods of data collection are stated and justified. A case study approach was employed, applying the following, largely qualitative, mixed methods: document analysis, semi-structured interviews, a survey and observations, which the chapter critically details. The sampling strategy is outlined, which largely utilised a non-probability snowballing strategy, which includes a discussion around the key role of actors in facilitating data collection. This chapter also discusses positionality and the process of reflexivity in relation to the study, and data collection. The data analysis process is outlined and the ethical considerations of the study are also put forward, as well as a reflection of the study's limitations.

The thesis moves on to concentrate on the empirical findings presented in three chapters. **Chapter 5** draws on secondary and primary data and relates to the study's first and second objectives which are concerned with identifying community food growing projects within a wider case study context, and exploring the governance arrangements in which they take place. This chapter essentially presents the wider case study of Lambeth, and the city of London in which it is geographically situated, and critically explores the evolution of food governance, and food growing activities within the borough. The two models supporting community food growing in the borough included in the study 'Myatt's Fields Park' and the Council's 'Edible Living' scheme are outlined, as well as the supported projects that took part in the study. This chapter therefore provides a contextual overview of the case study, an essential component of the conceptual framework, before moving onto the other empirical chapters concerned with the analysis of the data, explicitly structured by the internal and external drivers of participation.

To meet the study's third objective, **Chapter 6** specifically focuses on the internal drivers of participation, explicitly drawing attention to motivations, and draws out a number of underpinning values. The chapter is structured into three main findings around 'activity' – reconnection and experiences of food growing, 'people' – social aspects of participation,

and 'place' – the importance of the neighbourhood scale. Motivations associated with the social and place aspects of participation are found to be more prominent within the data than the food growing aspects, although the benefits of food growing are realised once participation has taken place. This chapter details how motivations can be conceptualised as 'primary', in relation to the social aspects regarding participation, and more 'secondary', regarding the experienced benefits of participating in community food growing projects. Moreover, underpinning key motivational values are identified within the data showing how more self-interest and expressive values are associated with initial participation, and instrumental and altruistic values develop as a result of on-going participation.

Chapter 7 moves on to focus on the external drivers of participation, to meet the study's fourth objective, and in turn, contributes towards the second objective. The conceptual framework informs the chapters' structure which is ordered by different (external) scales influencing participation. As the individual scale was explicitly addressed in Chapter 6, the chapter commences by looking at the data in relation to 'relationships and social networks' which explores in more detail the collaborative arrangements regarding food growing projects, and emphasises the need for a range of different resource to contribute towards enabling participation. Secondly, the scale of 'groups and organisations' is given attention which critically looks at responsibility and tensions within partnership working through the role and evolution of different organisations within the borough. The final scale in this chapter relates to 'wider societal and global influences' which reveals differences in how communities and key actors view the role of community food growing spaces in relation to wider, political change.

The final chapter of the thesis provides a detailed discussion of the findings developed through the operationalisation of the study's conceptual framework, and demonstrates how the study's overall research question and objectives have been met. The chapter

outlines the implications of the findings for the existing literature, thereby illustrating the study's contribution to knowledge. **Chapter 8** firstly sets out the study's three main contributions to knowledge. Firstly, the development of a unique conceptual framework can usefully inform other studies; secondly, community gardening promotes reconnecting or embedded participation; and thirdly, participation in community gardening can be developed through partnership working based on principles of community empowerment, and via different and complementary approaches to change at the wider scale. The chapter then discusses the development of the conceptual framework and its components, associated with the internal, and external drivers of participation. In applying a person centred and multi-scalar framework, the study has been able to uniquely explore a range of drivers influencing participation within the specific context under study, and to conclude, key recommendations are outlined in relation to community garden research and practice, which are largely interconnected.

Chapter 2

What is known about Community Gardens?

2.1 Introduction

Recognising the complexities of sustainable city living and the rise of food system re-localisation, this chapter critically reviews the literature on CG and demonstrates how this research builds on, and contributes to the existing literature on this topic. In doing so, it highlights what is currently known about CG with a particular focus on the processes associated with participation in CG, namely different CG models, their governance, and people's motivations to participate. This chapter argues that the more pro-active role of the public sector, which illustrates a new stage or expression of CG activity where it is becoming more widely accepted at a governance level, based on the recognition of the numerous positive outcomes associated with CG.

Therefore, it is necessary to understand the range of factors influencing and enabling people to participate in such activity within this new context. This chapter makes the case for a more holistic focus on participation than currently found in the CG literature. The review informs the study's objectives; these are designed to explore participation in urban community food growing activity from a 'user' or person-centred perspective, which recognises the importance of contextual influences. This chapter firstly outlines the development of CG research and the benefits of CG, before moving onto what is known about different models and governance[9] of CG, and the motivations associated with participants' involvement.

2.2 The evolution of Community Gardening and an overview of their outcomes

2.2.1 Community Gardening research developments

It is widely acknowledged that the number and diversity of CG as an international phenomenon has substantially risen in recent years; the rise in the number of research

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[9] 'Governance' as understood more generally is defined in this study as "the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)." (United Nations, 2009).

studies on CG also reflects this (Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Firth *et al.,* 2011). It is generally accepted within the literature that the contemporary urban garden movement originated from North America in the 1970s as a response to the economic crisis at the time, which resulted in high unemployment, soaring food prices, and a widening environmental consciousness (Lawson, 2005; Armstrong, 2000). As such, most CG were established by residents to grow food on vacant lots predominantly in poor inner-city New York neighbourhoods. Growing food for local consumption was to contribute towards self-sufficiency and thus reducing family food bills (Armstrong, 2000; Lawson, 2005; Draper and Friedman, 2010). This activity took place on available or 'vacant' land where the urban environment had deteriorated because of disinvestment and as such, had little market value (Pudup, 2008; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2011; Lawson, 2005). It is against this backdrop that there has been a resurgence in the popularity of CG four decades on, where new expressions of CG activity have emerged in many developed market economies, including Australia, the USA, the UK, and other European countries (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Pourais *et al.,* 2016).

Given the historical roots of the CG concept, there are variants in how the practice of CG is conceptualised, as well as how CG may possess certain connotations. For example, CG are often considered a grassroots activity, and there is the tendency to link CG with low income and culturally diverse communities, areas of deprivation or marginalisation, and with vacant, degraded or underused land; as such, their temporary nature is often presumed (Drake and Lawson, 2014; Wesener, 2015; Wakefield *et al.,* 2007). Assumptions underpinning the phenomenon are influenced by much of the earlier literature on CG deriving from North American accounts, which is also the case regarding research on UA more generally due to the emergence of such activities within this context (Guitart *et al.,* 2012; Glover *et al.,* 2005; Amstrong, 2000; Lawson, 2005; Draper and Friedman, 2010; Adams *et al.,* 2015). It is important to consider the history of community gardening because:

> "current [CG] research is disproportionally focused on gardens in low income
> areas, upon gardeners with different cultural backgrounds, and in industrial
> cities in the USA *potentially biasing our understanding of the characteristics of*
> *the gardeners and their motivations, benefits and limitations*" [emphasis added]
> (Guitart *et al.,* 2012: 364).

Whilst more geographically diverse, and critically orientated studies, have started to gain traction in recent years (e.g. Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Milbourne, 2012; Metcalfe *et al.,* 2012; Pitt, 2014), little research has been done on UK CG (Milbourne, 2012), and more specifically CG in London. This shows that there is a lack of understanding especially around how CG operate within a UK context, and the factors that promote or constrain their development and ability for people to participate. It is important for contextually specific research to be able to contribute towards a revised and updated understanding of CG, particularly at a time where many different expressions of CG are developing, which includes the different and emerging governance arrangements by which they are supported (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Pearson and Firth, 2012).

This is particularly important given the call for more 'compelling evidence' to support CG as *a tool for change*, and for their social, health, economic and environmental benefits to be realised on a broader scale (Draper and Friedman, 2010). As such, there are calls for newly focused research to improve understandings of CG as effective strategies for empowerment, development and health promotion which should determine best-practice for forming and sustaining CG (Draper and Friendman, 2010; Armstrong, 2000). This shows the importance of such activities to routine daily life, in addressing the 'everyday' forms of injustice (Drake and Lawson, 2014; Milbourne, 2012). It is on this premise that this study, by generating knowledge on CG participation in London, contributes towards gaining a better understanding of contemporary UK CG as an

'informal, everyday practice', and the factors influencing participation (Milbourne, 2012). This link has not yet been made within the literature, and this contribution to knowledge aims to aid with CG development and how they can be appropriately supported to ensure their inclusivity and societal benefit.

The following sections of the chapter will provide an overview of how the literature on CG has developed, demonstrating the need for the study within this 'new stage' of CG development where many more stakeholders are recognising and supporting the contribution of CG. As show in Figure 2.1 several general trends have emerged from the development of CG literature. The wide-ranging interest in the phenomenon of CG is reflected in a range of disciplinary backgrounds (physical and social sciences), including (but not limited to) planning, health, geography, and sociology. Whilst this chapter draws on many of these literatures, this study approaches the phenomenon from a geographical discipline, which helps to address Tornaghi's (2014) recent call for the study of urban agriculture (UA) more broadly, to be better considered and informed by human geography, to politicise, empower, and to identify alternatives to help imagine and forge new directions for socio-environmentally just cities.

Indeed, this study responds to calls for more critical approaches to 'community improving' activities – such as CG - portrayed as inherently 'good', which means that there is little critique or evaluation of their actions (Hardman and Larkham, 2014). As demonstrated in Figure 2.1, this study contributes critical insight into CG by taking a more holistic approach to move beyond, and build upon, the recognised benefits of CG. In focusing on the governance of CG (involving the public sector), as well as people's motivations to participate, and the contextual influences informing these, a greater understanding of the processes around participation in CG is reached. This contributes towards the ways in which CG development and participation can be supported.
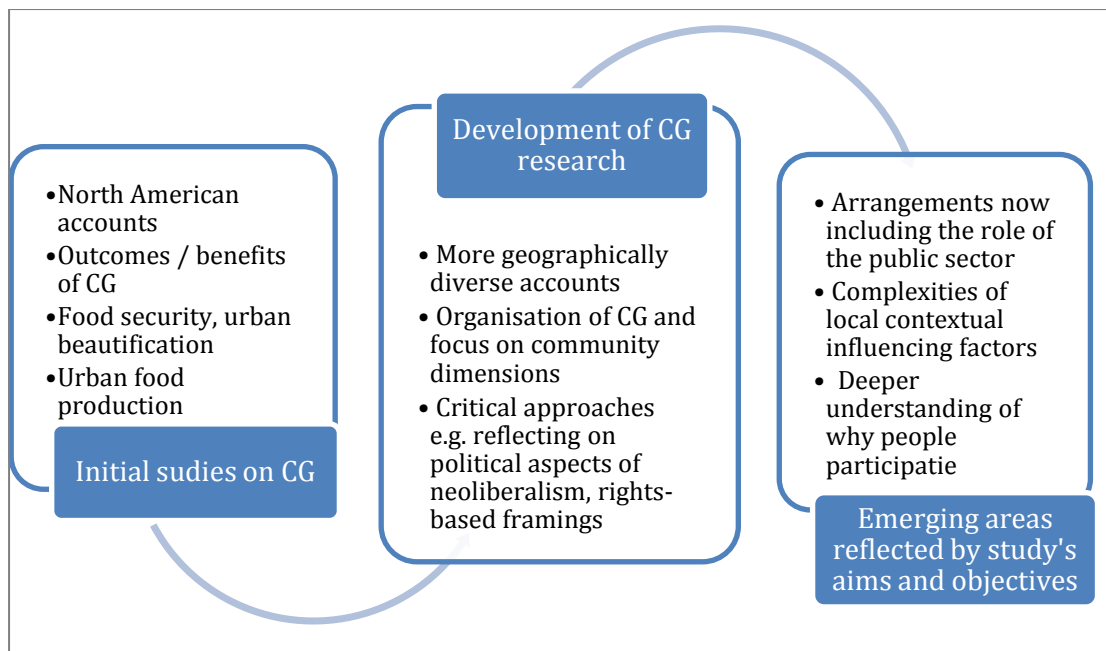
Figure 2.1: The development of the social science literature focused on CG (Source: Author)

2.2.2 The outcomes associated with community gardening activities

In outlining the general direction of CG research and the need for more updated understandings of contemporary CG activity, this section briefly summarises the benefits of CG – as part of the justification for gaining a better understanding of CG activity - before moving onto focus on governance and motivations. There is a large evidence base which documents the benefits and outcomes associated with the practice of CG. Although recognising the ecological and environmental benefits of CG such as increased biodiversity, more permeable surfaces, greening the city, countering the effects of the urban heat island (e.g. Cabral *et al.,* 2017), which are crucial as part of attempts for more sustainable city living, this study, being concerned with CG participation, develops knowledge of the social aspects of CG. For Holland (2004), although CG contribute towards local level sustainable development policies, the social, and environmental benefits of CG far outweigh their economic contributions.   At present, social science research shows how CG have positive community building outcomes and benefits for

individuals and communities (Firth *et al.,* 2011). Therefore, in appreciating their positive outcomes, this study is concerned with understanding participation so that CG can be of wider societal benefit, and does this by focusing on the users of CG, and the range of factors influencing their participation.

There is an established evidence base surrounding the positive health and wellbeing outcomes of CG, which are becoming increasingly important in the context of the negativities associated with city living, and the mainstream food system. Such benefits include (but do not form an exhaustive list): the reduction of public health disparities (George *et al.,* 2015; Caraher and Dowler, 2007), addressing chronic and non-communicable disease through opportunities for physical activity, improved nutrition (Lovell *et al.,* 2014; Wakefield *et al.,* 2007), reduced stress (Pitt, 2014; Lovell *et al.,* 2014), improved wellbeing and mental health (Egli *et al.,* 2016; Wakefield *et al.,* 2007), physical activity (Lanier *et al.,* 2016), increased vegetable consumption and improved fresh food accessibility (Algert *et al.,* 2015; Lanier *et al.,* 2016; Eggert *et al.,* 2015; Wang *et al.,* 2013), mitigation of food poverty and food deserts (Wang *et al.,* 2013; Lovell *et al.,* 2014), and the provision of leisure space, green space and therapeutic places (Pourias *et al.,* 2015; Metcalfe *et al.,* 2012; Pitt, 2014; Holland, 2004).

Other community-based and socially orientated outcomes which are significant given the level of isolation in cities despite high population densities, cultural diversity, and urban degradation for example include: community engagement and development (Eggert *et al.,* 2015; Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Holland, 2004), a sense of pride (Armstrong, 2000), a sense of belonging (Agustina and Beilin, 2012) social capital (Lanier *et al.,* 2016; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Glover *et al.,* 2005), social cohesion (e.g. Veen *et al.,* 2015), fostering new relationships and friendships (Lanier *et al.,* 2016), social diversity (Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015), culturally meaningful / valued foods and activities (Eggert *et al.,* 2015; Agustina

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and Beilin, 2012; Lovell *et al.,* 2014), as respite from everyday city life (Nordh *et al.,* 2016), revitalising degraded land / address urban decay (Glover *et al.,* 2005; Bell and Cerulli, 2012), opportunities to build resilience, for collective action, and self-organisation (Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015; Metcalfe *et al.,* 2012), skills and education (Holland, 2004), and the cultivation of active citizens (Pudup, 2008; Crossan *et al.,* 2016). This non-exhaustive documentation of the outcomes associated with CG emphasises both their individual and collective benefit (Glover, 2005).

In recognition of the wide-ranging outcomes associated with CG, attempts to categorise them by scale are present (e.g. Middle *et al.,* 2014; Poulsen *et al.,* 2014). For example, at the *individual* scale, outcomes are associated with psychological benefits (Poulsen *et al.,* 2014) and more accessible and alternative forms of physical activity (Middle *et al.,* 2014); here, there is little interest in any view of community beyond this (Drake, 2014). *Neighbourhood* experiences involve the development of trusting relationships and shared learning experiences (Poulsen *et al.,* 2014), where CG are viewed 'for the neighbourhood' (Drake, 2014). At the *community* scale, CG create 'gathered places' that facilitate 'bridging interactions', and participation in green space planning processes, reclaim city space, improve the food environment and more widely, provide 'unique opportunities' for education, leading to enhanced ecological outcomes (Drake, 2014; Poulsen *et al.,* 2014; Middle *et al.,* 2014; Firth *et al.,* 2011).

Specific to CG activities is the exchange of learning and knowledge, which is made possible by the *communal* aspects of CG, discussed in the following section (Bendt *et al.,* 2013; Hale *et al.,* 2011; Lanier *et al.,* 2016; Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015; Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Kim, 2017). Here, 'lost' food production memories and skills are recreated, leading to opportunities to build resilience and combat the loss of knowledge in cities about nature (Barthel *et al.,* 2015; Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015). This is part of a wider evidence base that is emerging around how engagement in community-based food growing more generally results in

increased knowledge and sustainable behavioural changes (Kneafsey and Bos, 2014; Kneafsey *et al.,* 2017). This study contributes towards how CG are indeed becoming increasingly acknowledged as a tool to 'develop healthy urban environments' to enhance many aspects of human-dominated environments (i.e. cities) including green infrastructure, and human wellbeing (Poulsen *et al.,* 2014; Kransy *et al.,* 2014).

Some peer-reviewed studies have specifically focused on (east) London CG and support some of the key findings outlined so far relating to sustainability and learning. Kim (2017), through investigating the environmental aspects of community gardeners' food consumption patterns in relation to their carbon footprint, found that gardeners demonstrated behavioural change as a result of experiential and social learning, which resulted in a lower 'foodprint' in daily life. Similarly, Metcalfe *et al.*, (2012) found that CG promoted learning and skill development to take more control of their food security, for marginalised women. However, Bell and Cerulli (2012) also in exploring the environmental aspects of CG, found CG to make a minor contribution to the environmental effects of the industrial food system, but found CG to provide important local environmental improvements in neglected urban neighbourhoods.

2.3 Understanding the role of community, and place within Community Gardening

2.3.1 The communal nature of Community Gardening

Whilst some of these outcomes can be attributed to food growing and gardening more broadly[10], the communal element to CG cannot be ignored. Community-based food growing activities are often characterised by their difference to more individual, private domestic, home-based food growing activities such as allotments and backyard / home gardens in which there has also been a relative recent surge of interest (see Zainuddin

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[10]For further information, Davies *et al.,* (2014) provide a detailed account of the benefits of gardening.

and Mercer, 2014; Shamasunder *et al.,* 2015; Gray *et al.,* 2014; Larder *et al.,* 2012; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Pourias *et al.,* 2015; Scheromm, 2015; Guitart *et al.,* 2012). In the UK, food growing through allotment gardening has a long history dating back to the early 1900s. Whilst allotments are still very present across the UK, community food growing, as detailed in Chapter 1, is also thriving meaning that there is also a public interest in the specific aspects of *community* food growing activities. As has been indicated, new expressions of CG activity mean that the nature of CG in the UK varies widely. For example, Firth *et al.,* (2011) acknowledge how CG in the UK range in size and where they are located, and how some larger community gardens act as community hubs, offering training and education facilities as well as a pleasant green space. What also distinguishes CG from more private based food growing activity is their degree of organisation, and they can also have greater ownership rights over their sites of activity (Glover *et al.,* 2005; Crossan *et al.,* 2016).

Community gardening is a widely-used concept reflecting the substantial rise in the number of community-based food growing initiatives (Derkzen and Morgan, 2012) at a national and international scale. However, defining the concept of community gardening remains unclear, which is likely to be reflective of how it can encompass many different types of activity (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Holland, 2004). This suggests that 'community gardens' can be regarded as an umbrella term which encompasses different aims, communities, locations, connotations, assumptions, organisations structures and degrees of participation (Veen *et al.,* 2015). This degree of ambiguity has led to other expressions of CG commonly referred to as urban gardens (e.g. Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015), community food growing initiatives or projects (e.g. Franklin *et al.,* 2016), urban collective gardens (e.g. Poiraise *et al.,* 2015), and public access community gardens (e.g. Bendt *et al.*, 2013), which are often used interchangeably with the concept of 'community gardens', which can have more political undertones.

There are some general principles that can be taken from the literature to provide a deeper understanding of what is meant by the practice of CG helping to arrive at the study's understanding of CG. Firstly, the term community gardening refers to 'open' or public spaces which are managed and operated by members of the local community to cultivate food or flowers. Some, but not all definitions incorporate an urban dimension to activities (Guitart *et al.,* 2012; Glover *et al.,* 2005; Greenspace Scotland, 2011; Veen *et al*., 2015), which is of centrality to this study. Firstly, for Pudup (2008), *community* can refer to various affiliations, for example a group of people living in the same area, or from the wider city, or can refer to a group of people sharing a life circumstance or specific interest. Many have conceptualised the community aspect of CG as currently, or initially deriving from a grassroots initiative, comprising people that inhabit the area in which it takes place (Glover *et al.,* 2005; Drake, 2014; Milbourne, 2012; Greenspace Scotland, 2011). This reflects how CG are regarded by Greenspace Scotland (2011: 6) as "locally managed pieces of land that are developed in response to and reflect the needs of the communities in which they are based". As such, the range of CG activities is expected to be diverse if they develop according to some degree of need, determined by the local area or community (Firth *et al.,* 2011).

Secondly, for Pudup (2008) the gardening element can refer to everything from 'individual plot cultivation' to 'collective gardening' (in public spaces) and as such, a CG space may be cultivated collectively or divided into individual plots. These ambiguities surrounding the community involved in CG, and the type or space of CG activity, are further muddied by the produce grown in the CG, as in some CG the produce is consumed by those who grow it, while in others it is sold, for example, in local markets. Building on this conceptualisation, Veen *et al.,* (2015: 3) define a community gardening predominantly as:

"a plot of land in an urban area, cultivated either communally or individually by a group of people from the direct neighbourhood or the wider city, or in which urbanites are involved in other ways than gardening, and to which there is a collective element".

An important aspect to note is how Veen *et al.,* (2015) include *collective ownership* in their definition, rather than just comprising a shared responsibility for the gardening work. As such, for Veen *et al.,* (2015), CG also include allotments[11] and gardens where people may not necessarily be involved in cultivating vegetables, but buying them for example. This broader collective element, such as collective ownership or decision making, can be seen in examples of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) where a producer is largely responsible for producing food for members, (based on a financial and often a social arrangement). These broadly defined conceptualisations of community gardening therefore encompass various forms and organisation of 'alternative' food growing practices, the communities that are involved in them as well as the extent of their involvement.

Although Pudup (2008) and Veen *et al.,* (2015) widen their definition to include initiatives which incorporate those who are not necessarily involved in food production, a common feature of CG is the *collective element or shared nature* of activity. Many do however agree that this centres on the way in which 'gardeners' (those involved in the activity of the community garden) work collectively to manage the garden (Lovell *et al.,* 2014) for either personal use or for the shared benefit of other gardeners/members (Lovell *et al.,* 2014; Glover *et al.,* 2005). This collective work, for Glover (2005: 79) means "to garden successfully, [community] gardeners must share resources, such as space, tools, and water. Cooperation is, therefore, a necessary component of the activity."

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[11] Defined by Veen *et al.,* (2015) as a collective of garden plots that lie adjacent to each other, effectively subdividing a larger piece of land.

The setting in which CG can take place varies; for example, they may be situated within schools or prisons (e.g. Pudup, 2008), in local urban neighbourhoods, or on dedicated pieces of farm land (e.g. Veen *et al.,* 2015). Therefore, the extent to which they emerge from informal, 'self-organised' networks (Bell and Cerulli, 2012), or whether they are a more formal, frequent activity with internal or external support / ownership (Glover *et al.,* 2015; Crosson *et al.,* 2015; Firth *et al.,* 2011) varies across projects. Although the chapter will now expand on some of these aspects, it is necessary to define the scope of activity this study is concerned with. Drawing on the various principles of community gardening activity, the following conceptualisation informs the study's approach to CG, specifically defined as: **informal, local, communal food growing activity in urban neighbourhood spaces, involving people from the area in which the activity is based** (Greenspace Scotland, 2011; Lovell *et al.,* 2014; Crossan *et al.,* 2015). This definition essentially sets out that CG activity takes place on an informal basis, where gardeners may not necessarily be involved in the initiation or management of CG, or where CG is not formalised through a business venture, but where people grow food in a communal space. This activity takes place in locally situated urban neighbourhood spaces, meaning that CG are a physical space within populated, local scale city spaces (i.e. neighbourhoods), and are open to the involvement of people from the area, rather than being exclusionary to one particular 'type' of fixed community.

2.3.2 The importance of place within Community Gardening

In terms of unpacking the community dimensions, different ways of conceptualising CG are present within the literature; one way is through the distinction between 'place-based' and 'interest-based' CG (e.g. Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015). 'Interest-based' CG are defined largely by the types of communities which engage in them. Examples include: prisoners, migrant communities, asylum seekers, refugees, low income populations, students, senior citizens, those experiencing or recovering from physical or

mental ill health (Pudup, 2008; Brown-Fraser *et al.,* 2015; Whatley *et al.,* 2015; Agustina and Beilin, 2012; Hartwig and Mason 2016; McIlvaine-Newsad and Porter, 2013; Eggert *et al.,* 2015; Metcalfe *et al.,* 2012). Furthermore, interest-based CG may also span across diverse communities, rather than being targeted at one particular community (Firth *et al.,* 2011). The range of overwhelmingly positive health, wellbeing and social outcomes associated with CG therefore makes them 'ideal interventions' for a range of communities experiencing the effects of exclusion and marginalisation in society, such as poor health, or seen to be making 'poor' life choices. CG are therefore becoming increasingly recognised as "key actors in advocacy" (Drake and Lawson, 2014: 133) indeed by a widening range of stakeholders, including the public sector, discussed further on in the chapter.

Interest-based CG encapsulates CG aimed at addressing a specific 'social issue' affecting a 'community of people' defined by their 'need' rather than a community of people defined by their location. These types of CG may be more controlled or closed in terms of the type of activity focused on, the location of the CG, and the people that participate (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Bendt *et al.,* 2013). Here, the personal outcomes of CG activity are likely to take precedence, and as Veen *et al.,* (2015) suggests, they may have limited value in place-making strategies as social connections are unlikely to trickle down to the wider neighbourhood. In contrast, 'place-based' CG generally encompass communities defined by the location in which the CG are situated – i.e. they are more territorially embedded in the local community (Firth *et al.,* 2011). Here, these CG comprise members of the local community, where CG activity takes place – however, the extent to which the community is involved in the initiation, organisation and management of CG varies. In these types of CG, there is relatively little control over who joins, and they are found to be a positive attractive space and meeting place for the community (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Bendt *et al.,* 2013; Veen *et al.,* 2015). Therefore, CG are relatively open spaces as there is no criteria for CG involvement, but this conceptualisation still poses questions as to which

members from the local community participate, and why, and how the local community is defined by geographical scale.

Although 'place' is an important aspect of CG and will be discussed below, it should be noted that all CG are situated within a place; the distinction to make therefore, is how 'place-based' CG are formed of the community in which they are situated as their predominant defining feature. A useful way in which Veen *et al.,* (2015) refer to these types of CG is as 'neighbourhood-gardens' to reflect the central spatial aspect. However, this is not to suggest that 'interest-based' CG (which revolve around a shared interest) cannot also be situated in such spaces, which may comprise members of a wider, rather than immediate locality, coming together to garden based on a shared interest. Arguably, all CG participation can be seen to be 'interest-based' regardless of whether it is a targeted intervention or not, because individuals participating in CG choose to do so, based on some degree of interest. As the chapter will move on to discuss, individuals' interests or motivations are complex, but the point to make here is that CG can be formed predominantly around an 'interest' or a 'place', as their *main defining* feature. However, this does not negate the presence of these aspects in the instances where they are not a main defining feature, which raises caution over simplifying CG spaces, activity and reasons for participation. Nevertheless, if CG are not located in neighbourhood spaces (where communities are situated), they are less likely to produce many of the positive outcomes which are attributed to them, which will now be discussed.

Being concerned with CG that align more so to a placed-based categorisation, it is important to look at how place in relation to CG is discussed within the literature. 'Place' has been recognised as an important aspect of CG participation which relates to place connections at various scales and also includes connections to people. For example, place can be regarded as the actual garden space, or the community or neighbourhood in which the garden is situated (Dunlap *et al.,* 2013). For Hale *et al.,* (2011: 1853), these *physical*

and *social* experiences of place, through CG involvement, are made possible through 'relational processes' which "awaken the senses and stimulate a range of responses that influence interpersonal processes (learning, affirming, expressive experiences) and social relationships".

Through these relational - physical and social - processes, CG are found to be 'therapeutic place experiences' that make the 'unfamiliar familiar' by creating a 'sense of belonging' and 'connections to the community' (Pitt, 2014; Agustina and Beilin, 2012; Bendt *et al.,* 2013). As such, Pitt (2014) recognises the importance of place by stating that *where people are* is as important as *what they do*. For Bendt *et al.,* (2013), this is particularly significant for degraded neighbourhoods, where there are less positive associations with place. Pitt (2014: 89) takes this further by suggesting that there is significance in having the "freedom to pursue a favoured activity in a preferred place" which points towards the need to further explore the various aspects of participation which uncovers some of the factors influencing people's participation beyond (yet including) 'place'. Unpicking aspects associated with 'place-based' CG shows the importance of place, but questions still remain around *why* people become involved in ('place-based') CG.

Place-attachment is therefore recognised as a result of CG participation and the aesthetical experiences at the neighbourhood level which are made possible through CG activity, for Hale *et al.,* (2011) generate *meaning* that then stimulates further engagement in activities leading to health promoting benefits. This provides some insight into the processes behind CG which lead to the many positive outcomes which CG are becoming increasingly recognised for and shows that CG activity must mean something to those participating, which deserves further exploration. Such meaning has been described as 'attachment to place' which relates to residents' emotional bonding or connection to their community, to their physical and social environments; it is argued that these relationships are crucial aspects of people's involvement in their community more generally (Veen *et*

al., 2015; Comstock *et al.,* 2010). Moreover, these bonds of people to their physical and social environments (community) are "critical for shaping how people interact with their local environments, connect with others and may be vital for fostering sustainable health behaviour change" (Comstock *et al.,* 2010: 435). Therefore, CG are recognised as being much more than about growing produce, given their ability to provide opportunities to connect with others socially, and physically to place, which Lanier *et al.,* (2016) describe as opportunities for positive involvement in the community.

Related to these relational processes, studies show that CG possess a strong ability to produce social capital and cohesion. Drawing on Putnam's (2000) theory, social capital is one of the main ways by which the 'community' aspect of CG has been approached (e.g. Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015; Lanier *et al.,* 2016; Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Glover *at al.,* 2005; Glover, 2004; McIlvaine-Newsad and Porter, 2013). Notions of social capital comprise: 'bonding' – associated with strong ties *between individuals* in similar socio-demographic situations, 'bridging' - which tends to *bring people together* from across diverse socio-demographic situations and 'linking' - concerning *connectivity between unlike people* in dissimilar situations (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Putnam, 2000). In relation to CG, Firth *et al.,* (2011) outline four ways in which CG generate social capital. Firstly, CG bring people together around a common purpose to participate in a joint activity. Secondly, CG create a meeting place for the community to interact. Thirdly, the type of CG activities can bring together a diverse range of people around a common interest. Fourthly, CG can help to build links with institutions and organisations through partnership working.

Studies show how CG are found to be both a *consequence* and *source* of social capital (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Glover, 2004); this is interesting to consider as it suggests that some degree of social capital needs to be in place for CG to initially exist. Interestingly, for Veen *et al.,* (2015), a positive identification with the neighbourhood was a stronger determining factor for the generation of social cohesion, rather than the presence of strong social

contacts, suggesting that it is the neighbourhood place that is a central factor to people's participation (over social relationship). Finally, probing into some of the reasons associated with *why* these aspects of social capital are important proves useful to understanding the processes underpinning positive experiences, relationships and connections. Social capital is found to be built through the development of 'empowerment' and 'trust' which enables people to work together towards a common purpose, for example tackling social issues in their community (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Lanier *et al.,* 2016). The factors that enable people to participate in CG are therefore important to investigate. This framing also demonstrates the important aspects of *interest* (gardening) and *place* for social and physical connections, which seemingly appear to be made possible through CG. Furthermore, it has also highlighted aspects of governance, which the chapter will now focus on.

2.4 Community Garden organisation and governance

2.4.1 Types of Community Gardens

Other ways in which CG have been understood through their organisation and management, which is likely to impact on people's participation in CG. Understanding the range of factors influencing participation is important given how firstly CG rely on participation to function and to create productive gardens (Lanier, *et al.,* 2016), secondly, how participation can take different forms with a CG (Veen *et al.,* 2015) and thirdly, how the 'success' of CG is based on the extent to which a CG is 'internally' organised (Firth *et al.,* 2011). As such, this section will focus on the organisational aspects of CG, and how these are found to influence participation. A number of different types of CG are emerging beyond the 'classical image' of the (US) grassroots neighbourhood CG, as has been indicated so far in this chapter. For example, in this current context, it is not uncommon for CG initiation and management to be undertaken by external organisations, and for CG

to comprise various hybrid forms including income generation (Drake, 2014; Firth *et al.*, 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015).

CG which focus on a community of people with a shared need or specific 'issue' (regarded as 'interest-based') are likely to be led by external individuals or groups. Here, CG activity is likely to be based on more formal and organised structures or programmes *for* communities or individuals, where proximity, as already established, is not necessarily a requirement (Pudup, 2008; Firth *et al.,* 2011). Although there is much value in CG as 'interventions', this study is more aligned to 'interest-based' conceptualisations of CG, which in developing from a 'grassroots' model, can still take this form, but can also comprise various organisation arrangements.

Drake (2014) for example outlines three types of CG organisation and management – grassroots, externally organised and active non-profit management; the differences that were found between them are as follows. The grassroots gardens were found to be quite active, with waiting lists, the externally-organised gardens 'orientated toward neoliberal mantras of community self-reliance' to never really take shape and actually generated some resistance from the community, and active participants (albeit paid staff) were present at the non-profit CG (which commercially sold the produce) although they were non-user-initiated or managed (Drake, 2014: 193). The crucial point to note is that the 'success' of gardens was dependent on how *ownership* was created (in responding to the needs and wants of the community) rather than *type* of garden organisation. However, the type of organisation is likely to influence the extent of ownership. A such, there is recognition that successful CG are likely to be internally driven, 'bottom up', and initiated and managed by participants from within the neighbourhood or community (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Metcalfe *et al.,* 2012; Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Holland, 2004). Therefore, the type of CG organisation is likely to influence the extent of ownership, and further exploration is needed to determine the factors influencing successful CG organisation and participation,

particularly given calls to expand and stabilise CG through enabling bottom up, rather than external initiation (Bell and Cerulli, 2012).

Thus, to increase projects' chances of succeeding, the development of CG involves a great deal of active involvement of the community, which includes listening to the existing users of the land (Drake and Lawson, 2014; Nolan and March, 2016). Successful CG participation requires much more than the sheer provision of land, or indeed a project – this alone does not guarantee successful gardens. As Drake and Lawson (2014: 141) caution, "land must not only be *available* but also *accessible,* and people must be interested in gardening for example [emphasis added]". Although accessibility encompasses a range of aspects, the development of CG in central, *visible* locations is likely to impact on people's willingness to participate in neighbourhoods CG, in public spaces (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Firth *et al.,* 2011).

Therefore, the extent to which the needs and wants of local people who participate in CG are incorporated into CG initiation is important. As one study demonstrates, the organisers of a particular CG 'assumed' that residents needed a CG to address food access issues, and it was expected that residents would take over the CG when it would be handed to them. However, these presumptions were far from being in tune from what was needed and as a result, there was no 'buy in' from residents which meant that the initiation of the CG proved counterproductive (Drake, 2014). The more successful garden in the study was down to the fact that the manager incorporated the viewpoints of neighbourhood residents, in line with their own expectations for the garden (Drake, 2014). Therefore, the management and governance of CG in ways that are consistent with the aspirations of all who are involved is seen to make a difference in how CG ownership is created, and how CG are accepted within the local community (Pearson and Firth, 2012; Drake, 2014). As such, although categorisations or types of CG provide insight into and a

context for how CG are run, it is important to focus on the associated principles and processes when aiming to fully explore why people participate in CG.

2.4.2 The role of the public-sector in Community Garden organisation

Understanding the different ways CG are governed and managed is important given how differences in these can affect ownership, acceptance, and the appropriateness of CG to be able to meet the needs of local communities. Therefore, rather than the type of governance arrangement, closer attention needs to be paid to the governance processes surrounding successful participation. Expanding on the 'externally organised' model of CG incorporates how there is increasing recognition that CG are starting to receive attention and support from external actors and institutions, including the public sector. Emergent studies focusing on this draw on examples from Scotland (Witheridge and Morris, 2016), Hungary (Franklin *et al.,* 2016) and Israel (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015). Interest surrounding the public sector is not surprising given the ability of CG to fulfil a wide range of policy goals, particularly in the areas of health and wellbeing, social inclusiveness and education, and climate change mitigation (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Franklin *et al.,* 2016) yet little exists which focuses on the public sector within the UK. A focus on public sector involvement in CG activity is worthy of further exploration given how CG are recognised as positive urban assets which can positively contribute to a broad range of national and local policy objectives (Franklin *et al.,* 2016), and how such support and recognition could aid their development and in widening participation.

Evidence shows how CG are able to provide some mitigation against some of the negativities associated with contemporary city life, where (as Chapter 1 has shown) many inequalities and disparities are concentrated. Given the public health contributions of CG (and the public nature of CG spaces), the public sector is uniquely positioned to contribute towards CG development and sustainability. Yet only a few studies have explored the role of the public sector in taking a lead, or active role in the development of community

gardens / community food growing (Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Anderson *et al.,* 2014) which, coupled with their potential for change, makes it fertile ground for the study. This approach also draws on the fourth way Firth *et al.,* (2011) consider social capital to be generated – through CG helping to build links with institutions and authorities, with an important emphasis on relationships developed through partnerships. It also moves beyond 'alternative' framings of community-food growing activity, which can hinder the full potential of CG; thus, 'normalising' CG can be achieved by "promoting gardens in visible locations in neighbourhoods and within local plans" (Witheridge and Morris, 2016: 202). This shows that there is a need for coherent partnership working across and within sectors, as this can, along with national and local policies, impact the way CG projects develop and organise.

To date, community-led and public sector-led food initiatives have been somewhat disconnected in their approach or opportunity to work together, which runs the risk of isolating and ignoring the capacity of government actors / public sector workers, some of whom work with the most marginalised in society (Franklin *et al.,* 2016). Whilst the wider recognition of CG from the public sector is to be celebrated, concerns regarding local government involvement in CG activity are present and centre on how they may not genuinely involve or benefit communities (Firth *et al.,* 2011). Such 'top- down' produced CG might be for some communities another form of social service, aimed to empower or integrate underprivileged populations (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015) which comes back to the conceptualisation of 'interest-based' CG. Whilst social support should not be demeaned, such an approach brings into question whether CG are imposed as an intervention on 'marginalised' communities as opposed to being based on *community empowering* principles, which have been identified as a key aspect to successful CG. Such governance arrangements deserve further investigation as 'top-down' and 'bottom up' models of organisation are much more complex in practice (Drake, 2014).

Nevertheless, Franklin *et al.,* (2016: 14), found in their Hungarian case study a genuine attempt to improve social inclusion and food security which was achieved through actively promoting and directly facilitating CG through increasing access to resources. There is potential therefore, for further research to investigate the effect and ability of the local state to influence the development of CG through the promotion, facilitation and provision of resource, as a way to counteract some of the negative societal impacts present in city contexts, with empirical UK case studies needed.   This new era of CG development is also in line with the rise of new food governance formations which too involve the public sector (Chapter 1). Therefore, how CG relate to wider initiatives, or indeed other CG, is largely absent within the literature, even though the networking of CG to share best practice has been suggested by Firth *et al.,* (2011). This raises questions regarding the rise of new food governance structures as detailed in Chapter 1 (where the public sector is a key player), and the extent of relationship to community food growing practices, if any.

Some studies in approaching CG from more of a political-economy centred debate, critique the role of the local state, centring arguments within a neoliberal framing as highlighted in Chapter 1 (section 1.4.3). As part of this debate, some envision CG in the global North, to act as political spaces of alternative food production, or spaces of resistance, being inherently oppositional to neoliberalism and the dominant agri-food system (Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014a: McClintock, 2014; Barron, 2016; Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015).   Here, arguments are constructed around (regaining) control or seeking to assume control through the lens of food to directly challenge and influence wider systems (Pierce *et al.,* 2016; Passidomo, 2015; Purcell and Tyman, 2015; Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015; Tornaghi, 2014; Cangelosi, 2015; Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015; Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015). Alternative realities are imagined regarding food production and consumption and are centred on a shift in control, rather than on models which operate within current 'neoliberal' paradigms, which is regarded as hindering their disruptive or transformative

ability (Cangelosi, 2015). Many studies from this perspective are aligned to more militant, activist, and overtly political frameworks, sometimes framed as radical political practices (Ghose and Pettygove, 2014b), 'political gardening' (Kato *et al.,* 2013) or 'garden activism' (Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015), reflecting new forms of urban lifestyles (Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015).

Many, but not all of these debates draw from North American perspectives, which may prove limiting for wider learning as, on the contrary, one UK study found little evidence to suggest that CG projects have been initiated in response to the withdrawal of the local state, which actually provided opportunities as well as constraints, to produce more meaningful and democratic community spaces (Milbourne, 2012). Moreover, given the prominence of politically framed viewpoints within these debates from the rise of 'researcher-gardener-environmentalist' (Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015) caution is needed to ensure un-biased understandings of people's motivations in CG. In recognition of the neoliberal contradictions CG produce, this study moves beyond these debates and, whilst not ignoring, accepts and situates CG participation within the overarching neoliberal context, recognising the influence of wider structural forces at play and the influence of local contexts. In doing so, the possibilities of the public sector in supporting CG as a tool for change is equally deserving of scholarly attention. In exploring factors associated with the governance and organisation of CG influencing participation, the chapter now turns attention to the literature focusing on motivations to participate in CG.

2.5 Motivations to participate in Community Gardening

Although motivations are a key aspect of people's participation in CG and are thus important to consider (Veen *et al.,* 2015), it is acknowledged that individual's motivations have not yet been *thoroughly* investigated (Pourais *et al.,* 2016). However, motivations in terms of CG involvement have been the topic of some studies but questions remain

regarding the wider factors influencing people's motivations present in, which this study seeks to address. As previously outlined, the organisation of CG (e.g. grassroots, externally organised, not for profit) does not necessarily impact on participation (Drake, 2014) rather the extent to which aspects such as ownership and empowerment are fostered, and the needs of the community are met (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Lanier *et al.,* 2016). It is these factors that should be considered when measuring the success of a CG, rather than their type (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Greenspace Scotland, 2011; Drake and Lawson, 2014; Nolan and March, 2016; Drake, 2014). As such, further research is needed on governance and organisation of CG to explore these aspects, but in considering the 'needs' of the community, or the reasons why people participate in CG, motivations need to be part of the object of study. This study therefore considers both these elements as being inherently connected or complementary, and in considering participation as a more holistic practice will provide further insight into this relationship and the multiple reasons which enable CG participation. Moreover, care needs to be taken not to conflate benefits of CG with motivations, which again, may be an easily made assumption.

Studies show that people's motivations to take part in CG are multiple, complex, largely interconnected and difficult to disentangle (Veen *et al.,* 2012; Pearson and Firth, 2012; Holland, 2004) which poses a challenge. This does illustrate however the "the multifunctionality of the gardens, even on an individual scale" (Pourais *et al.,* 2016: 13) – a positive feature of CG. The extent to which motivations are about gardening varies (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Venn, 2006) which emphasises how CG are much more than just a place of food production (Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Crossan *et al.,* 2016; Scheromm, 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2015; Holland, 2004). CG are places which attract people who are to have practiced gardening to a small or large degree, and those who have had no prior gardening experiences at all, which makes CG an inclusive activity for people of varying abilities (Agustina and Beilin, 2012). Therefore, as food production is no always a priority for people, motivations range from collective desire for the good of the community, to

reconnecting 'self' with the community and environment (Crossan *et al.,* 2016; Scheromm, 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2015).

Motivations vary across studies, as do their significance when ranked (see Appendix 1). For example, 'health' is considered a strong motivation in some instances (Armstrong, 2000; Agustina and Beilin, 2012), and a moderate or weak motivation in others (Scheromm, 2015; Pourais *et al.,* 2016). Likewise, motivations associated with 'self-actualisation' (Agustina and Beilin, 2012) were strongly present, which includes meeting *personal needs* such as a social space / meeting place, connecting to nature, a pleasurable activity / hobby, better health, fresh, better food, learning (e.g. Scheromm, 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2015; Pourais *et al.,* 2016, Armstrong, 2000; Agustina and Beilin, 2012). However, motivations related to *wider benefits* were found to be of more significance in other studies; this includes, for example helping to beautify the community, to give back to the community, to re-appropriate land for community use, to support the conversion of green space (Ohmer *et al.,* 2009, Crossan *et al.,* 2016). As expected, others found the wider impacts on the city, or building a better society to be weaker motivations (Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Scheromm, 2015).

Few studies found that motivations were to do with wider considerations such as environmental sustainability (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015) and some found these motivations, along with stronger political / social value motivations to be linked to people not involved in the communal activity of food growing (people participating in more private family allotment gardens, or not involved in the food *growing* activities) (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Scheromm 2015). For Veen *et al.,* (2012) these reflexive motivations are considered largely private and based on environmental morals to contribute towards a 'better world'. Given the connection to less communal food growing activity, caution is needed over connecting these findings to more communal CG practices.

Moreover, the rise in politically-framed studies of CG as previously discussed in the chapter, warns that careful attention needs to be given when focusing on motivations in the context of CG. This is because, given the 'communal' nature of CG, it is also easy to assume that participation supports strong democratic values (Glover *et al.,* 2005). Applying political framings to CG activities and participation overlooks findings which inform the reluctance of participants to frame their practices as political, or a countermovement, or who do not perceive their involvement in CG to be political (Veen *et al.,* 2012; Glover *et al.,* 2005). Likewise, for Eizenberg and Fenster (2015), although motivations were 'affiliated with sustainable environment thinking and practice' this was not part of an 'alternative or oppositional social discourse and practice', and there was an explicit avoidance to bring broader urban, socio-economic issues to the gardens.

Although Glover *et al.,* (2005) found CG spaces to offer a 'free venue' where participants could deliberate and address issues of collective importance, further exploration is needed into what such issues and needs are within specific contexts. As such, caution is needed over suggesting that participants hold political motivations, which may discount and exclude the experiences and contribution of those who participate in CG as an everyday or informal practice (Milbourne, 2012), which this study is concerned with. Moreover, participation where behaviours are not overtly aligned to food, environmental or community activism is still considered to have much value and potential for change (Smith and Jehlička 2013; Pottinger, 2016; Kneafsey *et al.,* 2017). This 'political' insight into motivations also shows a lack of desire for gardens to act as economic spaces (Pourais *et al.,* 2016) and even if CG are 'alternative' in nature, doesn't automatically suggest that the people taking part in them hold political motivations (Veen *et al.,* 2012). Consequently, political articulation is not necessarily connected to the success of an initiative (Veen *et al.,* 2012) and discussions of 'political' motivations require further unpacking when under investigation.

There is evidence to indicate that the outcomes experienced from CG participation may have some influence on motivations – suggesting that motivations could change over time. It is common for participants to reportedly experience a number of outcomes from CG participation, even when their motivations do not necessarily align to these aspects - for instance, they may experience enhanced 'wellbeing' when this wasn't an initial motivating factor (Agustina and Beilin, 2012). Similarly, those who possess more socially-based motivations naturally have a higher appreciation for the social relationships built through CG, but these were also experienced, enjoyed by, and added value to those are primarily motivated by growing vegetables (Veen *et al.,* 2015; McIlvaine-Newsad and Porter, 2013). This links to the general complexity of numerous motivations, and to Glover *et al.*'s (2005) question as to whether social benefits (socialising with others) are a 'by-product' of participation, or whether this is a key driver for CG involvement – is worthy of further exploration. Nevertheless, in appreciating the numerous outcomes resulting from participation in CG, the "central role of the food function [within community gardening] which makes gardens unique compared to other urban facilities, must be taken into account" (Pourais *et al.,* 2016: 14).

As well as being able to produce a range of outcomes or benefits, it is clear that CG have the ability to attract participants with various motivations, which is perhaps one of their main strengths and a unique characteristic of CG. Considering motivations on a deeper level, raises questions about whether particular motivations are dependent on various influencing factors (such as socio-economic, political, geographical) of local contexts. Due to the different and changing contexts in which studies have been conducted, this is a reason to explore why various motivations are present. As this chapter has shown how place is important, as well as governance arrangements, obtaining a better understanding of the context in which CG occur is likely to expose how a range of intersecting factors produce different types of CG and indeed different degrees of participation (Mintz and McManus, 2014; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2015).

It is necessary to recognise the influence and importance of the social and economic influences of local contexts, particularly when exploring the public-sector involvement (Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Mintz and McManus, 2014; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Milbourne, 2012) through contextualised case studies (Tornaghi, 2014). This recognises the way in which specific assemblages of macro-economic and political factors that interact with local forces in each city context, produce CG in different ways (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015). As such, this study provides a unique UK case study to explore individual's participation in CG which focus on a range of influencing factors within a specific context, including governance and organisation, and motivations. Transpiring from a review of the current literature are the study's overall research question, and subsequent objectives, as presented in Chapter 1.

2.6 Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter has highlighted the areas in which further exploration is needed to expand knowledge on CG participation, particularly from a UK perspective. The gaps which have been identified in the literature have informed the study's overall research question which is concerned with obtaining a better insight into the factors that influence people's participation in community food growing. In particular, an understanding of the ways in which CG governance, organisation and people's motivations influence participation, is required. Moreover, it is recognised that the context in which CG participation is situated needs further understanding in order to explore the influences of various contextual factors. Addressing these identified gaps in the literature (reflected by the study's four objectives) will enable a better consideration of the ways in which CG activity can be supported to promote participation, based on the desires and meaning of local communities where CG are situated. In doing so, CG can be developed in such a way that the positive outcomes associated with them can be experienced by city populations who

are affected by the negative effects of contemporary city life. Chapter 3 will now turn attention to how this study will explore CG participation by outlining the study's conceptual framework.

Chapter 3

Developing a Conceptual Framework for Understanding Community Garden Participation

3.1 Introduction

The review of CG literature (Chapter 2) identified that various processes of CG participation namely people's motivations and the specific contextual factors influencing them, require a better understanding. This is in recognition of a new 'stage' of CG activity reflecting a rise in institutional support from the public sector, given their multiple outcomes. Four objectives have transpired from a critical review of the literature on CG relating to the multiple factors influencing CG participation and CG governance. To further explore CG participation and meet the study's objectives, this chapter sets out the conceptual framework informed by wider understandings of, and approaches to, the concept of participation. Firstly, participation as a general concept is outlined, before the socio-political nature of UK participation is provided, as a backdrop for the study. This is necessary because participation, as recognised as a situated practice, rooted in space and place, cannot be fully understood without taking into account the socio-political context of a particular place.

UK political approaches to participation are then examined which, given the centrality of 'community', includes critically exploring theories of community and communitarianism, as well as neighbourhood-based approaches, and community empowerment, which derive largely from UK regeneration literature. The way in which participation has been conceptualised and applied to community-based work is then discussed, showing how institutional approaches to participation are largely unhelpful for investigating informal CG participation, and from a 'user-centred' perspective. Built upon understanding participation as a person-centred yet situated practice, the conceptual framework is then presented, which recognises the influence of drivers at various scales.

3.2 Introducing the concept of participation

Participation is an activity that can be theorised in various ways (Berner and Philips, 2005). For example, a 'participatory epistemology', originating from Goethe (1749-1832) represents a theory of knowledge which holds that meaning is enacted through the participation of the human mind with the natural world (Bortoft, 1998). Social science interpretations of participation are largely concerned with the *processes* of participation and view participation as a 'good' and sustainable' practice involving governments (the state) and communities (i.e. undertaken or promoted via partnership working). This approach to participation broadly has roots in political science, management and development theory, traditionally relating to developing countries (Johnson and Walker, 2000; Midgley *et al.,* 1986; Sen 1999; Claridge, 2013).

Drawing on Sen's (1999) work, participation is argued for on the basis of the freedom to make meaningful choices. It is the essence of development, and is a pre-condition for personal wellbeing. For Sen (1999) there is a 'deep complementarity' between individual agency and social arrangements – social influences have a role to play in the extent to which individual freedom is reached, making individual freedom a social commitment. Participation is thus seemingly important for development which removes obstacles which hinder people's agency, and gives people more choice and opportunity – i.e. empowerment (Sen, 1999). There is a belief that participation – involving people in the decisions that affect them - leads to more effective and sustainable policy solutions, and as such is something that should be encouraged and developed because of the positive impacts it can have on wider society, communities and individuals (UN, 2013). However, as participation is a broad area, open to many interpretations (Cornwall, 2008), it is necessary to determine what participation means in the case of this study. This will be done by critically examining understandings of participation within a UK socio-political perspective.

As Brendt (2009) asserts, participation is also a means to ensure equality, appropriateness and ultimately ownership which is achieved by enabling the creation of responsibility; this can be seen for example within a UK context of community involvement in design and production processes, which the chapter will elaborate further on. In this regard, the purpose of participation is to empower, and to change the relationship between the 'rich and poor', making beneficiaries more powerful (Brendt, 2009).

In the UK, participation has received longstanding political interest; participation in local government is seen to strengthen democratic institutions, empower local communities, build resilience, strengthen efficacy and self-esteem, build social cohesion, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services (Brodie *et al.,* 2011; United Nations, 2013). Moreover, participation is thought to foster confidence, skills, mutual solidarity, and have a positive influence on people's wellbeing and quality of life (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). Participation in general is therefore viewed as a 'good thing' for society by policy makers and as such, has been high on national and international political and policy agendas. However, as will be shown in section 3.3, 'top-down' attempts to promote participation are not without their challenges and barriers.

Table 3.1 summarises three types of participation, providing an overview of how participation has traditionally been understood, and what it looks like, within a UK context. *Public participation* refers to the engagement of individuals with the various structures and institutions of the state and democracy; this is also known as political, formal, civic, or vertical participation and/or participatory governance. This type of participation includes voting in elections or taking part in government consultations. *Social participation* refers to collective activities that individuals may be involved in, also known as 'associational life', collective action, or civil, horizontal or community participation, and includes volunteering or being a member of a trade union, a community group or tenant's association. *Individual*

participation refers to the choices and actions that individuals make as part of their daily life and that are statements of the kind of society they want to live in such as purchasing ethical products (Brodie *et al.,* 2011; Brodie *et al*., 2010a).   Therefore, the concept of participation comprises individual and personal acts, is fluid and dynamic, and aims to achieve social change (also personally determined), through engaging with other people, the public and the state (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). Before moving on to the study's framework of participation, the changing socio-political nature of participation in the UK will be the focus of the following section, and shows new emerging forms of participation, developing more traditional understandings as shown in Table 3.1. This offers a foundation for understanding context relevant approaches to community participation, given the strong emphasis on partnership working and the link between state institutions and communities.

Table 3.1: Three categorisations of participation (Adapted from Brodie *et al.,* 2010a: 1)

3.3 The changing socio-political nature of participation within a UK context

This section provides an insight into the changing nature of participation within the UK, in line with policy changes, and broad societal developments which are considered to have paved the way for a rise in more informal participatory practices (Brodie *et al.,* 2010b). This study was undertaken within a context in which the Conservative – Liberal Democrat coalition government elected in 2010[12] was in power, proceeding a Labour government from 1997-2010. Following the 2008 global financial crisis, the Coalition Government introduced an austerity programme, an economic policy to reduce the national deficit which included sustained 'cuts' in public spending. Under these measures, inequality intensified and wages remained stagnant whilst the general cost of living continued to increase. Simultaneously, the government's launch of the 'Big Society' agenda was to encourage local people to become more involved in 'participating' in their communities and in the running of public services, to, in turn, contribute towards 'building a stronger society' (Brodie *et al.,* 2011).

The Big Society initiative was a fundamental part of the Conservative's manifesto– part of an "underlying long-term vision of integrating the free market with a theory of social solidarity based on conservative communitarian principles of order, hierarchy and voluntarism" (Corbett and Walker, 2013: 5). However, this sparked much debate, and indeed criticism (Tait and Inch, 2016). To reduce public spending to 'combat' the national budget deficit - 'we're all in this together' - was a key feature of the wider austerity programme, as a key mechanism for reducing the size of the state (Smith, 2010). As such, there have been significant budget reductions to key public sector services, the welfare state, cuts to local authority budgets, and a stance on devolving powers from central government to local authorities and communities. This includes the 'opening up' of the

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[12] Since 2015, the Conservative government have been in power.

planning process[13], to communities, as a way to (in theory) give people the opportunity to have 'more control' of local level decisions in their areas (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). This market driven, neoliberal ideology features expanding and extending the role of the private sector and the third sector, and their ability to compete for service contracts. As such, not only has there been an increase in privatisation of services, there has also been a rise in the role and responsibility of the civil society, social enterprises and the third sector in a bid to shift control to communities, with some viewing this as a way to fill the gaps left from the withdrawing state (Scott, 2011).

One year after the Big Society initiative, the Localism Act (2011), was introduced with the aim to devolve more decision-making powers from central government 'back into' the hands of individuals, communities and councils (Local Government Association, 2015). However, such attempts to ensure communities have more power and a say about the things affecting them have not always been successful. One example is a recent high-court battle where allotment gardeners failed to save their community space from being sold (by local authorities) for development (e.g. the Save Terrace allotment in Watford – The Guardian, 2016). This reflects a trend whereby 194 of 198 applications to close allotments were granted by the Secretary of State between 2007 and 2014; this is a worrying sign for community and green spaces (Farm Terrace Allotments, 2015), especially considering the positive benefits associated with food growing and rhetoric around community 'powers'.

There has been a change in formal, or public participation in recent years. Although government policies, such as the Big Society agenda, have tended to focus on more formal methods of participation such as public consultations and volunteering schemes, rather than increasing, evidence shows that public and individual participation has remained stable, or

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[13] For example, a set 'Community Rights' were put forward in 2012 within the Localism Act – the Right to Bid, Build, Challenge and Reclaim land, and neighbourhood planning (House of Commons, 2015).

in some cases has decreased. This is in part likely to be a result of the cuts affecting organisations that support participation, and reflects how such policies have failed to consider more *informal* community activities and individual pro-social behaviours and actions (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). This is also in line with how, over the past 30 years, British politics has experienced a 'democratic deficit' (Tait and Inch, 2016) - the public's engagement in politics has reached an all-time low, with fewer people turning out to vote, fewer than ever before identifying with a particular political party, and fewer people who feel as though the current political system works for them (Park *et al.*, 2013; National Centre for Social Research, 2015). For example, the disengagement of younger generation is apparent within public participation - low proportions of 18-24 year olds now turn out to vote for to a number of reasons, including not registering, and not aligning to any of the main political parties (Electoral Commission, 2014).

There has also been a fall in those reporting trust in national government (ONS, 2016b). The cuts are said to have disproportionately affected the young and the poor – the groups that vote with least frequency which has resulted in a political disaffection leading to a 'vicious cycle' of disadvantage whereby the more politically disengaged have their interests considered less by policymakers[14] (Griffith and Glennie, 2014). It is against this backdrop that Brodie *et al.,* (2011) argue that new informal participatory practices are present where people are expressing themselves in new ways outside of formal participatory arenas. The rise of new and unexpected forms and expressions of participation is reflected, for example, in protests, campaigns and new food-related politics involving citizens (as outlined in Chapter 1) and also more informal activities such as community food growing. Moreover, according to Brodie *et al.,* (2010b: 3) this is part of an emerging picture of younger, more

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[14] However, there appears to have been a resurgence of political interest following the 2016 'Brexit' debate, which saw a 72% turnout compared to 66% in the 2015 general election, however this took place after the fieldwork and writing of this thesis.

socially, economically and ethnically diverse groups "participating in *a much less intense way across many forms of activities, raising some important questions about the voices in society that are not being heard and the inequality of participation*" (Brodie *et al.,* 2010b: 3). The societal and policy drivers or conditions which are thought to be underpinning this changing nature of UK participation are summarised in Box 3.1.

Box 3.1: Broad societal development and circumstances impacting participation

(Adapted from Brodie *et al.*, 2010b: 2-4)

3.4 UK political approaches to participation: partnership working, the neighborhood scale and community empowerment

This section provides the backdrop to how community participation has been approached within UK politics. Given the centrality of community to 'participation', within partnership working (and indeed CG), this section presents theories of community, as well as outlining political approaches to participation at the neighbourhood scale, and the aspect of community empowerment. The 1997-2010 UK Labour government's approach to participation in local decision making centred on 'empowering' local communities through confidence, skills, and power, to shape and influence what public bodies do for, or with them. The process of 'community engagement' sought to achieve this, a process whereby public bodies created empowerment opportunities by reaching out to communities (Adamson and Bromiley, 2013; CLG, 2007). Although the concept of 'community empowerment' initially found favour with New Labour, the empowerment, localism and decentralisation rhetoric witnessed a continuation following the election of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition Government (Tait and Inch, 2016; Adamson and Bromiley, 2013).

Under the coalition this however did see a move from local government to the voluntary and community sector being tasked with delivering socially orientated policies, at a time of reduced resources. Nevertheless, the view that individuals, once 'empowered' to do so, have the potential to engage 'successfully', or consensually, in community life is shared; however, as will be discussed, the extent to which politically ascribed values of community, participation and empowerment in government policies actually relate to 'real world' communities is questionable (Holman, 2014). Moreover, the development of partnerships between local government and communities (and community sector organisations) can be largely problematic as such partnerships do not form naturally, recognising inevitable aspects of power and difference, leaving them open to conflict (Blaxter *et al.,* 2003). Nonetheless, promoted by various governments in pursuit of different ideological priorities,

community empowerment is therefore frequently used as part of broader governance strategies to engage communities at the neighbourhood level, under banners of localism, decentralisation and devolution, within a neoliberal context (Bailey and Pill, 2015).

3.4.1 Community: political and theoretical understandings

Before moving on to look at how framings of participation inform the study, it is necessary to unpack notions of community, neighbourhood, and empowerment, given how they are central facets to such discussions on participation. Although the study is not predominantly concerned with the 'community' aspects of CG, but rather with the factors influencing individual's participation in CG, it is important to draw attention to the notion of community. This is because political attempts to promote participation have focused on communities and initiatives at the community level, and because community is a central part of CG activity (and inherently part of social understandings of CG). This study's research questions and objectives are not focused on the community aspects of CG, but on the person-centred approach to participation however, they cannot be ignored, given the centrality of community to CG and to approaches to participation.

It is generally acknowledged that 'community' is a widely used, ambiguous and complex term which can be adapted to suit different purposes and circumstances (Brendt, 2009). The variety of CG activity and the governance arrangements and geographical contexts in which they take place (Chapter 2), makes the study of community within CG not a particularly easy endeavour. 'Community' or sense of community is largely regarded as an 'outcome' or benefit of CG (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Glover, 2004; Pudup, 2008; Veen *et al.,* 2005) which is achieved through the creation of a sense of belonging to physical and social environments (i.e. 'communities') through relational processes (Hale *et al.,* 2011; Dunlap *et al.,* 2013; Comstock *et al.,* 2010). This draws on Etzioni's (1996) first characteristic of community which relates to a web of relationships between individuals that reinforce each other;

drawing on the CG literature, this can be conceptualised further as to also include relationships with place.

As such, the physical and social dimensions to CG are important to comprehend and this is in line with how community is often used as a geographical metaphor that encompasses spatial, and other non-spatial notions (Brendt, 2009). As shown in Chapter 2, the geographic location of 'place-based' CG often at the neighbourhood scale, means that CG are regarded as positive, open meeting spaces for the community in which the CG is situated (e.g. Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Bendt *et al.,* 2013). However, it is still unclear as to which members of the local community (geographic, demographic) form the CG community and *why*. Other associations with community align to how community is attached to different forms of collective identity that have to be created (Etzioni, 1996; Brendt, 2009). This draws on Etzioni's (1996) second characteristic of community which is to do with a particular culture based on a commitment to a set of shared values, norms, identity and meanings. For example, 'interest-based' CG comprises a community of people with a shared interest, which can refer to a group of people taking part in an intervention for example or which possess a shared characteristic (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015; Pudup, 2008).

As argued in Chapter 2, there is however likely to be an overlap between these distinctions which means that both spatial and non-spatial dimensions to understandings of community are relevant. Although representations and conceptualisations of community are not the central focus of the study, it is helpful to define the study's interpretation of community, given how it is a central social component of CG activity. Being concerned with the factors influencing participation in CG, as outlined in Chapter 2, this study defines CG as 'informal communal food growing activity on locally situated pieces of urban land involving the community in which the activity is based'. It draws on geographical notions of place-based

CG, with 'the community' understood as those who take part in (open, i.e. non-exclusive) CG activity, who are likely to come from the area in which the CG is based, participating in a shared-interest. Through the application of the conceptual framework, this study will shed further empirical insight into importance of the geographical/physical aspects of community, and the shared or cultural aspects of CG as a community-based activity. Due to the focus on individual participation, those taking part in CG activities in this study are regarded as CG participants.

Understandings of community have roots in Tönnies' (1887) conceptualisation of *Gemeinschaft* 'community' and *Gesellschaft* 'society'. The characteristics comprising Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft are shown in Table 3.2. Gemeinschaft is thought to represent more traditional, conservative, place-based, shared values and world, based on cooperation and family, resonating with pre-modern society. Gesellschaft is more modern, functional, fragmented and urban, and comprises contractual relationships of industrial society based on specialist interest. Durkheim (1983) expands on these in relation to division of labour and social solidarity stating that 'mechanical solidarity' is a social community whereby solidarity is achieved because people feel similar and therefore part of a community – relating to Gemeinschaft. 'Organic solidarity' relates to Gesellschaft, and community is created through independence, complementary skills and interests between people, where people are mutually dependent on one another.

Table 3.2: Characteristics of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft adapted from (Plant, 1974 *in* Taylor, 2011)

These two categories in applied sociology are mixed rather than separate and should not be viewed as over-generalised differences. In line with the urban focus of the study, within Gesellschaft, community is thought to have been transformed rather than lost, as city dwellers have gained the capacity for surface-level relationships, rather than losing the capacity for long lasting relationships. Here, community remains an essential site in supporting social goods through common values, rather than private and personal needs to be satisfied by communities. However, Gemeinschaft community is valued as the place where new inclusive forms of democracy emerge, contesting the social costs of capitalism to marginalised people (Taylor, 2011). One final difference to note is how social order or equilibrium is implicit in Gemeinschaft through morals, conformism and exclusion as opposed to Gesellschaft where it is achieved through laws and policing; this suggests that 'control' and 'power' in Gesellschaft resides with governmental institutions, and in Gemeinschaft, it is socially determined from within the community. Differences can therefore be noted between notions of community (Gemeinschaft) and society (Gesellschaft), which are likely to co-exist. Another useful reading of community and society

is Etzioni's (2015: 4) view which suggests that "[s]ociety should not be viewed as composed of millions of individuals, but as pluralism (of communities) within unity (the society)." However, in appreciating these distinctions, the experiences of individuals, who form communities, are in essence captured which provide insight into particular phenomena under exploration (see Chapter 4).

Theories of communitarianism provide a useful framing for community food activity, given the inherent nature of community-development aspects of CG and nature of participation more generally. Communitarianism is associated with Gemeinschaft notions of community which critiques the individualism of the market with its negative effects on community life, and the dependency the state produces. Within this perspective, the preservation of individual rights or freedom is recognised, dependent on the active maintenance of civic society where citizens learn, acquire, appreciate responsibilities and rights, respect for others, and develop skills and habits of self-government, as well as serving others (not just oneself) (Etzioni, 1994; Galston, 1991; Taylor, 2011). It places an emphasis on *responsibilities*, seeks to revive the institutions (civil society organisations) that mediate between the state and the individual, and promotes the community as the site of moral norms and obligations (Etzinoi, 1996; Taylor, 2011).

Within communitarianism, Fraser's (2005) conceptualisation of 'progressive-empowerment communitarians' and 'radical / activist transformative communitarians' as approaches to community work, involving the state and the community to achieve social change, are of relevance.[15] In relation to studies on CG, attempts to achieve 'change' through CG on a variety of levels are made; however, the way in which this is done differs as does the extent to which 'structural' change, social equity, socio-environmental justice and

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[15] Within Fraser's (2005) conceptualisation, two other approaches to community work are present - 'anti-or reluctant communitarians' (concerned with individualism, economic conservatism), and 'technical – functionalist communitarians' (apolitical, top down, managerialist positioning) – forming the other end of the communitarianism spectrum.

community participation is considered and achieved (see McClintock, 2014; Milbourne, 2012; Tornaghi, 2014). Thus, these two avenues – 'progressive' and 'radical' will be applied to CG activities in the remainder of this section to offer a useful framing of how CG activities have been conceptualised within the literature. In doing so, these approaches should be regarded as two sides of the same coin concerned with change regarding sustainability and inequality, each undoubtedly with their own strengths and weakness.

Firstly 'progressive communitarians' apply the term 'community' to signify the possibilities of collectives sharing resources and decision-making to address social and environmental problems. Here, social justice - linked to both environments and people - is important and emphasis is more likely to be placed on incremental reforms than structural change (Ife, 2002; Fraser, 2005). This approach emphasises complexities and takes risks by forming alliances with other groups which do not necessarily share the same values. As such they can be seen to relate to new food governance arrangements (Chapter 1), and progressive approaches also include the more proactive role of the public sector in CG activities (Chapter 2) which is starting to receive attention within the literature (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Eizenberg and Fenster 2015). This is because progressive approaches adopt more nuanced or subtle understandings of power relations (working with or including, rather than opposing, the state), and they have the ability to garner resources for 'ordinary' people, who may face risk of exclusion or marginalisation.

This approach is considered more attractive to people who have little interest or faith in completely overhauling 'the system' (Fraser, 2005). Given the active and supportive role of the public sector in CG governance, and their affinity to working with the public and indeed the marginalised in many areas, particularly in relation to health and wellbeing, progressively orientated approaches are one way to frame this new stage of CG development, reflecting CG 'normalisation' and new partnership arrangements (Crossan,

2016; Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Witheridge and Morris, 2016). However, as Hardman *et al.,* (2017) highlight, the degree of support for urban agriculture activities in general, is likely to vary between local authorities. Critiques of this approach centre on the risk of vulnerability in terms of potentially being hijacked by the interest, ideas and agendas of dominant groups or individuals, as well as not achieving substantial change given their more subtle approaches (Fraser, 2005).

The contrasting approach is the radical/activist communitarians, which are often associated with Marxists, anarchists, socialists, more radically informed feminists, and those influenced by ideas from critical theory (Fraser, 2005). This can be seen in the CG literature (which has received more attention than progressive approaches) through alignment to Lefebvre's (1968) 'right to the city' as well as the adoption of 'rights based' framing associated with 'citizen control' and aligned to movements concerned with food justice, the right to food, and food sovereignty; here, the lens of food is used to expose, challenge and influence wider systems (Pierce *et al.,* 2016; Passidomo, 2015; Purcell and Tyman, 2015; Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015; Tornaghi, 2014). Within this framing, alternative realities are imagined regarding food production and consumption, centred on spaces of resistance, and a shift in control in opposition to the neoliberal dominant agri-food system, rather than models which operate within current 'neoliberal' paradigms, which hinders their disruptive or transformative ability (Cangelosi, 2015; Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014a: McClintock, 2014; Barron, 2016; Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015). Debates around CG as such are focused on the (urban) commons and politicise CG practices through, 'political gardening' or 'garden activism' framings (Ghose and Pettygove, 2014b; Cangelosi, 2015; Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015; Kato *et al.,* 2013; Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015; Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015).

Efforts are geared towards seeking to "radically transform global social economic order" (Fraser, 2005: 293) and can effectively recruit people to become active citizens, who may ordinarily be side-lined and alienated from formalised politics, and who may have suffered marginalisation and injustice (within the literature this is framed as active food citizens or powerful agents, Purcell and Tyman, 2015). Critiques of this approach centre on it being too ambitious and idealistic and therefore running the risk of being unworkable (Fraser, 2005). This is too seen in the case of how such approaches within CG may have limited impact on urban food systems (Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Milbourne, 2012). Furthermore, such approaches are often disregarded by governments, and other authorities and businesses given the limited role they offer to state authorities and professionals, as being too radical or uncompromising:

> "Alienating many 'powerful' segments of society, it is also not attractive to many 'ordinary' people who remain unconvinced that there is a viable alternative to global capitalism. Nor is it appealing to those who do not want to link their local community activity to global politics" (Fraser, 2005: 269).

Although the extent to which citizens are becoming decision makers around urban spaces and activities requires further understanding (Tornaghi, 2012; Hardman and Larkahm, 2014; Hardman *et al.,* 2017) this should not be confined to one particular 'perspective'. Given the lack of attention afforded to progressive approaches in CG governance and processes of participation, this study gives further attention to this particular perspective to enrich understandings of their contribution to CG activity. To summarise, 'progressive' perspectives have an interest in pursuing justice from within the current system, whereas 'radical' perspectives adopt more critical stances in challenging dominant regimes opposing the state. Nevertheless, while there are clear differences in power/control, and how these

two perspectives achieve change, it is appreciated that they have similar values in seeking change (Fraser, 2005).

Finally, it is worth mentioning civil society organisations (CSO), which are linked to communitarianism, due to their role in mediating between the state and the individual, and aim to promote 'community' as the site of moral norms and duties (Taylor, 2011). Civil society is described as "an intellectual space, where people from a myriad of different groups and associations can freely debate and discuss how to build the kind of world in which they want to live" (Howard and Pearce, 2002: 2). One of its strengths is that it comprises a whole host of diverse organisations, and people from organisations, with different voices; however, the degree of participation from whom in society, and whether the most marginalised are represented, is questionable. Moreover, the capacity to facilitate a number of different viewpoints on achieving a good society, means that it can be a place of conflict and competition, and can also run the risk of becoming insular and regressive. This is because as the organisations within it seek to advance their own vision and values, this can lead to instability, factions and defensiveness (Taylor, 2011). The role of CSO in new food governance arrangements has been outlined in Chapter 1, are further explored within the study.

3.4.2 Community and the neighbourhood scale

The notion of community, is very often linked to place, such as the neighbourhood – which draws on the geographical dimension to understandings of community and CG activities (for example, 'neighbourhood gardens' see Veen *et al.,* 2015). Within UK policy arenas, 'communities' are often associated with disadvantaged areas and the people within them, which as Chapter 2 identified, is indeed often an assumption of CG. Poor disadvantaged communities are often a focus of 'neighbourhood interventions' because of how they experience the worst forms of marginalisation and outcomes in a number of areas including

health and education, and are affected disproportionately by government cuts, leading to a downward cycle of disadvantage and political disengagement (Griffith and Glennie, 2014). Therefore, the neighbourhood scale has grown in importance for UK policy implementation which has been the focus for more socially orientated policies associated with 'disadvantage', whilst economic development for example has concentrated on the city region.

Therefore, 'neighbourhoods' are frequently seen as a proxy for community, and also have similar depictions to community, being understood as complex, dynamic, multidimensional, subjective constructs, with identities that go beyond defined geographical or administrative boundaries (Lepine *et al.,*2007a; Lepine and Sullivan, 2007c). This focus on neighbourhoods as 'sites of interventions' and 'spaces of governance formations' is because of their affinity to 'real places' where local authorities can promote collaboration, partnership arrangements and engagement of various sectors (Lepine *et al.,* 2007a; Purdue, 2007; Lepine *et al.,* 2007b). However, just because neighbourhoods are the site at which people live and interact, does not mean policy approaches at this level automatically provide solutions to a host of urban problems. However, in being 'real places', the neighbourhood scale is seen to be appropriate in offering "opportunities to understand and respond to such problems, and to engage people though day-to-day experiences and connections that matter to them." (Lepine *et al.,* 2007b: 216). The section has unpacked concepts of community and neighbourhood within the context of UK approaches to participation, given their centrality in these discussions as well as within CG research; empowerment is also identified as a central feature to community participation approaches and will now be discussed.

3.4.3. Community empowerment

This section focuses on the notion of community empowerment, given its focus in approaches to community participation, and claims that is promoted via CG participation (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Lanier *et al.*, 2016); as such it is useful to explore in the context of informal CG participation. There is no agreed upon definition of the term empowerment but Bailey (2010) in the context of 'formal' UK community empowerment strategies informs how it involves: engagement in democratic processes and civic activity, involving people in decision making around local services, the ability to express opinions about policies, and transferring powers to residents to manage assets/deliver services. Although, it is argued that such community empowerment strategies, in reality, often reinforce the power of institutions, and have marginal effects at the local level (Bailey and Pill, 2015). As such, there remains a contradiction between the rhetoric of community empowerment, and how much power is, in reality, in the hands of communities, and how much transformative change (and from whose perspective) this achieves.

Two different approaches to community empowerment are put forward (Bailey and Pill, 2015; Featherstone *et al.,* 2012) - the first, 'austerity localism' stresses the influence of neoliberalism in emphasising the local, but also ensuring that power is retained by higher level agencies. Austerity localism is described as 'top down', with well-funded projects consisting of clear objectives, but with difficulties regarding integration into mainstream arenas. The second is 'progressive localism' which emphasises 'bottom up' empowerment as an open-ended process, where new forms of citizen involvement can open up new spaces which have transformative potential (Bailey and Pill, 2015;). In sum, top down projects (austerity localism) tend to result in the least empowerment, whereas the more bottom up, self-help projects (progressive localism) provide opportunities for spaces to be created offering potential for varying degrees of transformation. Nevertheless, rather than

challenging the broader process of neoliberalism and globalisation, both empowerment approaches, with heavily constrained parameters - the external political and economic context - are at risk of achieving limited local outcomes (Bailey and Pill, 2015).

As recognised in Chapter 2 regarding CG development and participation, the context in which various community empowerment activities or programmes takes place, and the influence of external factors, is likely to affect the extent of engagement. Caution is therefore needed regarding temptations to parachute blanket or standardised engagement approaches or projects into communities which is not in line with their participatory culture. As such, approaches need to appreciate and respect the different characteristics of populations and local context and population. For example, opportunities provided in an area comprising skilled residents and with more business involvement, are likely to have more participation due to high levels of independence and efficacy, compared to more disadvantaged areas (Williams, 2005).   Therefore, in recognising the need for diversity within community engagement and participation approaches, the following quote captures how important it is to understand context in which working with people takes places:

> "It is *unless the plurality of participatory cultures is acknowledged and greater recognition and value given to informal cultures of community involvement*, then nurturing community engagement will continue to perceive *one type of participatory culture*, namely that characteristic of affluent wards, […] and attempt to impose this onto populations possessing different participatory cultures" (Williams, 2005: 37).

As such, "community empowerment is always likely to be partial and contingent on local circumstances and the wider context" (Bailey, 2010: 317) including the wider distribution of power. Engagement in particular programmes and activities are therefore influenced by a range of factors which effect the transformative potential of such 'created spaces' (which

is relevant for created CG spaces). Such factors include the level and types of *resource* made available (and how), the transfer of *powers* (from the state to the community), and an understanding of *local needs.* Moreover, there has to be an *interest* from the local community to engage in initiatives and partnerships (Lawless and Pearson, 2012). Empirical evidence is needed to establish the relative importance of these processes (Bailey and Pill, 2015) especially in the study of informal CG participation processes, where this is also a relatively new area of investigation. This is especially important for exploration because of cautions regarding the effectiveness of strategic or intentional (led) partnership working (i.e. governance approaches) involving the state and community which, as an approach, has been found to actually create barriers to community engagement and empowerment, and can cause disillusionment in specific instances (Matthews, 2014; Adamson and Bromiley, 2013). Nevertheless, Adamson and Bromiley (2013: 199) did find that "community members are willing to put time and considerable effort into local partnerships if they believe that their local actions will create significant and tangible change in their local areas" which may too have relevance for CG participation and needs to be explored.

3.5 Conceptualising participation in Community Gardening: frameworks and approaches

3.5.1 Framing participation: institution-led approaches

This section will discuss and analyse ways in which 'institutional-led' approaches have been employed to investigate participation to assess their relevance for this study. As will be shown, given the informal nature of CG participation, such conceptualisations are not the most helpful for this study, and so a more person-centred approach is proposed. Table 3.3 summarises approaches to participation, which are consistent with institution-led

approaches to community engagement which, as seen, are dominant within the regeneration literature. Pretty's (1995) 'typology of participation' focused more on the users of participatory approaches (i.e. institutions) and Arnstein's (1969) 'ladder of participation' and Burns *et al.'s* (1994) 'ladder of citizen empowerment' (a development of Arnstein's ladder) focus on those on the receiving end (i.e. communities). These framings outline various degrees of control and power intended to shift from authorities to citizens / communities. A common feature throughout these models is how various degrees of participation range from citizen control or more *active* participation down to *passive* or non-participation, with various stages in-between, involving degrees of interactive participation and partnership working. Ultimately, what this shows is how efforts to promote participation can have little desired effect when citizens do not have power and control, and vice versa – how they can promote the achieved outcome of citizen control, power, and delegation if successful. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, CG activity is associated more so with the upper ends of the spectrum towards 'self-mobilisation' (Pretty, 1995) and 'degrees of citizen power or citizen control' (Arnstein, 1969; Burns *et al.,* 1994).

Although these approaches to participation may prove helpful in assessing the extent to which participation may be occurring within an institutional approach to promoting or achieving participation, they do not focus on the views and experiences of the individuals nor are they able to demonstrate the reasons why people participate in informal activities. Moreover, the ability of such institution led approaches to influence change is questionable; 'citizen control' or 'self-mobilisation' (at one end of the spectrum) may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power and may be promoted by the state as part of goals consistent with neo-liberal approaches to development (Cornwall, 2008). Moreover, given the changing nature of participation such conceptualisations are likely to prove unhelpful for new and more informal forms of participation, including CG. It is important to make the link between CG (as an informal type of participation) and the complexities around

participation, where the public sector is involved. However, Wilcox (1999) in proposing 'interconnected levels' of community participation asserts that different levels of participation are acceptable in differing contexts and settings, and recognises that power is not always transferred in 'participative processes', but that the *processes* still have value which include *making decisions* and *taking action* collectively.

Typology of participation (Pretty, 1995)	Ladder of participation (Arnstein, 1969)	Ladder of citizen empowerment (Burns *et al.,* 1994)
Self-mobilisation: Initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Develop contacts with external institutions for resources but retain control over how resources are used. Self-mobilisation can spread if an enabling framework of support is provided by government and NGOs. May or may not challenge existing distribution of wealth and power.	**Degrees of citizen power** - Citizen control - Delegated power - Partnership	**Citizen control** - Independent control - Entrusted control
Interactive participation: People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals. Seeks multiple perspectives. Groups have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.		**Citizen participation** - Delegated control, partnership - Limited decentralised decision making - Genuine consultation - High quality information
Functional participation: Participation is seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals (especially reduced costs). Involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision making, likely only after major decisions have already been made by external agents.		
Participation for material incentives: People participate by contributing resources in return for material incentives. People are not involved in experimentation or processes of learning, and have no stake in practices when incentives end.	**Degrees of tokenism** - Placation - Consultation - Informing	
Participation by consultation: People participate by being consulted or answering questions. External agents define problems, collect data, and control analysis. Decision making processes are not shared and professionals are under no obligation to take on people's views.		
Passive participation: People participate by being told what has been decided or already happened. The information shared belongs to external professionals		**Citizen non-participation** - Customer care - Poor information - Cynical consultation - Civic hype.
Manipulative participation: Participation as a 'pretence' with 'people's' representative who are unelected and have no power	**Tokenism** - Therapy - Manipulation	

Table 3.3: A summary of approaches to participation (based on Pretty, 1995; Arnstein, 1969; Burns *et al.,* 1994)

Although the quest for citizen control is regarded as being inherently positive, the following excerpt highlights some of the challenges associated with 'top-down' governance approaches to participation and community empowerment, particularly aiming to involve more marginalised communities:

> "The challenge for community development is to be able to both enable those who take up these seats to exercise voice and influence, and help provide whatever support is needed – material, moral and political – to popular mobilization that seeks to influence policy through advocacy rather than negotiation. The state has a role to play in this, especially in respect of marginalized groups (Young, 2000). Taking up that role accountably and supportively, without taking over and tutoring 'the people' to speak to power in 'acceptable' ways (Barnes, 2006), is one of the challenges that efforts to stimulate community development through participation needs to address."
> (Cornwall, 2005: 282).

This statement argues for the *active role* of the state in supporting community development efforts, particularly in areas of marginalisation, in an appropriate fashion. In terms of the state's emerging involvement in CG activities (in line with progressive framings), and given the focus on context, it is necessary to take into consideration the ways in which this (successfully) plays out in practice. Although this section has identified how community participation has a tendency to be viewed as a formal policy, or 'top down' initiatives, such approaches do not reflect the current socio-political climate regarding participation which includes more informal types and expressions of participation – such as CG. Therefore, considering these new forms of participation moves beyond and enriches more formalised and obligatory public sector led community development programmes. Moreover, approaches concerned with more formalised participatory relationships are limited in their

ability to take into account the range of factors influencing participation, which is what this study is concerned with, although learning is applied from this literature concerned with community work and local government. As highlighted in Chapter 2 CG which are 'internally' initiated by the community, organised and managed are considered to be more successful (Firth *et al.,* 2011; Metcalfe *et al.,* 2012), however, such associated processes have yet to be explored within progressive arrangements.

As highlighted throughout this chapter, concepts of participation and community empowerment range from those concerned with an informal individual or community focus to those promoted as part of a more formalised political process. However, a number of commonalities are observed relating to participation and community empowerment summarised as 'power, control and responsibility', as well as being about 'action and decisions' (Bailey, 2010; Lawless and Pearson, 2012; Brendt, 2009) with an aim to increase these capabilities within communities and individuals. Whilst the study adopts a participation framing to CG activity, the literature regarding local government approaches to working with communities which this chapter has drawn upon is useful to inform explorations into CG participation associated with progressive approaches.

3.5.2 A person-centred, situated approach to Community Garden participation

A framework which considers informal participation taking into account the influencing factors is required for the exploration of CG participation. Given that participation has typically been approached from an organisational or institutional perspective, Brodie *et al.'s* (2011) conceptualisation of participation is refreshing and suitable for the study, understood as comprising **individual, personal acts, as being fluid and dynamic, and aiming to achieve social change (also personally determined), through engagement with others** (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). As such, Brodie *e al., (*2011: 6) understand "participation in a very broad sense to include taking part in **a wide range of social, public and individual**

activities." Participation is summarised as **voluntary, about action, collective or connected, and purposeful**, and in being a **personal experience**, people define their own participation in ways which are meaningful to them, within their own personal contexts (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). Moreover, they argue that people's decision to participate can be encouraged and enabled by many factors beyond those associated with 'top-down' institutional-led approaches. Therefore, the experiences and perspective of the individuals participating are considered as well as the various influences impacting participation (Brodie *et al.,* 2011). This approach is useful as it has the ability to encapsulate and take into account the rise in more informal expressions of participation which do not necessarily fit into traditional understanding of participation as discussed throughout this chapter. Applying this framing to this study adds a new insight into CG participation, and dimension to CG research, in line with contemporary forms of participation, including CG activity.

As previously asserted, considering much of the existing literature focusing on institutions and organisations that create spaces and process for participation, the focus on the individual is of particular interest for the study, and so Brodie *et al.'s* (2011) person-centred framing is particularly useful. Although the focus on individual is core, it is important to be able to situate the individual within wider contextual processes and thus understand the context. To do this, Bodie *et al.,* (2011) propose five 'scales' to consider: firstly, the 'individual' at the smallest scale, secondly 'relationships and social networks', thirdly, 'groups and organisations', fourthly, 'local environment and place', and lastly, at the largest scale, 'wider societal and global influences'. Understanding participation as 'situated practice' in this way allows for an exploration of how it is rooted in place and space (Cornwall, 2002; Gaventa, 2006; Brodie *et al.,* 2011). As such, because of the importance of *context* within the study of CG (Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Mintz and McManus, 2014; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Milbourne, 2012; Tornaghi. 2014), it is necessary to consider the broader context and drivers influencing participation present at various scales, which can

be achieved through this approach. This is useful because this study is particularly concerned with the factors that permit people to participate in CG - this is because although some of the benefits associated with taking part in CG have been well documented (Chapter 2), there is a need to further explore *why* people become involved in the practice of CG.

Figure 3.1 below demonstrates the conceptual framework designed and employed by this study which draws together and combines various components necessary for the study's exploration of participation in CG. It does this by bringing together applied framings and learning within the circle, as well concepts and theories around the outside of the circle. Of centrality to Figure 3.1 is participation in CG which is appreciated within this study as a person centred, situated practice; it is embedded in the wider context which is necessary to understand. A holistic view of participation is taken which explores the interconnecting and interrelated factors influencing CG participation, within the case study context of Lambeth. This is explored through five scales of influence (Brodie *et al.,* 2011) ranging from the individual scale to the scale of wider global and societal influences; throughout this study, these are referred to as the internal (individual scale) and external (remaining four scales) drivers of participation. In order to further explore the specific influencing factors at these scales, Figure 3.1 shows how aspects of the literature on community development, regeneration, community gardening, and wider social / political themes derived from the previous chapters, have been applied to the conceptual framework. Therefore, the study's conceptual framework demonstrates how key concepts and ideas from various bodies of literature are combined to further understandings of CG participation, through the application of the framework.

Figure 3.1: The study's conceptual framework (Source: Author)

Although the five stated scales are largely interconnected, they will now be discussed in turn in more detail within the context of the study and conceptual framework. Firstly, the individual scale (which comprises the internal drivers of participation, explored in Chapter 6) reflects the need to further investigate motivations and CG participation as argued in Chapter 2 (e.g. Pourais *et al*., 2016). Moreover, it is recognised that the study of motivations needs to take place within a consideration of the wider influencing factors (such as socio-economic, political, geographical) of local contexts in which CG activity occurs (Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Mintz and McManus, 2014; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Milbourne, 2012; Tornaghi. 2014). In responding to these calls, this study situates CG participation and individual's motivations for participation, within a wider framework which takes into account other influencing factors at varying scales. Forming the external drivers of participation (see Chapter 7) are the remaining four scales comprising: 'relationships and social networks', 'groups and organisations', 'local environment and place', and 'wider global and societal influences'. The second scale of 'relationships and social networks' draws upon the notion of informal cultures of participation and community involvement (Williams, 2005) which indeed relates to 'community empowerment', and relates to how CG participation is an informal, personal centred, rather than institutional-led, practice.

Some level of overlap is present with the third scale of 'groups and organisations', given the focus on 'progressive-empowerment' approaches, involving the role of the public sector (Fraser, 2005; Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Franklin *et al*., 2016; Eizenberg and Fenster 2015). This draws upon aspects of partnership working involving various sectors, namely the public sector and communities, and within a time of austerity. Traditionally, interventions have been targeted at communities at the site of the neighbourhood, and CG activity is too reflected at this scale, showing how it is important to consider within the fourth scale of 'local environment and place'. CG participation within neighbourhood or

community spaces however cannot be divorced from governance structures at the borough and city scales, which are specifically explored in Chapter 5. The final, fifth scale is 'wider global and societal influences' and here, wider political and societal trends and movements as identified within Chapter 1 – 3, are considered as part of the wider 'context' in which CG participation occurs.

The related theories and concepts are stated around the outside of the circle, which too are largely interconnected. This includes Fraser's (2005) progressive-empowerment approaches to community work, which is a logical and useful way to reflect the more active role of the public sector in CG activity. Secondly, governance is stated, which is to do with the process of decision making and implementation (United Nations, 2009), and incorporates partnership working. Community empowerment is considered within this holistic framework given how central it is to partnership arrangements and interventions to do with community participation, and incorporates 'community' which is implicit throughout the study and indeed CG activity. Participation is then stated; participation and community empowerment to some extent overlap due to commonalities associated with 'power, control and responsibility', being about 'action and decisions' and also recognised as being dependent on local circumstances and wider contexts (Bailey, 2010; Lawless and Pearson, 2012; Brendt, 2009). Although sometimes used interchangeably, community empowerment is clearly connected to concepts of community, and whilst participation can also apply to communities, a more holistic view of participation is concerned with individual acts (Bailey and Pill, 2015; Sen, 1999; United Nations, 2013; Brodie *et al.,* 2011) and as such remain separated within the framework. The conceptual framework therefore uniquely draws together many interrelated concepts for the exploration of CG participation, considering the drivers influencing participation through a multi-scalar approach.

3.6 Summary of Chapter 3

In recognising that there is a need to better understand processes of participation in CG activity as a situated practice, this chapter has drawn on literature concerned with participation, largely from a UK regeneration perspective. This reflects a change in political support for community participation more generally, and provides a contextual backdrop to the study in recognition of increased public sector support for CG activities and thus new partnership arrangements involving the community. Given the centrality of community to CG activity and approaches to participation, concepts of community and communitarianism, as well as the significance of the neighbourhood scale and principles of community empowerment are in line with progressive-empowerment framings. Moving away from dominant institutional–based conceptualisations of participation, which are not useful for understanding CG participation, this study applies a person-centred approach to understanding new contemporary expressions of participation. Therefore, drawing on literature concerned with community participation, the conceptual framework has been designed to account for and explore the many factors influencing participation to further empirical contributions to the study of contemporary CG participation and governance from a UK perspective. Informed by the study's philosophical approach, the methods employed by this study to collect empirical data within the chosen case study is set out in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

A Methodological Approach to Examine Participation in Community Gardens

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the choice of methodological approach for data collection to meet the study's objectives and overall research question. Firstly, the philosophical approach, critical realism, is explained and justified regarding how it informs the methodological approach. Following on, the design of the data collection process is outlined which comprises a case study approach, interviews, a survey, and observations. This choice of mixed-methods is generally regarded as the most appropriate and beneficial way to investigate a problem under a realist epistemology. The non-probability sampling method is also outlined as well as considerations of positionality, reflexivity and ethics. Finally, the process for data analysis is discussed as well as methodological considerations.

4.2 Approaches to research philosophy

This section examines key research philosophies and outlines the philosophical position of the study, critical realism, which, being concerned with social change through recognising the reality of the natural order in the social world, differs from positivist and constructivist ontologies, as this section below outlines. This approach complements ontological approaches in the CG literature which have predominantly explored the ways in which participants articulate their own participation (Dunlap *et al.,* 2013). With regard to research philosophy, ontology is "the set of specific assumptions underlying a theory or system of ideas (what can be known)" (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 6). Epistemology on the other hand, is "to do with what we believe constitutes knowledge and how we can know something to be true and how we share that knowledge." (Petre and Rugg, 2010: 121). For Bryman (2008), epistemology is to do with what is, or should be, regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. A central issue regarding the construction of knowledge is the "question of whether the social world can and should be studied according to the same principles,

procedures, and ethos as the natural sciences." (Bryman, 2008: 13). The natural sciences are associated with a positivist ontology, whereby hypotheses are generated and tested, which allow explanation of laws to be assessed - the principle of deductivism (Bryman, 2008). Within positivism, objective knowledge, or facts, can be gained from direct observation – this is the only knowledge available to the natural sciences (Robson, 2011).

In contrast to positivism, interpretivism, also known as constructivism, is an ontology critical of the application of the scientific model (positivism) to the study of the social world, thereby asserting that the social sciences are different from natural sciences which indeed calls for a different logic of research procedure (Bryman, 2008). Therefore, interpretivism indicates a view that social properties are constructed through interactions between people, rather than having a separate existence. Meaning therefore does not exist in its own right, it is constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation. As such, there is a focus on individuals, and how they construct and make sense of their world (Robson, 2011). The third ontological position of realism asserts that there is a world existing independently of our knowledge of it, an external reality separate from our description of it, and that social phenomena have an existence beyond our reach or influence (Sayer, 2000; Bryman, 2012). This viewpoint acknowledges that the world can only be known under available discourses, though it does not assert that one description or explanation is better than any other (Sayer, 2000). Therefore, critical realism makes the ontological assumption that there is a reality but that it is usually difficult to apprehend (Easton, 2010).

Therefore, a realist approach differs from the positivist view of science which does not provide a direct answer to 'how' or 'why' questions. For Robson (2011), realism provides a useful language for the task of addressing such questions, which arise from open, uncontrolled situations in the field, rather than in a laboratory setting. Likewise, a realist

ontology also differs to interpretivism which asserts that a single reality does not exist but there are many realities, therefore finding difficulty in the notion of an objective reality which can be known (Robson, 2011). What realism does share with interpretive social science however is the view that social phenomena are context-dependent and have to be understood – therefore understanding causation (how and why questions) is dependent on understanding the context (Sayer, 2000; Nairn, 2012). Critical realism is concerned with recognising the reality of the natural order in the social world, it holds the view that we will only be able to understand –and so change – the social world through the practical and theoretical work of the social sciences (Bhaskar, 1989; Bryman, 2012). Critical realism is seen to have an affinity to emancipatory styles of research which seek to change the socio-political landscape for the better; this is achieved by taking note of, and understanding the perspectives of participants, and even promoting social justice (Bryman, 2012; Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Robson, 2011).

Whilst the study has the philosophical underpinning of critical realism, the way in which it informed the study's conceptual framework developed throughout the course of the study. Initially, it formed a key part of the conceptual framing as a way to explore the presence of a number of 'causal factors'. As such, it informed the study's methodological design, but the model proved difficult to implement when analysing and interpreting the findings and relating these back to the various components of critical realism. This was because of how critical realist research seeks to identify 'necessary' and 'contingent' conditions that are present within a specific context for an outcome to occur (i.e. participation in community food growing) across various layers or domains of reality (Sayer, 2000; Cresswell, 2013). As such, within critical realist research, the observable outcome, or the effects of causation are a result of causal mechanisms being activated or triggered under specific conditions (which are not necessarily observable) within a certain context (Sayer, 2000; Robson, 2011; Nairn, 2012; Jarvis and Dunham, 2003; Sayer, 2000; Bygstad and Munkvold, 2011). Whilst this

study was able to identify a number of conditions present relating to causation, it was difficult to disentangle these as either necessary conditions (structural often hidden) or contingent conditions (local, accidental, replicable) - both of which need to occur for an event to happen.

Indeed, undertaking critical realist research in practice is a major challenge and such limitations associated with its practical application / operationalisation is a common feature within the literature, which this study supports. For example, Pratt (1995) asserts that few examples have rigorously implemented critical realism from conceptualisation to practical research and as such, there are few accounts of the methodological implications of critical realist research. This reflects that lack of methodological development in the philosophical discourse of critical realism meaning that discussions have been confined to the abstract level and there is a lack of a clear and accepted practical mode of moving forward (Yeung, 1997; Pratt, 1994; Easton, 2012). Therefore, whilst still influencing the study's design (i.e. aiming to understand causation through 'how' and 'why' questions), the critical realist element of the conceptual framework was omitted, due to its complex application, which this study could not accommodate.

4.2.1 Methods used in critical realist research

Realism endorses, or is compatible with a relatively wide range of research methods, hence, it is necessary to choose and justify methods that are most suited to meet the study's research question and objectives (Sayer, 2000; Bryman, 2012). For many, the main methodology for conducting a realist study is therefore a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods, often referred to as a mixed methods approach (Kitchen and Tate, 2000; Robson, 2011; Bryman, 2012). Research methods can either be intensive or extensive in nature, which, as is typically the case in critical realist research, can be applied in a complementary fashion (Sayer, 1992). Extensive methods focus on patterns through

descriptive 'representative' samples, often through questionnaires, standardised interviews and statistical analysis. Intensive methods on the other hand tend to employ qualitative methods to study individual agents or a small number of cases, to explore processes and casual explanations. Used in combination, extensive methods prioritise information about patterns whereas intensive research investigates patterns (Pratt, 1995).

Employing a mixed methods approach allows for a phenomenon to be studied in a multi-layered way, such a consideration of scale is central to critical realist studies, (Bryman, 2012). Within realist studies, caution is needed with regard to empirical regularity as replication does not simply produce conclusive verification of the existence of causation, and the absence of regular associations between cause and effect is expected, due to how social contexts are variable and change (Robson, 2011: Sayer, 2000; Yeung, 1997). Thus, rather than replication, corroboration - relating to evidence which confirms or supports findings, is considered an appropriate 'test' in intensive studies. The following section of the chapter will focus on the chosen methods employed by the study with the aim to reveal different features or elements of the same phenomenon, enabling resultant findings to be complementary (Yeung, 1997).

4.3 Design of data collection process and methods

A consideration of the available methods is determined by their appropriateness to meet the study's overall research question and objectives. Firstly, the case study method will be outlined, and then the range of complementary data collection methods, which are outlined in Table 4.1, will be discussed.

Method	Documentary analysis	Semi-structured interviews	Semi-structured interviews	Observation	Survey
Time-period	From October 2013 (updated throughout study)	Jun – Aug 2014	Oct – Dec 2014	Jun – Dec 2014	Jun – Dec 2015
Description	Key documents and websites relating to the case study area to gain a broad understanding of the landscape, in relation to the research objectives	Key organisational actors at the city and borough scale	Participants taking part in selected community-based and estate-based food growing projects	Observational notes taken during the fieldwork stages	Targeted at community food growing participants at the borough scale
Sample size	Approximately 30 texts	6 interviews (2 interviews with city-level actors; 4 interviews with borough-level actors)	23 interviews (16 participant interviews, 1 group interview with 4 participants, 3 interviews with community gardeners)	Notes made after each research encounter (total of 14 days in field)	34 responses
Supporting evidence of method	(see Chapter 5, reference list)	Appendix 2a, 2b, 3	Appendix 4, 8	(see Chapter 5)	Appendix 5

Table 4.1: A summary of the study's methods and data (2013-2016)

4.3.1 Case study

The case study method is favourable as it allows for a particular issue to be studied in depth, and from a variety of perspectives (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). It is a "strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 1993: 52). The case study approach provides opportunities to ask how and why questions in a range of different ways which aim to explain causation and are able to disentangle a complex set of factors and relationships in one or a small number of instances, ideal for critical realist research (Rice, 2010; Easton, 2010). As such, given the justification for the exploration of the phenomenon of participation in CG, utilising a case study approach is necessary to be able to focus on different scales of influence, to generate new insight and to shed new light on the phenomenon to contribute to existing knowledge.

However, a key criticism regarding case study research relates to generalisability – making inferences about a population based on a single sample. However, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) in Gomm *et al.,* (2000) infer, many do not claim to make generalisable statements, but offer a new way of understanding a working hypothesis. The aim of this study is not to provide a representative or generalisable account regarding participation in CG in all urban contexts; by focusing on the particular case study is a way to understand the phenomena which may generate an emergent conceptual understanding which may be informative for shared learning in other contexts. Thus, this approach "involves investigating one or a small number of social entities or situations about which data are collected using multiple sources of data and developing a holistic description through an iterative research process" (Easton, 2010: 119).

The case study method is particularly appropriate when investigators are required to: 1) broadly define research topics, 2) uncover contextual or complex multivariate conditions and not just isolated variables, or 3) reply on multiple, not single sources of evidence (Yin,

2003). Furthermore, "the case study method is the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context." (Yin, 2003: 4). As such, case studies involve studying a phenomenon within its real-life setting; a specific example within time and space is chosen for study (Kitchin and Tate, 2000).

Case studies commonly involve the use of a number of data collection methods - these can be qualitative and/or quantitative in nature, and involve both primary and secondary data (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). This is reflected in the mixed-methods approach adopted by the study (Table 4.1), explored in the following sections. In terms of selecting a case study, Yin (2003) asserts that this should be not based on the most convenient and accessible site from which data can be collected but the "selection process needs to incorporate the specific reasons why you need a particular [case, or] group of cases" (Yin, 2003: 10). Lambeth, the chosen case study for the study is detailed in Chapter 5, and is a singular explanatory case study (Yin, 1993) which was chosen for the following reasons:

- Large number of community food growing projects recorded across the borough
- Active food governance formation (in the form of a food partnership comprising public sector and civil society organisations)
- High socio-economic and ethnic diversity
- Highly populated and dense urban setting (reflective of many London boroughs)
- Contained and accessible site (within the constraints of the study), with established relationships with a few key organisational actors (gatekeepers).
- Situated within a broader geographic entity (London) and food governance structure (the London Food Board)
- Open to engaging with the research.

4.3.2 Text Analysis

As shown in Table 4.1, to gain a sufficient understanding of the case study areas, a text analysis of a number of relevant secondary data sources was undertaken. The analysis of key documents was undertaken during the study's methodological design, before the collection of primary data, and was a 'light touch' method to explore the extent of information available, and the key themes in the borough and city relating to for example, community food growing, food governance formations, and key organisations involved. This informed the chosen case study and also provided a general background understanding to aid with primary data collection. Throughout the study, particularly in the write-up stage, a further exercise was undertaken to incorporate updated information. 'Texts' in human geography can refer to a range of materials including landscapes, maps, music, and visual texts, for example, all of which can be 'read' (Aitken, 2005; Bryman, 2008). More specifically, documentary analysis can include speeches, newspaper and magazine articles, and letters (Robson, 2011). An analysis of texts in the study included key websites, and documents in the public domain, for key organisations in the borough. Chapter 5 which focuses on the wider context in which the study is situated, specifically draws on the analysis of these secondary data sources.

4.3.3 Interviews

Within the chosen case study, interviews were undertaken as one data collection method and were conducted in two stages using a semi structured approach. Interviewing is an intensive method used to study agents in an in-depth way; they are often described as conversations with a purpose to give an authentic insight into people's experiences (Cloke *et al.,* 2004). There are different types of interviews varying across a range of structured, semi-structured and unstructured formats, more often than not (in interpretivist or realist research) they are semi-structured or unstructured (Cloke *et al.,* 2004; Longhurst, 2003;

Valentine, 2005). Semi-structured interviews are orderly, partially structured and take a conversational and fluid form (Longhurst, 2003; Valentine, 2005) and allow for a sensitive and people orientated approach which allows the "interviewee to construct their own accounts of their own experiences by describing and explaining their lives in their own words" (Valentine, 2005: 111).

Although the interviewer prepares a list of predetermined questions, semi-structured interviews unfold in a conversational manner offering participants the chance to explore issues they feel are important, therefore, each interview varies according to the interviewee's experiences, interests and views (Longhurst, 2003; Valentine, 2005). Within semi-structured interviews, there are opportunities for the interviewer to go back over the same issue asking questions in a different way to explore issues thoroughly as well allowing respondents to raise issues that the interviewer may not have anticipated (Valentine, 2005). As such, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to alter the order and phrasing of the questions and to seek clarification on particular answers. Unlike questionnaires, "the aim of an interview is not to gain data that aims to be representative or widely generalisable (a common but mistaken criticism of this technique) but to understand how individual people experience and make sense of their own lives" (Valentine, 2005: 111).

Interviews are used to gain access to the *meanings* which interviewees attribute to their experiences of the world and are a popular method in the social sciences as a way to undertaking research in which to obtain and represent a range of different voices (Cloke *et al.,* 2004). Although there are many strengths of the interview method, there is also recognition of the concerns or limitations. For example, a critique is how some researchers can approach "interviewing in a rather blasé fashion, assuming that all you have to do is as the right questions and the respondent's feelings, thoughts and experiences will fall into your notebook or tape recorder" (Cloke, 2004: 149).

Furthermore, there is recognition that the interviewer is implicated in the construction of meanings with their interviewees. Positivists particularly associate bias with interview data as interviewers are not or cannot be detached; however, others argue that there is no such thing as complete objectivity in social science research. Rather, such intersubjectivity is unavoidable as all research work is explicitly or implicitly informed by the experiences, aims and interpretations of the researcher, and that researchers should treat participants in their research as people, not objects to be exploited for information (Cloke, 2004; Valentine, 2005). As such interviews require careful planning and thought, and skill on the part of the researcher as well as the process of reflexivity (based on subjectivity) through the research process (discussed in section 4.4).

Key actor interviews

The aim of the key actor interviews was to gain an understanding of the context area, to obtain their input into the study process and design of the project-participant[16] interview schedule and survey, and to also act as the initial part of the snowballing process (discussed further on). The semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 2a, 2b) was largely scoping in nature, and was designed to explore and gather data on the following[17]:

- Overview of London / Lambeth food governance structures and strategic [food] involvement (and their evolution)
- How Lambeth fares compared with other boroughs in terms of its food governance and community food growing activity
- The relationship between London and Lambeth's food governance formations

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[16] For reference, although many of the study's participants are in fact Lambeth 'citizens', for the purpose of the study, those taking part in the study in their professional role will be referred to as 'key organisational actors', and the community food growing project participants will be referred to as project-participants.

[17] The interview schedule was modified to reflect the city-level or borough-level actors being interviewed.

- Overview of the role(s) of the interviewee

- Overview of community food growing in Lambeth (and in London generally)

- Their perspective regarding people's motivations and barriers to participating in community food growing activities (and strategic level activities)

- Their opinion on the study in general, and prospect causal factors (discussed below)

- Their advice on other key actors to contact to request for an interview (this also involved the selection of project sites suitable for data collection with participants).

The philosophical approach taken informed the design of data collection methods and resulted in the identification of prospect 'causal factors' influencing participation. These were informed by the existing literature as well as from research experience in the chosen subject area. The following factors were initially considered:

- Conventional food system (e.g. disconnection between people and food, driven by capitalism)

- Neoliberalism (e.g. the presence of individualism)

- Networks / community (e.g. a desire for)

- Urbanism (e.g. efforts to make the city more sustainable)

- Policy context (e.g. local / national level policy / food governance formations)

- Resource (e.g. space)

- Time (to participate)

The key organisational actors were asked to consider and comment on these factors, and additional factors influencing participation arising from these interviews included:

- Climate change (e.g. projects as a response to)

- Local food environment (e.g. food poverty, obesity epidemic)

- Key contacts

Thus, these draft factors thought to influence participation were integrated into the data collection methods, outlined in the following sections. Through this consultation, actors advised on the data collection tools and processes regarding project-participants which was considered to strengthen the data collection process, as well as informing how findings may be of benefit to them in progressing with the aims of their activities (promoting participation in community food growing).

Selection and sampling method

Within the case study, it was necessary to identify community food growing projects to be able to access people who participate in such activities, via 'gatekeepers' which are "individuals in an organisation that have the power to grant or withhold access to people or situations for the purpose of research" (Burgess, 1984: 48 *cited in* Valentine, 2005: 116). Through this process, interviews with gatekeepers led to interviews with key borough-level organisational actors, which then resulted in accessing community food project growing participants (project-participants) – a process known as 'snowballing'.

> "This term describes using one contact to help you recruit another contact, who in turn can put you in touch with someone else. [...] The strength of this technique is that it helps researchers to overcome on of the main obstacles to recruiting interviewees, gaining their trust. It also allows the researcher to seek out more easily interviewees with particular experiences or backgrounds" (Valentine, 2005: 117).

The gatekeepers that were crucial at the start of the data collection process were identified as a result of an European funded project (the 'Foodmetres' project), delivered across 6

international cities, of which London was one of them. The Foodmetres project[18] commenced in September 2012 (for three years, until October 2015) and thus ran at the same time as the study. London was the UK case study and the research team was formed of a range of organisations, including Coventry University and the CSO Sustain which, has links with many of the boroughs in London, including Lambeth. The project engaged with the boroughs of Lambeth and Enfield, investigating local and metropolitan urban agricultural food systems with a specific focus on a range of short food supply chains. Due to this difference in focus, the study and the project did not comprise the same focus. Three of the key actors interviewed were involved with the Foodmetres project (as shown by the blue icons in Figure 4.1) who were key in the snowballing process. A detailed description of each of the actors is given in Appendix 3.

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[18] Foodmetres - Food Planning and Innovation for Sustainable Metropolitan Regions (see Wascher *et al.,* 2015).
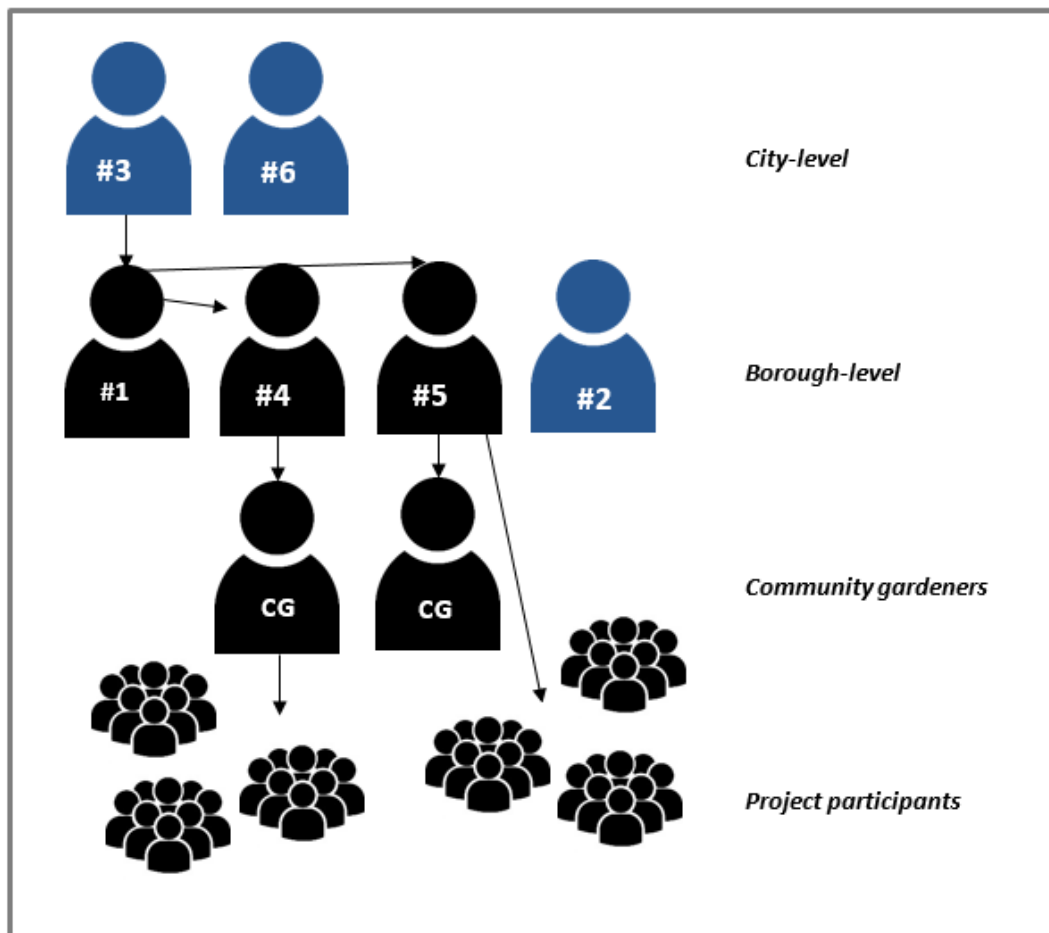
Figure 4.1: Key organisational actors and the snowballing process (Source: Author)

Other key actors[19] at the city and borough-level were contacted for an interview but were unavailable (due to a lack of capacity or time) to take part in the study. This reflects the lack of personal connection with Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL) actors, although as with a number of the other borough-level actors, contact was made via a recommendation from a shared contact. This reflection highlights the importance of 'buy in', trust and personable connections, rather than expecting to commence research from scratch without these aspects in place.

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[19] Including: the chair of Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL), the IEL food hub coordinator, a member of the food team at the Greater London Authority (GLA) (Mayor's office), and a community food activist / member of the Lambeth Food Partnership.

To meet the study's objectives, a range of non-probability sampling strategies were utilised. Probability sampling is "where each person of the population has an equal, or at least measurable, chance of being chosen as a potential respondent [and] non-probability samples are those where some people have a higher chance (although not a measurable one) of being chosen" (Cloke *et al.,* 2004: 145). As a result of snowballing, key organisational actors[20], acted as gatekeepers to access projects, community gardeners and participants (see Figure 4.1). Therefore, community food projects were selected based on the snowballing process, and project-participants were identified as a result of a purposive, convenience sample, being of particular importance to the researcher (Cloke *et al.,* 2004). Participants who were approached were also 'self-selecting' – in some instances participants were directly approached and in other instances a blanket request was sent out to recruit participants. Therefore, the central sampling methods employed by the study are snowballing, purposive and convenience, which are all non-probability types.

Project-participant interviews

Informed by the literature as well as the feedback from key actors, the participant interview schedule was designed (Appendix 4). The aim of the interviews was to explore and gather data on participation in community food growing projects, specifically participants' motivations, as well as socio-economic data, their connection to any of the borough's strategic organisations and to uncover prospect causal factors. The interview schedule was guided by the six key sections[21] as shown in Box 4.1. After piloting, the interview schedule

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[20] Key organisational actor #4, in working with the employed community gardener, was instrumental in providing access to the projects and participants on a number of estates. Key organisational actor #5 was also influential in contacting the projects and participants.

[21] National surveys were reviewed and although they did not inform the study's data collection tools a number of questions were inspired by the Community Life Survey (Cabinet Office, 2014). This process shed light on how useful current surveys are when exploring more informal notions of participation (such as in community food growing projects). These include: 'The Citizenship Survey' (Community and Local Government, 2012a; 2012b), the 'Volunteer Motivation Inventory' (Esmond and Dunlop, 2004), and 'The Civil Pulse Model / Survey' (McLean, and Dellot, 2011).

was refined slightly to simplify it. This was achieved by removing more structured components (such as a scale), merging questions to avoid repetition, and using more structured questions (e.g. 21 and 23) as a guide / prompt. On reflection, it may have been more beneficial to have designed an interview schedule incorporating a number of thematically structured open-ended questions, to account for the free-flowing nature of interviewing, which is how the interviews were indeed conducted, although this did allow for a clear structure to be followed which aided data analysis. The interview schedule was initially designed in such a way, as it was intended to generate some quantitative data that could be merged with the survey data, for comparability to the wider population sample. This was decided against because firstly, despite the pilot, it was not possible to ask questions in this fashion to every participant, and so was excluded in some of the interviews (due to the variable nature of interviewing) and as such, a semi-structured approach was indeed used.

At one estate, a group interview was conducted with four participants who were waiting to take part in the research and to provide a tour of their food growing space. When asked, they wanted to remain as a group to talk about their participation. In response to this the interview questions were easily adapted to run an impromptu group interview, which was successful as the participants were open, and comfortable with one another to discuss their opinions and experiences. Individual conversations were able to take place with the participants throughout the visit, of the food growing space, which supplemented the group discussion.

A. Involvement in the project

This section collected general data about what kind of project they are involved in, what their participation looked like, what factors initially, and currently influenced participation, how long they had lived in the area, whether they participated with anyone, and their perception of a sense of community in the area.

B. Meaning and perception of impact

The aim of this section was to collect data that went a bit deeper into the impact of project participation on the lives of participants, in the area of community / social relationships and on the local environment.

C. Resource and opportunity

Questions in this section revolved around whether participants were currently or had previously been involved in any food-related or community projects. Moreover, questions were asked regarding what participants felt they would do, should hypothetically, their current project cease to exist, to ascertain what aspect of projects were meaningful to participants.

D. Barriers

In this section, questions centred on whether there was anything participants found difficult or challenging about their current involvement, anything that they were initially apprehensive about, and anything that would stop them participating in the future.

E. Rights and responsibilities

This section was aimed at assessing how important participants felt projects were, their views on how to widen participation, and whose responsibility they felt it is to make projects happen.

F. About you

The final section contained questions on participant's demographics as well as their awareness of various food governance formations, strategic level food activities at the city and borough level. Participants were also asked if there was anything else they would like to add, or talk about further.

Box 4.1: Summary of project-participant interview guide

4.3.4 Survey

Often regarded in relation to positivist methodologies, surveys are also a part of a realist methodology (Jarvis, 2000). Survey data can be broadly classified into three types: data that classify people, data that examine the behaviour of people, and data about attitudes, opinions and beliefs. As such, surveys are able to gather a range of information by administering a standardised set of questions to a sample of individuals (Parfitt, 2005; McLafferty, 2003). The advantage of using a questionnaire, is that they "allow researchers to count up differing kinds of responses to questions, particularly where the questions are 'closed' (that is referring to a fixed range of potential answers)" (Cloke *et al.,* 2004: 130). Therefore, this 'counting up' of responses produces numeric measurements for the range of questions asked; "this information can then be cross-tabulated and used to make quantifiable inferences about the wider sample from which the sample is drawn" (Cloke *et al.,* 2004: 130). It is argued that questionnaires are able to provide consistent, bias-free and therefore representative answers across a large sample, convenient when looking for patterns or consistency (Cloke *et al.,* 2004). However, surveys do need to be informed by a carefully considered set of research objectives which underpins how the survey is designed and administered (Parfitt, 2005; McLafferty, 2003). In recognition of the limitations associated with questionnaires, Cloke *et al.,* (2004) inform that they are a familiar fact of life in the developed world. Thus, 'survey fatigue' may have implications for participant interest (survey response rate). Moreover, the intellectual and physical time and effort surveys entail should not be underestimated; they can be time consuming and expensive to conduct, and the type of information gathered as well as the quantity of information is important, and needs to be carefully considered (Parfitt, 2005; McLafferty, 2003).

There are two types of responses to questions – open ended and fixed responses and questionnaires in general can comprise either or both type of responses. Open ended questions give participants the opportunity to create their own responses in their own

words to express 'true' viewpoints and attitudes, preferences and emotions (McLafferty, 2003). However, open-ended responses have to be coded and categorised which depends on a level of subjectivity and time – more of which is needed if there is a large number of responses. Fixed response questions offer a limited, pre-determined set of responses for the participant to choose from, making it easier and quicker for respondents to answer and can incorporate a range of responses such as scale, categories and ranks; this allows for an easier and less time-consuming analysis as responses fall into a limited set of categories (McLafferty, 2003). Although a downside is a lack of detail, richness and personal viewpoints that such questions are able to obtain. This method was used in a mixed methods approach, in combination with interviews that were able to account for, and focus on more detailed responses (McLafferty; 2003).

For the purpose of the study, the face-to-face, telephone and postal methods were not employed (at least initially), due to resource (cost and time) constraints regarding access to the 'quota' sample (a specific group of the population) of people in Lambeth participating in community food growing projects. The online survey method was chosen, which was deemed less resource intensive and there were various ways in which the survey could be promoted; the sample was controlled by being explicit about who the survey was aimed at and including this as a question at the start of the survey. The survey was discussed with key actors (in terms of design and administration) due to their knowledge of the target sample population. The survey was promoted by key actors and various groups, organisations and individuals at the borough and city level via email (to participants and wider networks) and social media (Facebook and Twitter). This was to ensure that as many participants as possible across Lambeth were notified of the survey. The survey was approved by the gatekeepers and a pilot survey was administered to Coventry University staff members and postgraduate students (completed by nine participants) to assess that the research function worked well as a whole (Bryman, 2012). By conducting the pilot, data

input and analysis was tested and feedback was obtained which enabled the survey to be fine-tuned before the final version was launched.

Due to a low response rate, the survey deadline was extended three times over a period of five months, and it was decided that a version of the 'face-to-face' method would also be employed by two gatekeepers. The surveys were re-designed in the correct format, printed and posted to the gatekeepers along with pre-paid envelopes to that once distributed to participants, they were able post their completed surveys. This method often produces a higher response rate but does incur the most cost in the sense of printing surveys, and spending time distributing them or completing them with respondents. In this case, surveys were completed individually by participants as the gatekeeper acted as an initial distributor, which allowed for initial explanation of the survey context when necessary; this accounts for the limitations associated with this method around bias (Cloke *et al.,* 2004; McLafferty, 2003).

As the gatekeepers were able to support as part of their day-to-day role, this did not result in much expended time, which would have been the case without the support of the gatekeepers, and the presence of participants may have not been guaranteed during project visits – therefore, this method was decided on due to the numerous constraints stated. In total 33 surveys were completed (12 online surveys, and 22 were returned by post), pointing towards a general survey fatigue, or a lack of online presence of community food growing project participants, or willingness to engage in the apparent food growing networks in the borough. In all instances the surveys were incentivised, with the option to be entered into a prize draw to win a number of vouchers to spend at a range of high street stores. On reflection, what may have resulted in a higher completion rate (in addition to the reflections on gatekeepers) was making further personal connections with more

community food growing project networks; however, this had already been attempted through IEL, and thus wasn't a feasible option.

The survey was conducted to gather data at the borough-level to support or question the themes arising from the qualitative data. Therefore, the survey largely focused on fixed-responses, rather than open ended responses. Building on the interview schedule some questions were standardised / categorised to make them appropriate for the survey, some were removed, and additional questions were added to further explore the themes arising from the preliminary interview analysis. Therefore, the survey built on the themes of interest to the study (Box 4.2) arising from the interview schedule to gather data on the regularity of patterns; sections 3 and 4 of the survey built on sections B – E on the interview schedule, appropriate for a concise survey that was not too long. The survey was designed in Bristol Online Survey (BOS), Coventry University's approved survey tool (Appendix 5).

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1) **Involvement in food growing projects:** What kind of community food growing project they are involved in and where? (the location / name of project), frequency of involvement and initial awareness of project.

2) **Your reasons for participating in food growing projects:** what factors initially and currently motivates their participation.

3) **Aspects of community food projects you value:** the extent to which different aspects of community food growing projects are valued.

4) **The importance of food growing projects:** how participants perceive the importance of different aspects of community food growing projects.

5) **About you:** questions focusing on demographic information, as well as awareness of different food governance structures and strategic activities at the city and borough level. There was room for further comments to be made.

Box 4.2: Summary of the online survey content

4.3.5 Observation

Observation is a method which studies what people do, rather than what they say, and is therefore of much value to human geography (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). An advantage of an observational approach is that is:

> "sensitive to the individuals within the study [including the researcher] and also allows a certain amount of growth and progression of ideas and focus during the course of the study. [...] As such, some lines of enquiry will die while others will be followed up and observed more closely" (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 224).

Limitations concerning this method include how it can be time consuming, the extent to which the observer affects the situation under observation, and the need to develop trusting relationships with participants. Some of these aspects can be overcome by participants being accustomed to, at ease and comfortable with the presence of the researcher (Robson, 1993). The nature of observational recording and techniques as a method also raises concerns due to the position and interpretation of researchers (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). However, subjectivity recognises that research identities cannot be separated from other identities, and that researchers are not just researchers - such aspects of positionality and reflexivity are discussed in the next section. In sum, observation as a method contrasts with and complements data obtained by other techniques and is the principle technique for getting at 'real life' in the 'real world' (Robson, 1993).

Different types of the observation method exist. For example, observation can be 'covert' whereby participants do not know the researchers' identity and that they are being observed. This method is largely rejected in contemporary human geography research due to its ethical implications. The other broad type is 'overt' where the researchers' identity is known by the participants, who also know that they are being observed. Observation can be

'straight' where the researcher observes from a distance, rather than interacting with the participants which is the case in 'participant observation'. Here, the researcher joins a group of participants in an activity for example, or can record events as an observer.

The type of observation undertaken is aligned closest to the 'participant as observer' rather than the complete, or marginal 'participant', or complete 'observer' (Robson, 1993). Participants were fully briefed through explaining the Participant Information Sheet and consent form, and the study and methods were fully explained to them, including the motivations for undertaking it, which in turn created acceptance and buy in. This resulted in having 'tours' of food growing spaces, questioning and listening to what participants were doing, which complemented the interview method. When they arose, opportunities for participation were taken, which included harvesting and tasting vegetables (with participants), and attending a group meeting / refreshment break, for example. Rather than employing a coding scheme, observational data was generated and recorded in a more holistic way; consisting of more than random note taking, observations were recorded by detailed notes in a research diary that consisted of descriptive information, subtle interactions, narrative accounts and general reflections. This meant that in addition to descriptive data relating to place, people, actions activities for example, more detailed opinions and hypotheses about what was happening were also recorded (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). This exercise took place when possible in the field or as soon as possible after each research encounter (e.g. formal and informal meetings, interviews, site visits).

4.4 Positionality and reflexivity

As with all research, it is important for researchers to reflect upon their own positionality in the research process (Valentine, 2005). The researcher's positionality (subjectivity and positioning) represents a significant contextualisation of their role in co-constructing and then interpreting data. Although researchers need to be aware that they cannot ever fully

recognise or represent their own positionality (Cloke *et al.,* 2004), it is crucial to consider positionality, and "what it might mean in relation to the way in which we do our research, and how the people we work with perceive us" (Valentine, 2005; 113). A whole host of factors have a bearing on how our identities are formed, and how we do research, including race, gender, class experiences, our levels of education, age, able-ness, for example (Valentine, 2005).

Furthermore, the role of the interviewer in conducting the interview is important to consider; it is important for the interviewer to establish a 'rapport' with the participant (Cloke *et al.,* 2004). This rapport is certainly influenced by the location of the interview, who is present, the appearance and demeanour of the interviewer; other characteristics such as style of dress or manner of speech can be adjusted (Valentine, 2005). It is important to recognise and understand positionality in this sense, particularly when working with a range of people, as it can influence the way in which interviewees disclose information when responding to questions, which may, for example may be different if another researcher was asking the questions.

Reflexivity is a component of positionality, and has a number of meanings in the social sciences, Bryman (2012: 393) asserts that: "social researchers should be reflective about the implications of their methods, values, biases, and decisions for the knowledge of the social world they generate." Reflexivity, according to Watson and Scraton (2001: 272), "requires ongoing critical analysis of the concepts we employ, not only in terms of the kind of research results that are gathered but how they are defined and applied." Furthermore, reflexivity is a continual process that occurs over different times in different places and is not a singular process tied to a specific event (Watson and Scraton, 2001). Reflexivity entails sensitivity to the researcher's specific cultural, political and social context in which "'knowledge' from a reflective position is always of a researcher's location in time and social

space" (Bryman, 2012:393). As such, reflexivity was an undergoing process throughout the period of the study (also captured in observational notes), and something that was considered as part of the wider researcher role generally (e.g. in relation to other research projects, see Brown and Bos, 2017).

The process of reflexivity, and a consideration of positionality, based on previous research experience with a range of people has an overall positive impact on the study. The approach taken recognised the importance of interviewing and consulting with a number of key organisational actors, which in turn facilitated data collection processes. There was quick acceptance from participating actors (and project participants) due to the nature (and approach) of the study and because of an established relationship with a number of key and well known and networked gatekeepers who were 'automatic' advocates for the study. Being forthcoming about involvement in previous research project such as the Master Gardener Programme evaluation (Lambeth was one of the areas participating in the programme) and the Foodmetres project, gave credibility to the study. Moreover, the analysis of secondary data provided a background understanding of the key organisations, initiatives, issues and areas in the borough.

These skills and groundwork were necessary due a recognition of how certain aspects of the researcher's positionality may be (and have previously been) perceived. For example, establishing rapport with key actors within organisations can be a challenge in a society and context where knowledge is key, especially for a researcher who possesses a combination of the following attributes: lacks a doctorate, is female and 'young'. These attributes can be barriers in terms of having to justify being an employed, full time researcher, and explaining how undertaking a part-time PhD works in practice, especially in more 'corporate' settings. Such barriers were overcome by applying learned skills (from previous research experiences) to present as more professional or credible (when required in more

professional settings), through a consideration of how to introduce the study, the extent to which background knowledge and experience is shared, and other considerations such as, for example, clothing.

Such experiences and considerations contributed towards greater acceptance, support and positive relationships established at the key actor level, who were advocates for the study (as were community gardeners), resulting in a trickledown effect to the participant level where acceptance was also present. Whilst certain attributes were more of a barrier when interacting with organisational actors, they were in fact regarded as advantageous in terms of relating to research participants. Such attributes (and experiences of being in similar settings) allowed for a non-threatening presence of the researcher, and, an ability to be adaptable to engaging and participating in real life settings. Moreover, previous experience of working with a range of community food growing participants meant that giving sufficient time and attention to what people care about (i.e. the spaces in which they had created) was important to respect people and the time they were giving to the study, and to establish and build rapport (in a person-centred manner). Part of the approach taken was to ensure that results are to be shared with key actors and participants as undertaking meaningful and useful research was of centrality. This however had to be balanced with realistic expectations regarding the completion and long-term nature of the study. Whilst one key actor asked for evidence to support a funding application, another key actor was keen to know when the thesis would be complete.

The help from one particular gatekeeper was extremely useful in arranging access to projects and participants. In some instances, however, this meant that they wanted to be present during the interviews, and acted in some instances as supporting the interview. As confidentiality is imperative, when this occurred, the interviewee was asked if they were happy for the other person to be present, and afterwards it was explained why such

presence was not ideal, unless their presence was deemed necessary (for safety issues for example). Working with this gatekeeper was enjoyable and insightful as communication was fairly regular, by email when arranging fieldwork visits, and it allowed for ad-hoc conversations when out in the field, when waiting for participants, travelling around the borough, and thus for a greater insight in the phenomenon. Despite the challenges encountered, which are considered as minor, the fieldwork stage of the study was a successful, positive, and enjoyable experience.

4.5 Research ethics

At each stage of the study, ethical approval was granted by Coventry University's Ethical Committee (pages 358-362) before undertaking desk based research (literature review) and primary data collection). The ethical procedure included completion of an in-depth electronic form, as well as attachments of the participant information sheet (PIS), consent form, risk assessment, and data collection tool. These were either approved or rejected in the instance of modifications to be made. Copies of the PIS and consent form are given in Appendix 6 and Appendix 7. In terms of the online survey, the necessary information was stated at the start of the survey, and by clicking onto the next page to start the survey, participants were fully informed that this meant the agreed to take part in the survey and had read the proceeding information. Permission was obtained for interviews to be recorded to ensure that all verbal data was captured sufficiently.

The interview recordings were typed up into interview transcripts which, along with the recordings, were anonymised (as can be seen in Appendix 8) and securely stored electronically, and physically in a locked location. Key actor interviews were sent to Coventry University's approved external transcription company (recordings anonymised) and participant interviews were personally transcribed. Participants taking part in

interviews and the survey were given the option to be entered into a prize draw to win a number of high street vouchers. Those participants that wanted to be entered into the prize draw were given a number for anonymisation, and then an online random sample calculator was used to pick numbers at random. The respective participants were then contacted and sent their high-street vouchers via post.

4.6 Data analysis

Before moving onto the conclusions, this section will outline the analytical process which has been applied to the data. The first column in Table 4.2 shows the four stages of the analytical process based on an iterative process which, through abstraction and retroduction, refines the data in an ongoing fashion (Pratt, 1995). 'Abstraction' is firstly applied by initially identifying the phenomenon of interest, and asking questions around causation. Secondly, prospect causal factors are identified, which allows for data to be collected based on a process of critical reflection and research, known as retroduction. Finally, this allows for the identification of factors that are considered to have caused the outcome – participation in CG (Easton, 2010). Table 4.2 shows the practical application of the data collection and analysis process in relation to the study (informed by the study's initial approach as discussed at the start of this chapter).

Table 4.2: Stages of data collection and analysis (Adapted from Easton, 2010)

All interviews were digitally recorded which were transcribed verbatim and then analysed based on the processes outlined in Table 4.2, influenced by processes involved in Grounded Theory (Jarvis, 2000). Grounded Theory, as formed of a set of principles and practices, can indeed complement other analytical approaches, as in the case of the study, and attempts to standardise the coding process but generally recognises that it is not a step by step, linear or clear process (Charmaz, 2006). In Grounded Theory, draft conceptual explanations are generated initially from the data, which may be elaborated on and modified as data are assessed against them (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Regardless of the level of theory, Strauss and Corbin (1998) stress that statements of relationships between concepts is done *throughout the course* of a research project. Through coding, the 'analytical grasp' of the data begins to take form, which is supplemented by analytical memos about comparison within the data and other ideas about the data. This process of studying, comparing and writing notes on the data allows ideas to be defined that best fit and interpret the data as 'tentative analytical categories', this analysis eventually produces more refined theoretical categories (Charmaz, 2006).

Analysis of the data (transcripts and field notes) was undertaken by coding – an ongoing process recognised as fluid, circular and messy, where themes may be identified before, during or after data collection and analysis stages (Cope, 2010; Charmaz, 2006). Themes, which are built up from codes, were identified in the literature to form prospect causal factors, which were therefore some of the themes that were looked for in the data. This type of coding is called 'selective coding', where a key category has been identified before data collection officially commenced. In addition, open coding was undertaken to a degree to 'open up' the data and to break it up (if necessary); this allows for a particular category to be pursued for a while as a way to test its relevance (Cope, 2010; Strauss, 1987).

Thus, analysis took various stages which allowed for codes to be identified and built up into themes, which may be further pursued or disregarded, or for existing themes (identified as prospect causal factors) to be tested. This process of 'theme building' allowed for data to be organised into common categories, trends or elements that are theoretically important (Cope, 2010). Analysis initially consisted of selective coding, where written notes or 'memos' were made on each of the transcripts and notes on this process were also kept in the research diary throughout. Then the data was visited again through the lens of 'open coding', where further codes were identified and then considered. Such analysis took place by reading across materials, coding individual documents and then working on all materials (including notes and memos on the coding process) to work on a particular theme drawing on codes from multiple texts. This allowed for trends to be identified which may be expressed or manifest in different ways, by different people (Cope, 2010).

This process took place initially on transcripts and then in a number of word documents were different thematic subheadings were stated and corresponding blocks of text from each transcript were copied and pasted under each relevant subheading. This was an ongoing process where strong themes were further interrogated, some themes merged, and redundant themes were put into another document (which were then checked to ensure they need not be included). Therefore, this method and process of retroduction allowed for data to be ordered, for candidate factors to be considered, and influence from Grounded Theory allowed for new emergent themes to be considered. Thus, various versions of the data analysis took place consisting of various themes, until the 'finished product' was reached. This ongoing process resulted in the identification of a number of themes, which the following empirical chapters are structured around.

Finally, in terms of the quantitative data, once the survey had closed, online survey responses were exported in csv. format and then transported into SPSS – the Statistical Software Package for the Social Sciences. Paper based surveys were given an identifier number and then the numerical value for each response was manually inputted into SPSS (along with the online responses), where data analysis took place. Descriptive statistics and cross tabulation tables were run / created (based on categorical variables), the results of which were copied into Excel where data was manipulated to create graphs. A checking process took place, once the data was inputted, with a sample of surveys to check for any potential mistakes.

4.7 Methodological limitations

As will all research studies there are limitations to be recognised. From undertaking a mostly qualitative mixed-methods approach, the experiences and narratives of a range of participants have been uncovered, which has enabled an in-depth insight into CG participation. Being intensive in nature, this study does not seek generalisation or to be representative of the experiences of the wider population of people involved in the community food growing project models included in the study, or indeed within other projects in Lambeth or beyond. The case study approach has provided an in-depth and detailed snap shot of CG participation within a specific place and point in time; therefore, it is recognised that different findings may be generated if the study was undertaken at a different time, with different cases, or within a different place. A larger sample of quantitative data was anticipated, but the data that was generated was valuable in verifying findings from the qualitative data. Despite these recognised limitations, the study's methodological design, employing a mixed methods approach has resulted in a complementary data set, which through triangulation has reduced the threat of bias. Finally, undertaking a part-time PhD alongside a full-time job resulted in competing

demands and pressures, limiting the amount of time and resource available to dedicate to this research, however, wider research related experience did enhance the study through the transferability of skills and key contacts.

4.8 Summary of Chapter 4

This chapter has provided an overview of the research philosophy, the methodological approach and the chosen methods employed for the study. Moreover, it has appropriately demonstrated how much thought has been given to the design of such tools (as well as reflecting on various limitations), including the aspect of subjectivity and ethical consideration. To meet the study's objectives and overall research question, intensive methods form the basis of data collection (interviews), which has been supported through the application of an extensive method (survey). Finally, the chapter has justified the process of collecting and analysing data – the key themes of which are presented in the following empirical chapters.

Chapter 5

Community Food Growing in Lambeth: Context and Governance

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the chosen case study area of Lambeth, the wider city context in which it is situated, as well as the chosen projects, to contribute towards meeting the study's first two objectives: 'To identify informal, neighbourhood community food growing projects within a case study context', and 'To critically evaluate the governance arrangements and processes in which community food growing projects operate.' This chapter draws on both secondary and primary data, see Table 4.1 (Chapter 4) to present an informed understanding of the wider case study context, which is a key component of the conceptual framework (Figure 3.1). A comprehensive understanding of the context in which CG participation is situated is important to understand participatory cultures, and because participation is regarded as a situated practice embedded in and related to place (Cornwall, 2002; Gaventa, 2006; Brodie *et al.,* 2011).

This chapter firstly outlines the wider context of London's general governance structure and food governance formation, showing that there is a disconnect between city-level and borough-level food governance, giving rise to the ability of boroughs to be relatively autonomous in their food governance activities. Secondly, Lambeth's political and socio-economic composition is described, as well as the evolution of food growing activities and food governance in the borough. The city-wide Capital Growth campaign and the role of key people are demonstrated as being of significance to the level of food growing activity in the borough. The final section of this chapter presents the case study's community food growing models and projects; data from participants involved in these projects is presented in Chapters 6 and 7 (to meet Objectives 3 and 4).

5.2 Introduction to the wider city context of London

London is England's capital city and with a population of over 8.5 million people is regarded as a world city. Greater London comprises 33 boroughs, including 12 inner city

and 21 outer city boroughs. It has a unique governance structure – the Greater London Authority (GLA) - which was established in 2000 and is governed by the Mayor of London. The Mayor is responsible for leading the city-wide strategic government of Greater London, with city administration coordinated by the GLA. Every four years, the London Mayor is democratically elected, along with 25 Assembly Members and staff, who work with central government and London's boroughs. The Mayor is accountable to the London Assembly (at City Hall[22]) to ensure that decisions are in the public interest. The London Assembly comprises 25 elected members to ensure that the Mayor is held publically and democratically accountable (GLA, 2016c). Assembly Members also champion Londoners' concerns by investigating important issues and pressing for changes to national, Mayoral or local policy (London Elects, 2016). The Mayor sets an overall vision for London and has a duty to create plans and policies for the capital covering a range of areas[23].

London's annual budget of £17 billion (generated from central government grants, transport fares and other charges, business rates and council tax) supports investment in public transport, fire services and policing as well as the work of City Hall. Central government leads on the NHS, welfare and most forms of taxation, and the following services are the responsibility of the boroughs: council housing, schools, social services, rubbish collection, street cleaning, parking permits, council tax collection and birth, death and marriage certificates (London Elects, 2016). Thus, whilst London has its own unique governance structure with some degree of autonomy, it is still informed by central government in some areas, and likewise does not govern boroughs regarding particular public services. The London Plan (written by the Mayor, published by the GLA)

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[22] City Hall is the headquarters of the GLA (comprising the Mayor of London and the London Assembly).
[23] Arts & culture, business & economy, environment, fire, health, housing and land, planning, policing & crime, regeneration, sport, transport, young people, higher education, foreign Investment and attracting events and conferences to London (London Assembly, 2016).

is a strategic plan setting out an economic, environmental, transport and social framework for development (GLA 2016b). The Plan is a requirement of the GLA Act (1999) to deal with matters that are of strategic importance to London, and to include in its scope the health of Londoners, equality of opportunity, and sustainable development; food is part of this strategic remit.

There is stark disparity in London; the city "contains the highest proportion (15%) of people in the poorest tenth nationally and the second highest proportion (15%) of people in the richest tenth after the South East" (Aldridge *et al.,* 2015: 32). Whether it is income, pay or wealth, London is the most unequal part of the country with the poorest areas worse off than the rest of the UK population, whilst average pay is higher (Aldridge *et al.,* 2015). It is reported that around 2.1 million people in London are in poverty, and in relation to other regions, Londoners were found to have lower levels of wellbeing and life satisfaction, with the exception of the West Midlands (Aldridge *et al.,* 2013). According to London's Health and Environment Committee, thousands of Londoners are at risk of food poverty, something which affects children, those of a working age, older people as well as people both in and out of work. In response to this, the committee called for the London Food Board to take strategic responsibility for addressing food poverty in London, with the Mayor ensuring that the London Food Board (discussed in following section) has the right capacity to fulfil this role (GLA, 2013).

5.2.1 London's Food Context

London's food system has been characterised as a 'hybrid food system'; whilst the city has been named the world's 'gastronomic capital' comprising high quality restaurants reflecting an array of cuisines associated with the city's cultural diversity, the quality of the mainstream food system, like the rest of the UK, is poor (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010). This is due to an emphasis on plentiful, cheap food supplied by the conventional food

system, resulting in a range of issues (see Chapter 1). In addition, the London food system is thought to "be at the heart of a whole series of urban problems, which can be summarised under; health, environmental, economic, social and cultural, food security" (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010: 5). Food is considered by a number of government departments (beyond Defra – the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and organisations across London, and does not fit into the responsibility of one particular department. However, there are concerted efforts in London to take a more strategic approach to food in the city.

5.2.2 Food governance in London: The London Food Board

Understanding food governance in the chosen case study of Lambeth requires situating the borough within wider food governance structures at the greater London level. This is because Lambeth is a London borough and is therefore under the governance of London in a number of areas (see section 5.2). At the city-wide level, the Mayor implemented the London Food Strategy (LFS) 'Healthy and Sustainable Food for London' in 2006 after a year-long consultation process, which has the following objectives:

- improve Londoners' health and reduce health inequalities via the food they eat
- reduce the negative environmental impacts of London's food system
- support a vibrant food economy
- celebrate and promote London's food culture
- develop London's food security

Launched in 2006 by Ken Livingstone, Boris Johnson elected in 2008 was then responsible for the LFS. Initially, diet and health related issues (such as the obesity crisis) were key drivers of the LFS but under Boris Johnson's leadership, the focus of the LFS has been driven by the food security and food growing agenda (Reynolds, 2009). Such initiatives included the city-wide urban greening programme 'Capital Growth' discussed further on

in the chapter. The London Food Board (LFB), established in 2004, puts the LFS into practice by coordinating work and leading debate. The LFB forms an advisory group of independent and influential food policy organisations and experts from across London (progressively working in the area of food) chaired by the Mayor's food advisor, Rosie Boycott.

The LFB is supported by the GLA's Food Team[24] (GLA, 2016a); the intersection between the LFB, the GLA and London's boroughs is demonstrated in Figure 5.1. The aim of these city-wide activities is to take an overarching role in terms of strategically influencing food related practices in the city, and raising the profile of food / putting it on the political agenda. However, this is not to suggest that a number of organisations were not already trying to do this and it should be noted that there were many activities taking place across the city (many undertaken by the actors involved in the LFB) prior to the creation of the LFB and LFS.

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[24] In 2013, the GLA food team moved from the Environment Team within the GLA to the Business and Economy Team, to better fit with priorities (Halliday, 2015).
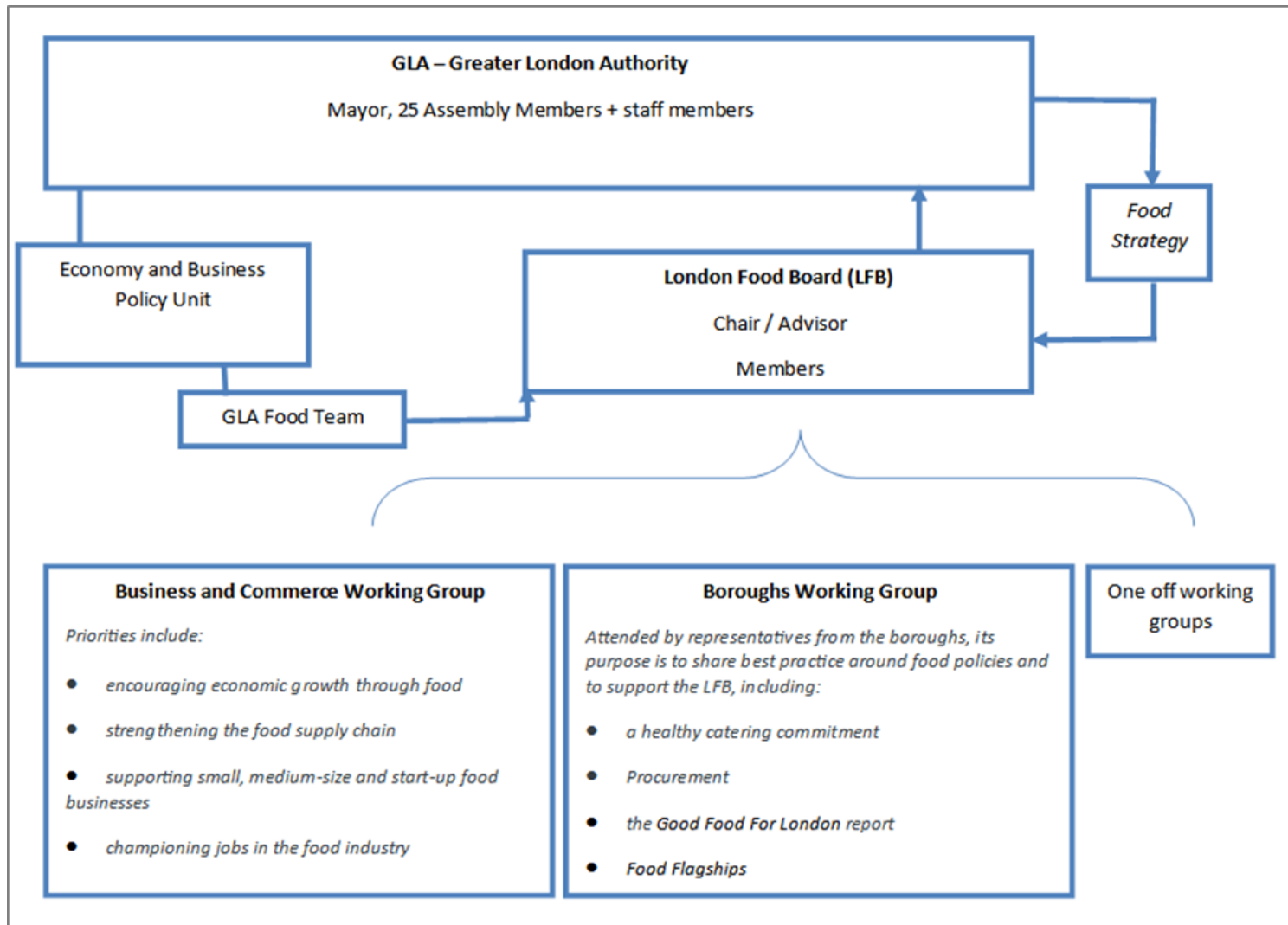
Figure 5.1: Overview of the strategic governance of food at the city level (Source: Author)

5.2.3 Experiences and perceptions of the London Food Board

The example of the LFB as a new food governance formation in practice, is largely progressive as it is working within political systems, for change (Fraser, 2005), but this does not suggest that it is without challenges. Interactions with, and viewpoints on the LFB were a key part of the organisational actor interviews (see Chapter 4, and Appendix 2a, 2b). The data show how there is a perception that the LFB lacks transformative power, in terms of having a limited effect or impact on borough level activities. For example, one actor stated:

"they [the Board] talk about very interesting things and I think it is very stimulating for the people that attend, but in terms of the decision power or the influence that they have is very limited … so I don't really understand what the purpose is because if you just want to get together with a group of people that are interesting, you don't have to come to the London Food Board." (National organisational actor 6).

With the LFB trying to influence London's 33 boroughs, the involvement and representation of only two boroughs (Halliday, 2015) has sparked some controversy and barriers as the boroughs are under no obligation to act in line with Mayoral preferences or to respond to recommendations from the GLA, and the majority of boroughs are not involved in governance of the London Food Plan (Halliday, 2015). The interview data supports Halliday's findings regarding a level of frustration with the LFB:

"I don't think that the London Food Board is really that clear on what it wants to get out of … meetings. I think the London Food Board is great but it doesn't really have any power as a board and it doesn't have any money. So, if you haven't got money and you haven't got power then what are you doing to try and influence

people... I just don't think they've got the time or the head space to think about

how best to use the London Food Board." (National organisational actor 3).

Fundamentally, the interviews show a level of disconnect regarding engagement with the LFB and boroughs. *"I think the GLA has worked, the London Food Board has worked quite in isolation"* (Local organisational actor 1). Coordination at this scale, according to one actor, is one of the challenges faced:

> *"the biggest problem in London in terms of coordination is that you have 33 Local Authorities, so to coordinate a meeting...it's absolutely impossible. In terms of policy level or in terms of streaming money from local budgets to something, that is something which is out of the question."* (National organisational actor 6).

Arguably, the size and scope of the LFB poses challenges for its ability to engage with the boroughs, *"I've kind of stopped following it. It's a different scale"* (Local organisational actor 2). Some of the frustrations with the LFB not only relate to the reported lack of action seen at the borough level and the challenge of scale, but also are informed by comparisons to other (perceived as successful) international food governance structures, which appear to be 'doing more' through partnership working (which is noted as a challenge for London), which is unsurprising considering the length of time they have been established. For example, one actor reflects on the example of Toronto (shown in Chapter 1, as an exemplar food governance model):

"in other cities, in Canada, they all got together, academics, the government and third sector, they all got together and created some kind of strategy[25], but those activities have never been able to happen in London. It has been more like, alright we have an idea and we will do it and everyone has ideas and they do it to try and get money and the problem is that this created an environment of competition for the funding that is available." (National organisational actor 6).

The data aligns to a critique regarding how the LFB is more aspirational than operational, as it lacks sufficient resource and power (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010). The actor interviews also suggest that there is little support, in terms of resources, for the LFB's governance activities; as such, power in this sense, is devolved to the borough level. The aspect of competition is further discussed in Chapter 7.

5.2.4 Interactions between city and borough scale

The implementation of plans, policies and strategies resting at the borough level is, according to Halliday (2015), arguably independent from the vision, objectives and plans of the LFS. Therefore, it is at the discretion of each borough regarding the extent to which they engage with the LFB and to determine what food-based activities they undertake within their borough (if any at all). However, this degree of autonomy at the borough level, in terms of decision making around food activities, has allowed boroughs to innovatively create their own food governance practices. City-level activities (undertaken for example by the organisational members of the LFB, and not necessarily LFB initiatives per se) do aim to influence the borough's activities (for example the Food for London Report). However, efforts to focus more on the boroughs are progressing; at the time of data collection, Lambeth was in the process of applying for the competitive Food Flagship award, run by the GLA (implemented under the LFB's Boroughs Working Group).

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[25] The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC), which formed in 1991, amongst other work have made significant contributions to a number of food and farming action plans, the food and hunger action plan, the environmental plans, the Toronto Food Strategy and the Toronto Food Charter, within the city of Toronto and Greater Toronto. (TFPC, 2015).

Lambeth has since been successful in the Food Flagship inner-city borough award (from the Mayor of London and Department for Education); obtaining the Flagship Food status means that Lambeth (as well as the outer city borough of Croydon) received £600,000 in 2014 to dedicate to food activities in the borough. This is based on a commitment from the Department for Education's School Food Plan, to encourage change in terms of healthy eating in schools and communities. This study has not been able factor this in, as data collection came to an end as the award was given. Whilst city-wide food governance efforts have, for the actors interviewed, had a limited impact on Lambeth on the one hand, it has also created the opportunity for local actors to independently develop appropriate food governance structures (discussed in the next section).

5.2.5 Sustain's Capital Growth campaign

Other city-wide activities have had a profound (in terms of an observable / tangible) impact on food related activities at the borough level, implemented for example by the organisations associated with the LFB. The city-wide 'Capital Growth' campaign has been successful in influencing the number of growing spaces and engagement in food growing across London, including in Lambeth. Capital Growth[26] was launched in 2009 by the national charity Sustain (the Alliance for Better Food and Farming), and can be considered as a CSO. Sustain is an independent charity (based on membership) which has been in operation since 1999; they are highly influential and run a magnitude of campaigns and projects such as the London Food Link[27], food and farming policies, and children's health to name a few, and sit on the LFB. Sustain represents around 100 public interest organisations at a range of levels (local, regional, national and international). Box 5.1 showcases the types of activities Sustain is involved in (Sustain, 2016a), including

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[26] Funded initially by the National Lottery's Local Food Fund; other funders include City Bridge Trust and the Mayor's Office (GLA).
[27]The umbrella term for all of Sustain's activities in London. A network with over 250 organisations and individuals ranging from farmers to food writers, caterers to coop mangers, bread makers to borough health and sustainability officers (London Food Link, 2013).

practical campaigns, and it also influences political parties on the matter of food and farming.

- Facilitate the exchange of information to strengthen the work of the membership, and help promote their activities to the media and to policy makers.
- Develop networks of members and allied organisations to devise and implement policies and practices on particular issues of common concern.
- Advise and negotiate with governments and other regulatory agencies to ensure that legislation and policies on food and agriculture are publicly accountable and socially and environmentally responsible.
- Encourage businesses to produce, process and market foods which are good for health and the environment, and to devise, invest in and maintain policies and practices that make sustainable food choices the easy choice.

Box 5.1: Activities Sustain initiates and works towards.

The campaign aimed to create 2,012 growing spaces in London by 2012; the Mayor of London, the London Food Link and the Big Lottery's Local Food were also partners forming the initiative. Involving approximately 90,000 people, they have established a coordinated mechanism for a network of community growers across London (Capital Growth, 2016). This has resulted in a large degree of influence in the city; taking a multi-level approach Capital Growth has worked at the grassroots level with citizens and with organisations such as housing associations, homeless and mental health charities (by providing training, networking and resources for example) to demonstrate change, and has used this as a force when arguing for political change with councils and city-wide government. For example, in terms of food growing, Sustain has worked with councils to agree to provide a certain amount of space for this, they have initiated the Food For

London report (see Figure 5.1, implemented by Sustain / London Food Link) to showcase boroughs' sustainable activities, incorporated food growing into the London Plan and have influenced the London Food Strategy.

> "*there's a very sort of long history of campaigning on the key issues, very sort of policy driven about how do you change things from a policy level. But also demonstration, how can you demonstrate something that works before we can then take it to the policy makers, and then how do we share that information?*" (National organisational actor 3).

The Capital Growth[28] campaign successfully achieved 2,012 growing spaces by providing resources to community growing groups and spaces and it continues to work directly with community growing groups, and their representatives.   In terms of planning policy in London, the density of the city creates contentions around space and development. One actor discusses Sustain's role in influencing space for community food growing in the London Plan:

> "*The planning, the policy supports community food growing so in terms of London they [community food growing] are in the London plan and in various supplementary guidance documents and in many planning strategies at the borough level but the reality is that when planners are working on planning applications, they have the pressure of housing because housing is a massive problem in the country so including spaces for community food growing ... falls off the agenda because the biggest priority is housing.*" (National organisational actor 6).

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[28] Capital Growth is supported by London Food Link, the Mayor of London and City Bridge Trust.

Despite this, it does show the influence of the charity and how community food growing has gained more credibility and has much potential throughout London, due to campaigning from Sustain (and undoubtedly other actors). This is an example of how Sustain, has influenced the planning system, which is a recognised area of contention (resulting in more 'radical' approaches, operating outside of 'the system' (Tornaghi, 2012; Hardman and Larkham, 2014), which has successfully resulted in political acknowledgement of food growing and green spaces[29]. Following on from an overview of the food governance activities at the London scale, examples of this innovation are also apparent at the borough level. Lambeth is an example of a borough initiating collaborative arrangements in the context of food governance, which along with the high number of community food growing spaces, makes it an ideal case study (see Chapter 4). The remaining sections of the chapter focus on the case study of Lambeth and the evolution of food governance and food growing activities in the borough.

5.3 Introduction to the case study: Lambeth

Lambeth is one of 33 boroughs in London and being located directly south of the river Thames is an inner-city borough (Figure 5.2). Politically, Lambeth Council comprises a majority of Labour councillors and since 2010 has set out to be a 'co-operative council', explained by the quote below. Lambeth's cooperative council ethos is likely to impact on the borough's collaborative arrangements regarding food governance, which will be discussed in the remaining chapters.

> "*so, we set all of our priorities, political priorities whatever, with the community*
>
> *and then we'll work towards those outcomes… but it's very much based on the fact*
>
> *that we put the citizen at the heart of everything we do. Co-produce everything,*
>
> *co design, co deliver as much as possible. It seems to me, and one of the big*

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[29] E.g. Policy 2.18 Green infrastructure: the multi-functional network of green and open spaces; Policy 5.10 Urban greening; Policy 5.11 Green roofs and development site environs; Policy 7.1 Lifetime neighbourhoods; Policy 7.22 Land for food (GLA, 2016d).

influencing factors, is localism, doing things a lot more locally. … we are looking

at more local jobs, local people doing things … it all sounds very uh… yes, but

actually we know that there are some people who want to do things." (Local

organisational actor 1)*.*

Some materials have been removed due to 3rd party copyright. The unabridged version can be viewed in Lancester Library - Coventry University.

Figure 5.2: Map of the London boroughs (ONS, 2015)

5.3.1 An overview of Lambeth demographic profile

Measuring 3 miles wide and 7 miles long, Lambeth has a population of just over 303,000 (the third largest population in inner London) resulting in a high population density of over 100 persons per hectare, which is more than double the population density of London (Lambeth First, 2011; Lambeth Council, 2015a). Lambeth's population is spread across the boroughs' 21 wards which function as administrative boundaries, which can be seen in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: Lambeth wards and selected community food growing projects (Adapted from Lambeth Council, *n.d.*)

Apparent in Lambeth are neighbourhoods or urban villages, larger in scale and comprising several wards, each with their own distinct culture; these areas in Lambeth are Brixton, Clapham, Hearne Hill, Kennington, Norwood, Stockwell, Streatham and Vauxhall and Waterloo (Lambeth Council, 2015a). The geographical composition of Lambeth creates an interesting dynamic for community food growing participation at the ultra-local scale (see Chapter 6). In terms of ethnic composition, census data (2011) reveals that 39% of the population in Lambeth is from a White British background (which in the past 10 years has decreased from 50%). One quarter (25.9%) of Lambeth's population is Black; Lambeth has the second largest Black Caribbean population (9.5%) in London after Lewisham (11%). With high West Indian immigration in the 1940s and 50s, Lambeth remains an important focus for the Black Caribbean population as large African and Portuguese populations reside in the borough (Lambeth Council, 2014). Compared to the inner London average (14.5%), Lambeth's Asian population (including Chinese) is relatively small (6.8%). Citizens from another White (18.1), White/Black or White/Asian (7.6%) background make up the rest of the borough's population along with those from an Arabic (0.6%) or other (1.9%) ethnicity.

Unsurprisingly, Lambeth is renowned for its diversity; it currently sits at 11th place nationally for diversity (scoring 4.9 out of a maximum of 18), over 150 languages are spoken and it is often described as 'one world in a borough' (Lambeth Council, 2014). Not only is Lambeth ethnically and culturally varied, it is socially and economically mixed with residents living in highly affluent areas in close proximity to other residents in areas of high deprivation. As a borough, Lambeth was ranked as the 14th most deprived district in 2011 (out of 326 local authorities in England). On the whole, London boroughs feature within the 20 most deprived areas in England including 7 inner city boroughs and 3 outer city boroughs. In Lambeth, there are also high proportions of social housing particularly in Brixton and North Lambeth and a recent study found 'strong correlations between

social housing tenure and higher rates of economic inactivity and Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claims' (Shared Intelligence, 2014).

Although the most deprived areas are spread throughout the borough, deprivation in and around the Coldharbour ward (see Figure 5.3 for clearly labelled ward names) is particularly concentrated, indicated by the darker areas (and highlighted by the red circle) in Figure 5.4. The lighter areas in Figure 5.4 show low Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) rankings in the areas to the west and south west of the borough as well as the more affluent areas (including the Dulwich border area of Thurlow Park and the Thames-side part of Bishops ward) (Lambeth First, 2011). The proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) residents across the borough is shown in Figure 5.5; the Coldharbour ward highlighted by the darkest area (and surrounding wards to the north and south) shows a high proportion of BME residents, correlating with areas of high deprivation in Figure 5.4. The community food growing projects included in this study are largely concentrated in and around the Coldharbour area. This particularly reflects the local dimension to the Myatt's Fields Park 'food hub' model. Whilst the Edible Living model also supports community food growing projects in and around the Coldharbour area, one project is located in Knights Hill and another in Ferndale, both of these wards also reflect high IMD rankings, and relatively high proporations of the population from a BME background (between 39.4% and 54.6%).

Figure 5.4: IMD 2010, Lambeth (national context) (Lambeth Council, 2015b)

Figure 5.5: Share of residents from a BME background (%, 2011) (Shared Intelligence, 2014).

Other socio-economic indicators show that one in three children in Lambeth are eligible for school meals and nearly one third (32%) of households fall into the 'low income' category (Lambeth First, 2011). One final measure to draw on shows that in general, average wellbeing is worse in Lambeth compared to average wellbeing scores for Inner London, London and England; 'life satisfaction' is 0.5 points below the average and for 'anxiety', the average score is 0.6 points above the average (Shared Intelligence, 2014). The following section discusses the health inequalities and food environment across Lambeth, which illustrates some response to these high levels of deprivation.

5.3.2 An overview of Lambeth's food context

There are a number of organisations within Lambeth considered part of the current food governance structures present in the borough. Much of the information in this section draws on reports and other materials collated by these organisations, which is advantageous, but does mean that there is a lack of critical insight into such activities (e.g. see Tornaghi and van Dkye, 2015). There is serious concern regarding food inequalities as well as associated disparities in the borough with food (to some degree) being used as a focal point to highlight some of these issues. Illustrated in Table 5.1, as taken from the Lambeth Food Strategy, are 'key food related issues' in the borough, which express concerns (and some aspirations), spanning the food system and encompassing a range of sectors, organisations and actors.

Some materials have been removed due to 3rd party copyright. The unabridged version can be viewed in Lancester Library - Coventry University.

Table 5.1: Key Food Issues (taken from the Lambeth Food Strategy, Lambeth Food Partnership 2014d: 6-7)

The social and health effects, resulting from such unsustainable food systems has recently come to the attention of Public Health departments. For example, Lambeth's annual Public Health report identifies food as a social condition that powerfully influences people's chances to be healthy (as well as other conditions such as housing, lifestyle factors etc.) (Department of Public Health, 2015). Of particular concern for Public Health researchers in Lambeth is how the borough faces a number of challenges which impact on food security and sustainability:

- High urban density and lack of green space for food growing

- Deprivation and low-income households

- Increasing population growth

- High reliance on imported food (Cunningham and Oki, 2013).

Food inequality presents a number of health challenges as "evidence shows that people most likely to be affected by diet related health conditions tend to be those in poverty, older people, people with disabilities, the unemployed and members of black and minority ethnic groups" (Cunningham and Oki, 2013: 7). In line with the borough's high levels of deprivation, the health scores for Lambeth are significantly worse than the England average for areas of life expectancy, diet related conditions and childhood obesity, with high levels of adult (and childhood) obesity also present in the borough (Cunningham and Oki, 2013). Taking a look at the environmental factors present, access to fresh, healthy food is compromised for those in the most deprived areas as food deserts and fast food outlets feature highly (Cunningham and Oki, 2013). These facts demonstrate a number of detrimental and immediate issues for those living in Lambeth, and can be viewed as the nucleus for the formation of some food governance structures and community groups in the borough aimed at trying to tackle some of these problems. The chapter now moves onto the emergence of food governance structures in the borough.

5.3.3 Evolution of food governance structures in Lambeth

The development of the food governance structures in Lambeth, as captured in Figure 5.6 has taken place between 2009-2014. Approaching the events in a chronological fashion, the launch of Capital Growth and the employment of the Green Communities Champions Officer (GCCO) at the Council in 2009 initiated the escalation of food governance and growing related activities in Lambeth, enabling action, as a result of resource. The GCCO position was recruited from the Public Realm Sustainability Unit, with a remit that included supporting the development of a cross borough programme with residents that will encourage groups to get involved in environmental projects, facilitate reducing household carbon emissions, increase recycling and decrease waste. The role also had a special focus on the Brixton Low Carbon Zone and responsibility for the monitoring of the project's carbon emissions (Lambeth Council, 2010). Therefore, food growing activities very much started as a community level, sustainability activity.
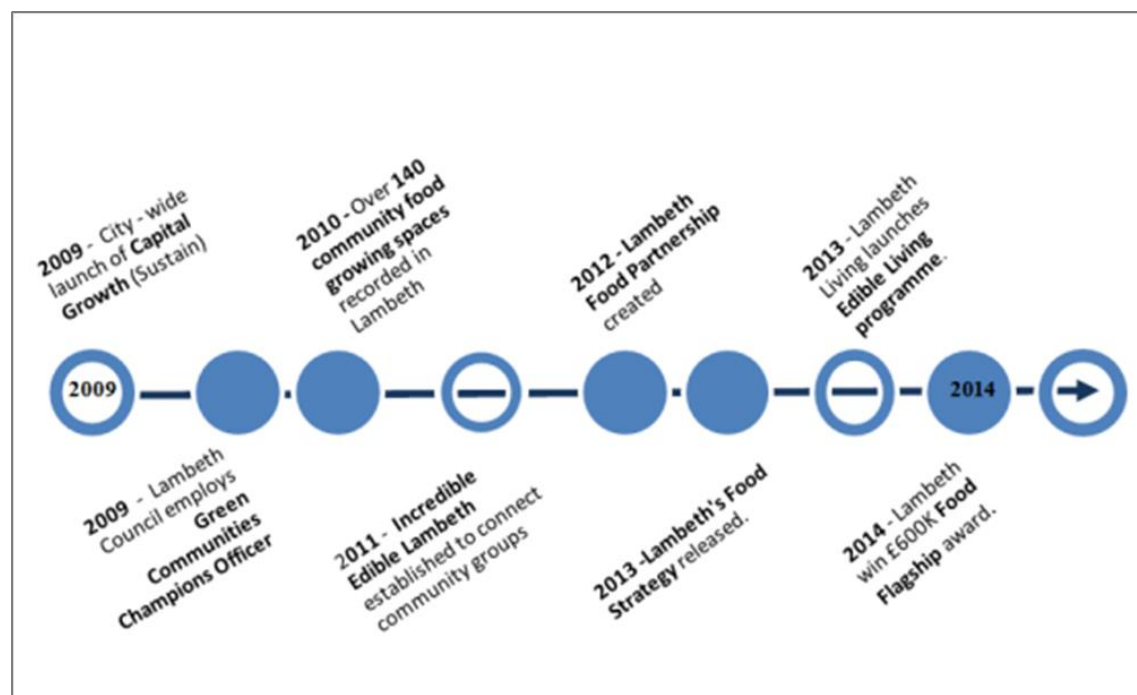

Figure 5.6: Timeline of key events in Lambeth (Source: Author)

In 2010, one year after the launch of Capital Growth, and the employment of the GCCO, 140 community growing spaces were recorded across the borough – this was recorded as 173 in 2013, and now stands at over 200 (London food Link, 2013; IEL, 2016). The GCCO played a central role in initiating and forming Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL) which, based on Incredible Edible Todmorden[30], was established in 2011 and is based on a membership model. Created in response to something that was already happening at the local level, IEL was established to enable existing community food growing projects to network - a strategic move by the GCCO two years after their employment to help facilitate the development of community food growing projects:

> "*once we had lots and lots of food growing projects it was hard for me to go and help them develop without working more strategically. So first of all, I helped put them, get those projects networked with one another. And that was when we set up Incredible Edible Lambeth, which is still going and is doing more and more...*"
> (Local organisational actor 1).

Lambeth was inspired by the Todmorden model, and they also wanted to 'be part of something bigger' (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014b), part of a wider movement. As an organisation, 'Incredible Edible Lambeth supports growers, cookers, and eaters to be more connected, more sustainable, and more successful'; their motto is, 'if you eat, you're in!' (IEL, 2015). IEL aim "[t]o increase healthy sustainable food grown, produced, sold and eaten through transforming our local food system, by celebrating, supporting and strengthening community food activity and the connections between local people and local food (IEL, 2016). Therefore, in aiming to establish an alternative local (economic)

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[30] Incredible Edible is an international network, with the first established in Todmorden in 2008. The project aims to bring people together through actions around local food, helping to change behaviour towards the environment and to build a kinder and more resilient world. In some cases, it also envisions groups becoming self-sufficient in food production, hence having all food being produced locally. For Todmorden, the aim is to be food independent by 2018. (Farming Matters 2011; Paull, 2013).

food system, IEL very much badge their activities as 'food activism', comprising a 'network of food growers and activists, working to nurture and strengthen local communities, through re-localising the food system in Lambeth' (IEL, 2016).

Classed as a key player in the borough, the GCCO has had significant influence in terms of community food growing; their role has since developed to Senior Policy Officer within the council, and they were also the inspiration and driving force behind the food partnership. Throughout the actor interviews, the role of this key person was unanimously recognised:

> *"So, in that sense Lambeth has been great because there's like a 'go to' person you know the other thing to say about Lambeth is that [name] is a real driver behind what's going on in Lambeth and the fact that [name] is a resident, and [name] works for the council, and [name] is passionate and committed you know I would, I don't think they would be where they are without [name]."* (National organisational actor 3).

This key individual also reflects on their own influence, *"[a lot of people] still know me as the person, the food person, so it lands on me a lot of the time."* (Local organisational actor 1). This also suggests the level of ambiguity existing around 'food' in policy and local authority arenas in terms of how there is not one council department or policy initiative for example tasked with the responsibility for food related issues or the development of sustainable food systems.

In line with the general rise in the number of localities implementing food partnerships; inspired by Brighton, the Lambeth Food Partnership (LFP) was the second to be formed nationally, *"we copied Brighton … or were helped by Brighton shall we say"* (Local

organisational actor 2). Other food partnerships have since formed, for example in Durham (Northern England) and other London boroughs including Islington and Greenwich (London Food Link, 2014). Starting as a working group in 2012, the LFP was created to coordinate the high level of food related activity in the borough. Throughout the interviews, actors recognised the 'impressive' activity in the borough, "*I think Lambeth is better organised. There is a layer of organisation and communication that doesn't exist in a lot of other places*" (Local organisational actor 1). Lambeth particularly stood out to a city-wide actor:

"I don't think they've [other boroughs] necessarily got the organisational structure behind what they're trying to do. … that's what's interesting about Lambeth, they are trying to do quite a lot they are trying to be grassroots-y and have lots of growing spaces and they are trying to do the political thing" (National organisational actor 3).

With the official launch in 2013 there are now twelve members forming the LFP board, three members are from Lambeth Council, Lambeth Public Health and IEL (Figure 5.7); the remaining posts are elected on an annual basis, or are seconded throughout the year as required (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014a). Three of the board members took part in the study (see Chapter 4). Membership of the LFP is open and free to join for anyone living or working in Lambeth.

Figure 5.7: The Lambeth Food Partnership (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014e)

The partnership's vision is: "to galvanise organisations and individuals to cultivate a healthier and more sustainable local food culture. By working together we are greater than the sum of our parts" (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014b). Recognised throughout the interviews is how people in Lambeth are actively passionate about food related issues, *"Lambeth is really, it's pioneering in a lot of ways. Some real, there's some real, I don't think it's too much to use the word 'food activists', for people who, you know are passionate about the food system in the borough"* (Local organisational actor 4). The aims and outcomes of the partnership (Table 5.2) show that the LFP's remit focuses on the whole food system in the form of seven outcomes in the three overarching areas of people, planet and economy. In terms of supporting the delivery of the outcomes, the LFP aims to facilitate projects where the Council, NHS and local communities work together (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014c).

Table 5.2: The aims and outcomes of the Lambeth Food Partnership (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014c; 2014d)

Ultimately, the LFP was formed as a body that could implement a food strategy, in recognition that it would take a collaborative partnership to reach this goal:

> "[w]e thought at first what we needed to do was write a strategy. But, once we started to work on a strategy, we realised what we really needed was a partnership so that we could all be working together … the real strength that we could see is in having the Partnership (Local organisational actor 1).

The LFP also wanted to be something more 'official' than a network that could apply for council external funding, act as an umbrella for all the activities going on in the community and the council, and involve businesses. Moreover, the LFP wanted to become a delivery partner with statutory bodies (such as the Council and NHS) using community resource to deliver sustainability and health interventions around food (Lambeth Food Partnership, 2014b). This shows how the ambitions of the LFP were recognised as much wider than what IEL could cater for, and how food is a much broader issue which fundamentally

involves a comprehensive range of actors, across different sectors, in line with collaborative, progressive arrangements (Fraser, 2005). Whilst Lambeth has been praised for its level of activity, another city-wide actor felt the ambitions of the LFP has inhibited its ability to achieve actual change:

> *"maybe they are trying to do everything, they are very ambitious in what their vision is …be more clear, I've heard them talk about health, takeaways, markets, community food and all this stuff is just too much. If you are trying to do so much then you end up doing nothing, which is what I feel has happened"* (National organisational actor 6).

In terms of establishing governance structures, Lambeth has excelled, however, it is not to say that there has not been challenges; there is a general consensus from the actors involved, that they are constantly learning how to undertake this new and innovative way of working around the issue of food, which will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

This section so far has provided a contextual overview of Lambeth as a borough in terms of its demographic profile and the food governance structures, and how this links to food governance at the city scale, and key actors. Firstly, through the establishment of the LFP, Lambeth is fairly autonomous with regard to city-wide food governance. Secondly, IEL was the first organisation in the borough related to 'food', but the vision of the borough scale was beyond their scope. Thirdly, the formation of IEL and the LFP was a response to what was already happening, rather than to initiate activities, as one actor puts it, *"I guess the egg was there and the chicken has come along to look after it"* (Local organisational actor 2). Therefore, the evolution and formation of food governance structures was a result of an interest in food and food growing in the borough likely to be influenced by the Capital Growth campaign and a key actor at the council. With over 200 community food growing spaces across the borough, the following section will focus specifically on how

food growing has evolved, and will focus on the community food projects included in the study.

5.4 Evolution of food growing in Lambeth

It is not possible to ascertain the degree of food growing prior to the Capital Growth campaign and the employment of the GCCO (at the council) but the recording of food growing spaces correlates with these two events. This was also at a time where there was a broad cultural interest in food growing (and environmental sustainability) generally *"I think that it was a good time, there was a change in culture in just in food growing nationally, it was quite easy"* (Local stakeholder 1), which paved the way for an increased desire for citizen engagement. Food growing is thought to be something that community groups wanted to pursue, within an 'environmentalist' context initially:

> *"picture, the idea that communities could get together and they could do things to improve their environment and that improves their broader environment as well and it was an area in which the Council wasn't really doing a lot of work. So I started to work with people and the first things that they wanted to do was food growing projects. So I didn't go along and say okay this is what we need to do, the Council has asked us to do this, I said if you want to improve the environment, the climate, the big picture stuff, … what do you want to do? … So what we did in the food growing is co-production, really good example of co-production. We didn't tell people what we wanted them to do, or ask them to do anything in particular, we facilitated what they wanted to do already."* (Local organisational actor 1).

Although there is a lack of empirical data to suggest that this was project-participants' reasons for engaging in food growing activities (in the context of the study), it may have been indeed a motivation for environmentally-minded citizens (e.g. such as those engaged

in IEL) at the time. One actor comments on how the rise in CG was at a time when the funding environment was influenced by climate change, "*because of the funding that has been happening because of the threat of premature change, a lot of people felt that growing food was a way of them to contribute to climate change, to preservation of environment*" (National organisational actor 6). Whilst the green agenda (e.g. climate change) may have been the initial catalyst around community food growing in the borough, one experienced actor explains how this, in practice, this has led to a social focus. "*I think that people that start organising these kinds of projects do have a strong green agenda, but I think they realise that once they are doing it, that it's actually about interacting with people.*" (National organisational actor 6).

Therefore, it is acknowledged that food growing has now gained momentum beyond the environmental perspective or approach, as many recognise that the wider benefits of food growing, *"when I first started it, it was very theoretical. What if we could grow food? And it was all about climate change and the environment, it was very politically motivated, whereas now we understand that the community benefits, the wellbeing benefits and we can do it for lots of reasons."* (Local organisational actor 1). The combined efforts of the Capital Growth campaign and the council supporting citizens to grow food resulted in over 140 community food growing spaces recorded across the borough in 2010. This shows how Lambeth council (in general) was seen to support the community in its desire for community food growing projects (although as shown further on, projects in this general area have developed and expanded to form different aims, participants, and motivations).

As these growing spaces are often localised and small scale at the neighbourhood level, they often lack an online presence or other documented profiles meaning that they are difficult to record or measure which is why the work Capital Growth has done has been essential in providing some measure in terms of the extent of community food growing

projects across London and within each borough. In this vein, one actor questioned why the LFP (or IEL) did not tap into this city-wide resource in terms of knowledge and experience: *"We have such a wealth of information and no one within that group of people thought maybe we should go and speak with Capital Growth … so I think there's a lot of repetition of services you know."* (National organisational actor 6). Nevertheless, IEL was formed to respond to this high level of food growing activity in Lambeth with an aim to locally connect the growing groups and the LFP took a wider approach with a vision for the food system as a whole. At a borough-strategic level, food growing is recognised with the draft strategy and is included under the LFP's second aim (planet) under Outcome F 'to grow more food'; furthermore, community food growing can be said to span across the other outcomes (see Table 5.2) especially 'food communities' (Outcome C), suggesting that the community level is the best way to undertake food growing. In terms of community food growing in Lambeth, whilst the aim of the study is not to undertake an audit of all the project types (in acknowledging their diversity), a number of distinctive models have been uncovered, which will now be outlined as the basis for analysis.

5.4.1 Selected place-based community food growing projects

Table 5.3 outlines the place-based community food growing projects included in the study. Whilst they are all regarded as 'place-based 'community food growing projects as they are situated within neighbourhoods, there is recognition that CG in general are highly diverse and therefore can differ in their attributes (Pearson and Firth, 2012). This accounts for the distinction made between the 'community-based' and 'estate-based 'projects shown by the yellow triangles (community-based) and blue squares (estate-based) in Figure 5.3, for which there is a lack of differentiation in the current literature. Estate-based CG have been the subject of few studies – Veen et *al.*'s study (2015) included Dutch 'neighbourhood' gardens and Agustina and Beilin (2012) explored CG on social housing in Australia. In this regard, at a minimum, there is potential for estate-based CG

to respond to concerns, about CG as a temporary practice; estate-based CG could in theory facilitate more 'permanency' (Drake and Lawson, 2014) and are therefore worthy of exploration. 'Estates' is a common name for social housing in the UK which is affordable accommodation to those on low incomes or who are state dependent (see Shelter, 2018; UWE, 2008).

This section discusses Myatt's Fields Park (MFP) a community-initiative, and Edible Living (EL) which is an estate-based initiative, both supporting community food growing. These projects are generally located in the areas of high deprivation in the borough and areas which have high BAME representation; projects are located in Vassall, Coldharbour, Ferndale and Knight's Hill wards all listed within the most deprived areas within the borough (Lambeth Council, 2016). Observational notes from a number of project visits are also included in the section which provide an insight into the dynamics and experiences of the local areas.
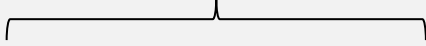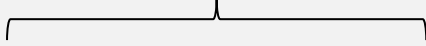
Community food growing projects involved in the study	
Community-based projects	**Estate-based projects**
Myatt's Fields Park (food hub) *(provides support for up to 10 local food growing projects, as well as a centralised resource hub)*	**Edible Living Programme (social housing)** *(provides support for estates / social housing residents willing to engage across the borough[31])*
Cowley Food Farm	Canterbury Gardens estate
Loughborough Junction	Woodvale estate
Resident's estate	Holland Town estate
Myatt's Fields Park greenhouse	Solon estate

Table 5.3: The community food growing projects included in the study

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[31] At the time of the study the number of estates engaged with EL was 9, in August 2016 this had expanded to 17.

Myatt's Fields Park Food Hub

When IEL formed, their aims were to implement the food hub model[32], and to create a food strategy. Situated in different localities in the borough (to reflect different neighbourhood areas) and all offering different activities and approaches, essentially the food hubs encourage learning, education, skills, community development, engagement and inclusivity in each of their localities (IEL, 2015). One actor discusses the neighbourhood boundaries present within Lambeth: *"the physical neighbourhood connections just aren't there so we need hubs in each neighbourhood"* (Local organisational actor 1). There is also an implicit desire to expand the model to areas where there is not currently a food hub as the model is a reflection of the localised culture in Lambeth and is seen as a key way to engage with people (also reflecting the personal dimension to the model – a point of contact), *"if there is a hub locally that you can go and pop down and pick up seedlings, it makes it a lot easier, and even just pop in and ask someone, oh what does this mean?... if we clone [MFP leader] and put [them] round the city"* (Local organisational actor 2). The MFP food hub leader points out the importance of the scale of the hubs, *"my approach... it's very locality based, it's very local and its but I think that's how people work ...they don't think outside of their own village... we could do with eight really. And people don't go elsewhere, they just go, they won't go, they're villages"* (Local organisational actor 5).

MFP greenhouse is the physical location of the hub which is situated in one corner of Myatt's Field Park. Since regeneration efforts in the area from a range of partners, the reputation of MFP as an area of gang warfare and crime has changed. The greenhouse is open on specific times of the week for volunteers to access, where they are given tasks by the community gardener, who is responsible for growing the produce and supporting the

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[32] The Food Hubs model was initiated by IEL and include Myatt's Fields Park, Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses, Growing Rosendale, and Streatham Common Community Garden. The four food hubs are supported by 'Growing Lambeth' a two year programme launched in 2014 with funding from Esmee Fairbairn, and managed by Groundwork London in partnership with Lambeth Council.

community food growing projects. Resources are stored at the hub and distributed to the community food growing projects; the produce grown at the greenhouse is for the café on the site of the park, food events and for the volunteers to take home. There are also a couple of buildings next to the greenhouse, including a kitchen; the local community can also use these spaces.

Located in the Vassal ward (see Figure 5.3) an area with socio-economic deprivation, and providing a resource for the community (kitchen and greenhouse) MFP also supports up to ten local food growing projects, three of which were also included as case studies (Table 5.3) alongside the greenhouse. The ten community food growing projects supported by MFP food hub are all distinct and unique in their own right, and are in close geographical proximity to MFP. For example, within a few minutes' walk from MFP, a resident volunteering at MFP greenhouse has initiated a food growing project on his estate, which is supported by MFP and cared for by a number of residents in the block of flats and the produce from the CG is given freely to the local residents. The leader of MFP food hub was also a key player in setting up IEL (and currently sits on the board) and is an advocate for the community where MFP is situated.

Figure 5.8: Myatt's Fields Park greenhouse (Source: Author)

Cowley Food Farm

As shown in Table 5.3, Cowley Food Farm is one of the projects supported by Myatt's Fields Park although it was initiated in advance of the food hub model. It is situated at the heart of the Cowley Estate and was initiated by the Resident Management Organisation (RMO) in 2010. The project grows food for the local community and promotes community involvement and engagement for the diverse local community. The plots are communal and a range of produce is grown, there are also animals on the site and natural habitats have been established for frogs and newts for example. The following images, and excerpt of observational data provides insights regarding this project.

Figure 5.9: Cowley Food Farm (Source: Author)

> *This visit was a bit last minute. I arranged to meet [Name] at Cowley Food Farm at 4pm. I had met with [Loughborough Farm] in the morning and had gone back to the place I was staying for lunch, before going to Cowley. I wasn't sure how long it would take [to get there] so I left in plenty of time and to my surprise found it easily! I had taken the tube to Oval and then walked. However as soon as I had got to the enclosed estate (wasn't sure if I could get in because of the gates and if I could it wasn't the most inviting place for outsiders), [Name] had text to say she was running late and would be there at 4:30 at the earliest. Now, I had arrived half an hour early so that meant I was there 1 hour early! It was quite busy with kids of all ages coming out of school. I was in a place I wasn't familiar with, I had to find something to do for the next hour. The area was also a largely black neighbourhood so I felt a little out of place; the cafes and shops were quite local – no chains, and it's hard to tell what kind of place it is when just walking past, particularly as they were all on the other side of the main road [Brixton Road] which was really busy and there were not very many opportunities to cross so I stayed on one side. I wouldn't have minded sitting in a park I came across – I turned left into it and decided not to go and sit on a bench as there were a group of white middle aged men looking like they were dealing drugs or something – they may not have been! I didn't want to sit near them though. I decided to just walk down the main road – if I walked straight I'd get to Brixton and probably find a cafe or something where I felt comfortable going in. I came across a Sainsbury's and decided to get a drink [from there]. I then started to walk back, stopped at a bus stop to write a card I had also brought for a friend, then continued to walk back to the Cowley estate. When I was walking back from Brixton is was really busy. A black guy was cycling on the path and I heard him say 'stupid white bitch' to a lady with a pushchair. I don't think she heard him but he must have thought that she'd got in his way or something. Anyway I got [to Cowley Farm] when [Name] had called to say she was just putting her bags in the car and then she'd be there. It was now around 4:40/4:45 and she called to ask where I was – she was already in there, so I asked her 'how do I get in', because it was gated. I managed to get in as someone was already going in. It was quite a big estate with a lovely space inside of the complex.*

Box 5.2: Observational data Friday 17th November 2014

Loughborough Farm

Loughborough Farm is another project supported by MFP. It is situated on an area of unused land waiting to be developed, off a busy road and is therefore visible for passers-by. Temporary permission to use the land, coupled with not knowing whether the land is contaminated or not (due to it being an industrial site previously), means that food is grown in large builders' bags. Loughborough Farm has been running since 2013, is free for volunteers to attend and is open twice a week (Saturdays and a week day evening).

Volunteers help with a range of activities and come together socially each week around tea and eat cake, where the running of the project is also discussed. Loughborough Junction was initiated by the Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG), and employs a community gardener to oversee the farm activities. All of the produce grown is for local consumption, it is taken home by volunteers and sold to local people at a stall. The following observational data reflects on this project visit, and the images aim to visually demonstrate the project.

I went straight from Myatt's Fields Park to Loughborough Junction – I walked with [Name] [along Coldharbour Lane] who was going there, and her flat is on the way. Loughborough Farm is in a good location with lots of housing estates surround it, in easy walking distance. I was informed that there were not as many volunteers there as there usually are. They said they had a busy weekend last weekend so people may feel like they've 'done their bit for a while'. The space was really good, a bit like an oasis in the middle of quite a busy, and rundown area. The lush greenness contrasts against the railway bridges. Plants are grown in sacks due to possible soil contamination but there is no one to test it. The area lacked some indoor space or cover; they do have a gazebo but it was on loan. [Names] let me get on with things [talk to people and have a look around], it was a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The weekly tea and cake was a nice touch – everyone seemed to feel comfortable and it was great that there were new people looking around (black young lady, old white lady, mother and two older daughters white), [Name] did a good job of welcoming in them in to the space and showing them around. It's nice that the gate was open – it is a very inviting space. During the tea break the group sat together and there was a space for announcements; one of this week's announcements was about taking the farm out to people on the estate. There was also an opportunity to try cucamelon – and learn about this crop. It was an informal time where most people seemed comfortable enough to chat to each other.

Box 5.3: Observational data Saturday 18th October 2014

Figure 5.10: Loughborough Farm (Source: Author)

Edible Living

Whilst IEL aims to provide overarching network for (and governance of – see Chapter 7) community food growing groups, food growing has, quite naturally, transpired outside of this network structure. One example is the Edible Living (EL) programme created by 'Lambeth Living' the council's social housing department. Through the engagement with residents, it is consistent with Lambeth Council's 'co-production' approach. Lambeth Living's Resident Engagement Officer, who also sits on the board of the LFP, saw how food growing provides a number of opportunities for residents on estates as well as broader environmental and social outcomes; thus, food growing has too been recognised by the council:

> "*any food growing in the borough has become a lot more high profile, there's a lot more support for it. I think that it's value is now recognised a lot more in terms of, well the Council certainly supports it you know more than I imagine it ever has. You know, the fact that you know, Lambeth Living … they're putting an officer's time onto this project*" (Local organisational actor 4).

The EL model centres on the provision of resources and support from the council in terms of raised beds, soil, seeds for example, and a community gardener, who provides a number of free supported sessions, for residents living on estates who wish to undertake community food growing. The success of the EL project now sees residents from a number of estates engaging with the project, some of which took part in the study (Table 5.3), with plans to expand to more estates as the (experienced) Edible Living Community Gardener reflects, "*this is really good new project this, because, it's quite ambitious to do it on quite a big scale quickly so… it's just beginning.*" (Community Gardener 080). The number of estates EL are actively working with now stands at 17 (August 2016). The following images are from Woodvale estate, one of the estates taking part in the study (located in Knight's Bridge ward), and corresponding observational data is also presented.

Figure 5.11: Woodvale Estate (Source: Author)

> *I found the housing estate easily from West Norwood train station. When we arrived at the community centre, it was clear to see that [Name – community gardener] hadn't been there before; it was like a community space, a warm, cosy, communal space, that had been booked for my visit. There was a group of residents there, but Name] and I had arranged for us to have a chat first, because we hadn't met before. I think the residents were expecting to start as soon as we arrived though! The group of residents made a comment about whether [Name - from the council] coming, and the interviews, so I decided to end the interview with [Name] and move on to doing an unprepared group interview with the residents (as they were all sat together and were happy to participate, when asked, in a group discussion. Also, there was limited time to conduct one-to-one interviews, and go out in the garden). We started chatting as a group at around 3pm and it lasted for around 45 minutes – they seemed to be getting a bit restless as they wanted to go outside into the garden, where we spent over an hour there talking and looking at the space / produce they were growing, and taking part in an informal session from [Name]. [Name] mentioned to me, that she was quite surprised that they stayed for as long as they did to talk to me. I was also surprised at how friendly they were. [Name] mentioned that they moaned a bit about things which she really didn't enjoy, and I noticed that some of them were moaning about each other. [Name] said that she finds it quite frustrating, listening to them, rather than them listening to her when she has come to give them free advice. They are also quite competitive and want what each other have. There is that sense of community though. There was another resident who walked by and saw that the group were after some netting to put over the raised beds. The man brought a large plastic sheet for the group to use (although apparently he moaned about the project initially). Also, two young black teenage girls shouted [the name of one of the participants – an older white lady] and she went over to speak to them – this again illustrates the community relations on the estate. [Name] mentioned that on this estate, it is more of a group activity, whereas the other estates are a bit more individualised.*
>
> *Other observations – the location of the garden makes it very communal (surrounded by houses and a path either side). It is a pleasant space, although apparently not all the residents like it.*

Box 5.4: Observational data Thursday 13th November 2014

5.5 Survey responses

As shown in Chapter 4, interviews were undertaken with participants from the projects in Table 5.3, and a survey was targeted at all Lambeth community food growing project participants. Figure 5.12 provides an overview of the survey respondents, highlighting the projects and initiatives respondents are part of. Around one quarter of respondents completing the survey are involved in EL, two thirds in MFP (or supported projects) and

the remaining through other projects or organisations (including other food hubs, other local projects). Around one third (32%) of respondents stated that they are part of more than one project. For example, based on the qualitative data generated by the survey, it was apparent that some projects receive support from both MFP and EL, and some respondents volunteer at MFP greenhouse and are part of a supported project. This demonstrates that in practice, participation in projects, and different types of projects, may possess a degree of fluidity. As stated in Chapter 4, whilst the survey was open to all community food growing projects across Lambeth, there are more respondents from the projects engaged in the qualitative research, due to the established connections (e.g. gatekeepers).
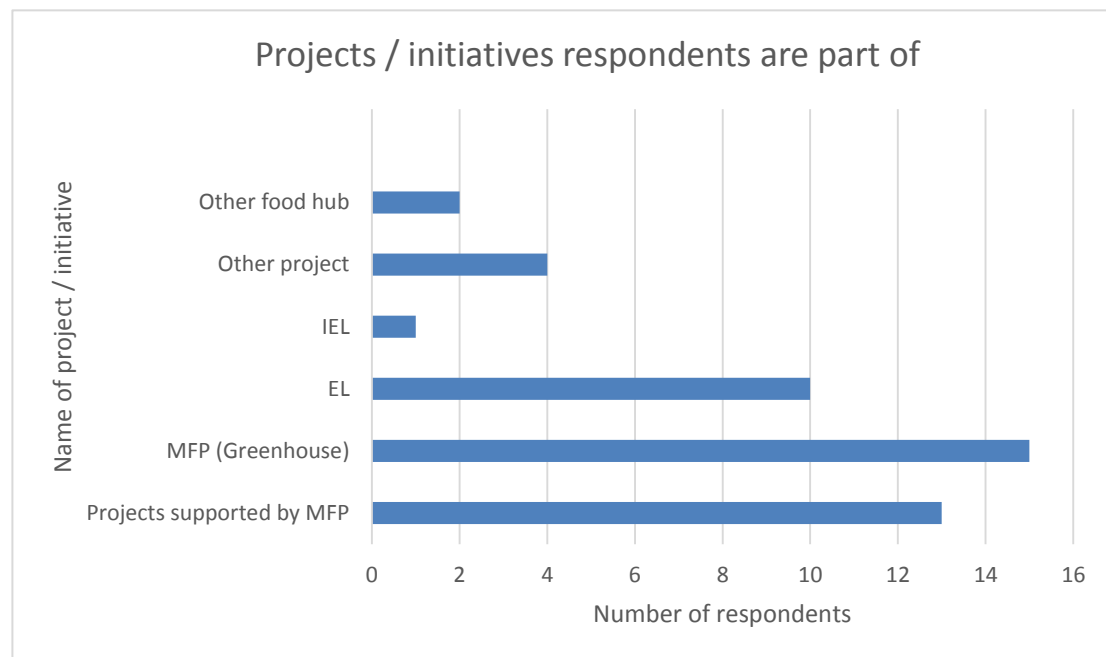
Figure 5.12: Lambeth projects and initiatives respondents are part of (Source: Author)

5.6 Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter has provided a detailed contextual overview of the development of food governance arrangements at the city and borough scale. It has outlined the main events occurring in Lambeth in a chronological fashion, and has introduced two community food growing models, contributing towards the study's first and second objectives. The evidence suggests that the expansion in community food growing in the borough was

initially triggered by two main events. Around the same time Capital Growth (city wide) was launched (2009) by the charity Sustain, Lambeth council employed a 'Green Communities Champions Officer' to help set up 'green' community groups (as part of a community level, sustainability remit) which enabled communities to become involved in food growing activities. The lack of activity in this area was essentially an opportunity to do something that the council had not done before, which was made possible by dedicated resource. Community food growing has since gained wider attention, and focus has now shifted from an environmental context towards a more holistic viewpoint with a particular connection to public health, involving a broader range of stakeholders, which has seemingly resulted in a high level of community participation.

The implications of city-wide food governance structures meant that there was a certain degree of autonomy which resulted in the formation of the Lambeth Food Partnership, with key organisations including Incredible Edible Lambeth, Public Health and the Council, formed to coordinate the general rise in food related activities in the borough. The different types of community food growing projects the study engaged with have been outlined, with the more community-based projects associated with IEL, and the estate-based projects as a result of a council initiative. This shows that although these two organisations are part of the LFP, as are the key actors involved, they have transpired outside of, or are independent to the LFP structure. Chapter 6 will now focus on the demographic profile of participants and will draw on themes from the interviews relating to the internal drivers of participation, to meet the study's third objective.

Chapter 6

The Internal Drivers of Participation in Community Gardening

6.1 Introduction

Chapters 6 and 7 present the results from the analysis of 29 interviews[33], (including one group interview), 34 surveys, and observational data - see Table 4.1. Further detail about the demographic details of participants is given in Table 6.2 and Appendix 8. Following an introduction of the sample profile, this chapter draws on themes in the data relating to the internal drivers of participation, namely motivations, in line with the conceptual framework, to contribute towards the study's third objective: 'To disentangle and analyse the motivations of people participating in urban community food growing'. This chapter is structured by the following, discrete yet interconnected sections (Table 6.1). Firstly, motivations associated with *reconnection* and experiences of food growing are presented, then motivations around the *social dimensions* to participation are discussed, before focusing on motivations regarding the importance of *place* (the local urban neighbourhood). The findings recognise how in general people participate for many reasons (Brodie *et al.,* 2011) and motivations in relation to CG are regarded as complex and difficult to disentangle, and they have not been *thoroughly* investigated (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Pourais *et al.,* 2016). Furthermore, this chapter identifies underpinning motivational values associated with people's participation. The external drivers of participation are then presented and discussed in Chapter 7.

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[33] 6 interviews with organisational actors, 3 with community gardeners, and 16 with people engaged with community food growing projects, as well as one group interview with 4 project-participants.

Themes in the data relating to the internal drivers of participation
Activity: Motivations associated with reconnection and experiences of food growing Spaces which foster reconnection and cultural engagement An ethic of care concerning future generations The experienced benefits of food growing Knowledge obtained from engaging in projects.
People: Motivations around the social dimensions to participation Community and a sense of place Social dimension of projects Participation as a hobby Escapism from responsibility Spaces to address social needs.
Place: Motivations regarding the importance of place (the local urban neighbourhood) Neighbourhood beautification and transformation The significance of the neighbourhood scale.

Table 6.1: Themes in the data relating to the internal drivers of participation

6.2 Sample profile

Demographic data for the six organisational actors interviewed is based on observations and shows that four females and two males were interviewed; five out of the six actors interviewed were observed to be White British and White European, and one actor classified themselves as 'other' (non-European). The three community gardeners interviewed comprised two females and one male, who were White British / European.

Table 6.2 shows the demographic of the survey respondents[34] and the project-participant interviewees; the profile of each respondent who took part in an interview is given in Appendix 8. Over half of survey (see section 5.5) and interview respondents are female, and whilst participants comprise a spread of ages, survey respondents are generally younger with half of respondents aged 20—49, and 42% aged 50-59. Over half (52%) of interview respondents are aged between 60-70+, and 29% are aged 50-59 (19% of respondents under the age of 49). A range of ethnicities are represented across the survey and interview respondents however the highest proportion of respondents are White English / British; 54% of survey and 62% of interview respondents identified as White British compared to 39% of the general Lambeth population, and 19% of interview and 11% of survey respondents identified as Black compared to 25.9% of the Lambeth population In terms of occupation, the majority of respondents are either employed or retired, with a greater proportion of interview respondents stating they are retired (48%) compared to survey respondents (7%) reflecting how more survey respondents are in employment (+15%) and in more diverse circumstances (in education, not seeking work, volunteering, on other benefits for example).

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[34] There were 34 survey responses in total, however, to avoid double counting, four responses have been excluded, as they were identified as interview respondents (one from a community-project and three from estate-projects).

	Survey respondents	Project-participant interview respondents
	n = 30	*n = 20*
Gender		
Female	85%	62%
Male	15%	38%
Age		
20-29	8%	14%
30-39	19%	5%
40-49	23%	0%
50-59	42%	29%
60-69	4%	38%
70+	4%	14%
Ethnicity		
White English / British	54%	62%
Irish	0%	5%
Other White Background	21%	5%
Caribbean	7%	14%
African	0%	5%
White and Black African	4%	0%
Chinese	4%	0%
White and Asian	4%	0%
Indian	0%	5%
Other Mixed background	4%	0%
Other	0%	5%
Occupation		
Full time employed	24%	19%
Part time employed	34%	24%
Retired	7%	48%
Not seeking work/not registered unemployed	10%	0%
Unemployed (JSA)	0%	5%
In education	3%	0%
Volunteering	3%	0%
Long term sick / disabled	3%	5%
Registered for other benefits	3%	0%
Other	10%	0%

Table 6.2: Survey respondents and project-participants demographic data

6.3 Activity: Motivations associated with reconnection and experiences of food growing

This section draws on data which provides insight into how participation in community food growing relates to reconnection and experiences of food growing, by focusing on the following themes:

- Spaces which foster reconnection and cultural engagement

- An ethic of care concerning future generations

- The experienced benefits of food growing

- Knowledge obtained from engaging in projects

6.3.1 Spaces which foster reconnection and cultural engagement

Participant's engagement in home-based food growing in many instances was part of their upbringing and a 'normal' activity. *"In my parents garden we used to do runner beans, beetroots, all sorts from you know, from when I could hold a spade I was helping mum and dad out. And we used to get a good crop of runner beans!"* (Edible Living, participant 094). Feelings of a historic-cultural, or a nostalgic (re)connection (Kneafsey *et al.,* 2008) were apparent throughout many of the interviews; many of the volunteers who grew up in another country spoke about reconnection in terms of food growing being an everyday part of their lives, something they undertook as a family activity (in a community or social context). *"When I was younger I used to come from school and help my father and I had my own small plot of food as well which my father gave me … When you grow up in that environment it seems natural, I was brought up in Ethiopia."* (Community project participant 012). Another participant explains her experience. *"My dad used to have a huge garden he used to grow everything. Yeah, I remember all that. Instinctive in Jamaica, around you everything is growing in a patch – a sweet potato here, a yam there, you know. I don't know whether I've learnt it [growing], it's something that's come back to me."* (Community project participant 014).

Others mentioned how this type of food production did not involve the use of chemicals. *"I grew up in the countryside so my mum always had a garden we loved to walk around and just eat stuff, it tastes so much better … it tastes a lot better and I know there's nothing on it, it's not been sprayed with anything."* (Edible Living participant 002). Another participant from Jamaica also reflected on growing organic (chemical-free) produce and how eating fresh and healthy food was a naturally occurring activity:

> *"we learn to eat the green from when we were young. Callao, ackee, green banana, well ripe banana but we do cook green banana, so we know exactly what as a child we can eat … Our food we just plant it, we don't use no spraying it and so on and so forth. We'd rather go out and get the horse manure, fork it into the soil, plant and let all of that rot in and then you get what you want."* (Edible Living participant 006).

This resonated with participants' upbringing, and participating in projects offered a sense of reconnection to their relationship with food (and the environment / the land) for British and migrant participants. One participant reflects that community food growing also appeals to, or is suitable for, older generations from different cultures (which comprises a large proportion of Lambeth's population) as it provides a range of opportunities for engagement, drawing on experiences and knowledge:

> *"Someone said about callaloo, he's from Jamaica, where is it, he said 'I'm too old to do work', I said 'you can come and give advice', which he loves doing, 'and then when it's ready to be reaped you can come and harvest some of it'. The whole idea is to encourage them to come out and do whatever they want to do. They don't have to do anything but at least they'll be part of it."* (Edible Living participant 001).

This also shows how food growing can act as a tool for social engagement and participation (section 6.4). Previous experiences of food growing have therefore influenced some

participants' involvement in the project in a positive activity (for self and others) and a way to engage with others, with positive associations to their upbringing and/or country of origin. The aspect of cultural variation also added to the experiences of community gardeners in terms of their knowledge and experience:

> *"There's so many nationalities, who you know, maybe from their homeland it was in their culture to farm or to do that and its bringing that back a bit again, getting in touch with that, and they've got such interesting stories and foods that I've never tried. I had a Nigerian lady recently, I can't remember the name of the leaf, it was like a sort of Spinach leaf and then she made us this stew with it and it was really good for Nigerian Independence Day, she was really, really pleased and it was delicious."* (Community Gardener 080).

The composition of the local community is reflected in the projects and how the community gardeners undertake or approach their work, showing the degree of flexibility towards collaboration with the community:

> *"I always try and grow quite a big diversity of things, so there's lots of things which try and tie in with the local community. So, we've got the Caribbean peppers, the Caribbean chillies and more Caribbean herbs. ... and making sure that there's quite a lot of Asian crops going through. ... so I think there's like first generation people it kind of connects them with home and things, so they've got all sorts of ideas about doing generational activities for kids ... So you've always got, thing of South Americans, South Americans are really big on that. I think the Caribbean's are too."* (Community Gardener 081).

Projects as spaces to grow a range of food (in terms of culturally relevant produce), was also important for community gardeners, but also for the majority of survey respondents (88%). Community food growing projects are inclusive spaces that foster intercultural participation, including older generations too, (in line with Eggert *et al.,* 2015 and Agustina

and Beilin, 2012), and contributing towards the recreation of food memories and skills (Barthel *et al.,* 2015).

6.3.2 An ethic of care concerning future generations

Participants spoke about how the projects can facilitate opportunities for reconnection for children; care for the younger generation was of importance for a lot of the participants. In total, 97% of survey respondents felt that projects 'as spaces for children' was important. This social sense of an 'ethic of care' has roots in the notion of reconnection (Kneafsey *et al.,* 2008; Cox, 2010); living in a highly urbanised area, participants felt the opportunities for reconnection with nature were limited, especially for the younger generations:

> "*I came to London, it's a concrete jungle, and I think now a days there are possibly children out there who have no idea where things come from, apart from mum goes to supermarket with a trolley and comes home and I eat dinner. You can't show everybody everything about food processes, but if you can just show them how a carrot grows in a pot*" (Edible Living participant 003).

Projects also provide opportunities for children from the wider community, *"children from the nursery come to the greenhouse to see where tomatoes grow ... where potatoes come from, that's good. Kids from the school come in and they are just gob smacked when they see things growing, that's sad isn't it?"* (Community project participant 010). Participants further reflect on how there is a disconnect with the younger generations and awareness of food growing, "*it's important for the young people to be involved in the project because they didn't know how it's growing, teenagers*" (Community project participant 011). This suggests the importance of educating children when they are young, when they are likely to find such activities interesting and provides opportunities for urban children to experience reconnection in line with how engaging in CG can promote reconnection through learning (e.g. Brendt *et al.,* 2013; Hale *et al.,* 2011).

6.3.3 The experienced benefits of food growing

The associated 'benefits' of growing food (e.g. taste, satisfaction, wellbeing) are realised once participants' have experienced projects. This is related to 'good quality experience', identified by Brodie *et al.,* (2011) in terms of 'continued participation', and based on a tangible / lived experience - something that is realised once engagement has commenced and is sustained. When reflecting on their participation, many reported saving money from growing their own food. "*I'm looking at that reward of saving me money from everything you go in, the price has inflated so when you grow your own at least you can stand back and look at it and think, yeah I tried.*" (Edible Living participant 006). A community gardener also reflects on participant's experiences:

> "*people do get quite a lot of produce out of here. So like, everybody is, mostly in the summer everybody is getting the vegetables for the week out of here...they weren't necessarily coming here specifically to save money, but then people say 'well I'm saving £30.00 a week here'. ... I think with [name] she has got lots of energy and she also likes getting the produce. But she's not coming, it's not a strict quid pro quo, even though she's going to be told that she can't take any tomatoes today and she'll be fine with it.*" (Community Gardener 081).

Indeed, the absence of a financial incentive is also recognised by some of the organisational actors, "*For some it's purely wellbeing ... don't think I've ever met anyone who says that they do it for cheap veg to be honest. ... It's always passion behind it not financial drive I think.*" (Local organisational actor 2).

Moreover, participants spoke about experiencing satisfaction around taste and knowing where it is from/how it is grown, once they had harvested their crop, *"I don't think there's anything better than you're cooking your dinner and its stuff that you've grown yourself. [General agreement]. The tomatoes taste ten times better than anything you buy in the shop."* (Edible Living, group interview). There was also a sense of satisfaction of being able to

harvest and cook with the produce they had grown and the on-hand availability of fresh produce. "*So the main impact on me is having fresh produce to hand. I mean the other day I had no greens in the house and I thought I could do with some greens and then I thought, the garden! And that was really nice!*" (Edible Living participant 001).

Through the projects, the outcomes of growing food can be indirectly associated with challenging the conventional way food is produced and consumed, *"It wasn't about that [referring to eating fresh, healthy food]. That's the forefront of it now.*" (Community project participant 014). This is explained by another participant more explicitly. *"The more I grow, the more reluctant I am to buy from food companies, supermarkets.*" (Community project participant 012). Survey responses support this and show that access to fresh local food was important for the majority of respondents (85% initially, and 82% currently), however, saving money was of least importance for participants; this supports claims that although saving money may be apparent through, there is indeed a lack of economic motivations (e.g. Pourais *et al.,* 2016; see Kneafsey and Bos, 2014). The following quote from one community gardener illustrates their understanding of the diversity of benefits of participating in community food growing projects; such understanding is pivotal for their role (see section 6.4):

> *"Well, I think the benefits for people involved are, well I think it's great to get people to be outside and meet their neighbours, be sociable for their own mental health and those reasons especially, well, all different kinds of groups but, elderly residents I do quite a lot of work with just health reasons, linking people to their food, kids discovering the seed can grow into a salad leaf, or getting kids to eat some things directly from the garden is really good fun, I love getting them to describe what things taste like, really encouraging them to try something they're not keen on and then they try it and they like it … I think the other thing is, especially on housing estates, people are quite negative often about their environment and I think it's really good to do something positive,… but its if you've*

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got a group of people and they its really changed the way they live their life, I mean it sounds a bit over the top, but if they're growing, if they're spending one hour outside a day in the summer and sitting outside in the garden and really getting quite addicted to it and getting a bit geeky about it, you know it does impact your mental health, it does mine, being outside in the sun." (Community Gardener 080).

For participants, of importance was how taking part in the projects contributed towards their subjective wellbeing; here a participant expressed how their involvement in the project has affected their sense of wellbeing, "*I'm feeling no stress, I'm feeling happy. The people are very important as well* (Community project participant 011). The recognised personal benefits of participating in community food growing projects are also illustrated in the survey data. Regarding initial involvement, 'wellbeing' was important for 94% of participants and at the time of the survey completion this had increased to 97% of participants. Furthermore, 100% of participants value feeling better in themselves since participation (67% a lot, and 33% a little). Data within this section resonates with the literature emphasising the social and wellbeing aspects of participation (e.g. Lovell *et al.,* 2014; Algert *et al.,* 2015, Egli *et al.,* 2016; Wakefield *et al.,* 2007) even when these are not necessarily initial motivating factors (Agustina and Beilin, 2016).

6.3.4 Knowledge obtained from engaging in projects

It is recognised that 'learning' is a key aspect of people's involvement in projects, as reflected on by one organisational actor "*… when people fill this [survey] out they use the words, for example, learn a lot, so they're talking about wanting to learn new skills, they want to learn where their food comes from."* (Local organisational actor 4). To learn about food growing was important for 97% of the survey respondents upon their initial involvement and the majority of respondents (97%) reported valuing 'people they can learn from' (community gardeners) (76% valued this a lot and 21% a little). Whether having experience of previous experience of food growing or not, some participants recognised the value of support,

showing that food growing is a learning process / activity. *"I like fresh veg and to know how I can cultivate the veg and this is why I came here as well because sometimes we're planting the seeds but sometimes we don't know what to do."* (Community project participant 011). Participants reflect on how the support from the community gardeners is invaluable, *"for people like me who don't really know anything about gardening it's really good to have people who shows you stuff and explains how to do things, what to grow when and that sort of thing.*" (Edible Living participant 002).

Building on the previous sections, food growing is recognised as something people can continue to learn and is suitable for all ages and abilities. *"It doesn't matter how old you are, you learn something about gardening all the time, and that's it."* (Edible Living participant 004). Learning from the community gardener has equipped participants with skills, which enhances their enjoyment. "*The idea of [name] coming is she can fill those gaps that we don't know, and that, we can produce a lot more and it turns out a much more enjoyable experience."* (Edible Living participant 095). Furthermore, this model facilitates an aspiration to be self-reliant in the future:

> *"all we need is a bit of help from people who will come in and say look try this because not everybody knows what they can try on here ... if we can get a few people in to say you know why do you try a difference of this, a bit of that, tweak a little here, a little there and see what comes out, then you are learning. So after a while you can try it all on your own."* (Edible Living participant 006).

Residents on one estate assert how this can be achieved based on the support from the community gardener, "*we know what to do. Exactly we know what to do now."* (Edible Living participant 095). This is in the context of a loss of skills and knowledge regarding food growing and preparation which shows how collective engagement stimulates a range of learning (see Barthel *et al.,* 2015; Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015; Brendt *et al.,* 2013).

6.3.5 Summary

The themes in the data relating to reconnection, demonstrate numerous values, which are intricately related. 'Self-interest' values show how participants want to personally learn about food growing and to obtain knowledge, as well as wanting to benefit from the range of outcomes related to community food growing (Poulsen *et al.,* 2014). This does not depend on prior gardening experience (Agusitna and Beilin, 2016), but does reveal a nostalgic reconnection for those which have had experience. Moreover, experience (to any degree), in turn, allows participants to show expressive values as they wish for others to experience such outcomes, as a result of exercising values and ethics, towards inclusion and integration (Kneafsey *et al.,* 2008; Cox, 2010; Shaw, 2015). Such spaces for cultural engagement, and to exhibit care for the younger generations show how participants are largely 'expressive' in their motivations, toward wanting a 'better' environment for them, associated with some of the pitfalls associated with the conventional food system and urban living. This shows how CG participation has the potential to impact on individuals' experiences of and perceptions of the food system, contrary to suggestions that CG lack impact in this regard (Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Milbourne, 2012; Witheridge and Morris, 2016). Finally, the key role of the community gardener in terms of being involved in brokering reconnection for CG participants is important, and deserves further attention.

6.4 People: Motivations around the social dimensions to participation

This section of the chapter presents data around the social dimensions to participation which is at the forefront of people's participation. The themes covered in this section include findings in relation to:

- the importance of community and a sense of place

- the importance of the social dimension of projects

- participation in community food growing as a hobby

- project participation - escapism from responsibility

- projects as spaces to address social needs.

6.4.1 The importance of community and a sense of place

Participants from the community-based projects who were newer to the area expressed a desire to be more embedded in their local area and to get to know local people and sought this through project participation. *"Well I saw it and I thought it looked like a really nice place and I wanted to do something in the area that was a bit more...because I don't work in the area so I suppose I wanted more of a connection with the actual area and to get to know people that live around here – that's part of the reason."* (Community project participant 007). Participants felt that projects were a way to tackle the lack of community generally experienced, *"we're perfectly happy being solitary neighbours and that's just part of the lifestyle we live in London, we don't create community that way or it takes something like this to pull things together."* (Community project participant 008).

Participants who had lived in the area a longer time (largely the participants from the estate-based projects) did not necessarily express this desire to be more connected to their local area, but reported how the project had enabled them to know people (social contact) on the estate,

"We're mixing in with people … I've lived here quite a long time. I didn't talk to the other people doing the gardening before – anything at all." (Edible Living participant 004). A participant from another estate also reflects, *"I've been here around 15 years and knew about 8 people on the estate to talk to. Now it's something like 150. I can't walk up, I live in the end block over there, next door to that one, and I can't walk up there without being stopped around 3-4 times, just walking up here … But I didn't know anybody before."* (Edible Living participant 005).

The survey data shows the frequency of involvement (thus social interaction) with 12% taking part in projects on a daily basis, nearly half of respondents 'multiple times a week' (45%), and around one quarter at least one a week (24%). Thus, the highest proportion of respondents are taking opportunities for social interaction and being outside multiple times a week, suggesting a commitment to participation in a non-formal activity.

Strongly present within the data is the level of social isolation and an individualist lifestyle respondents experienced in their local area; many spoke about these experiences and how the project has positively helped to address this issue for them personally, *"I definitely feel more connected to the area because of the project. I feel like I know what's going on a bit more, and have met people I wouldn't have met otherwise. It makes me feel less isolated, less disconnected, and like the area is a home rather than just somewhere I live, a house."* (Community project participant 007). Participation has also resulted in social support networks for participants:

"I didn't know anyone before that [the project], I found that I have, we have, a network of people that I can, I would now sort of phone up if there was a problem, and people would come to me or I would go to them, it's a mutually supportive neighbourhood network that wasn't there before." (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

Participants also spoke about how their project was important in addressing social isolation generally for people in their community as well as for themselves, and for some, how they are pro-actively trying to address social isolation for others, through the project:

"*it brings out people who you haven't spoken to, you walk by, then they walk by you, they don't know you. So, with all this now you've got people 'hey how you doing', 'hello', 'blah blah blah', what is it you plant?' and you can talk to them, they talk to you and now we're bringing the community more together. They can talk to people, people I used to see and never said a word to, now we can come over here we can stand and talk… we can exchange words … it's much better.*" (Edible Living participant 006).

Another example of this is given by a resident from the same estate:

"*Every community is in the same sort of boat now. Families are different, you never used to have to lock your door and now there's a lot of pensioners, on their own. We saved a guy's life last Christmas, he had a gas leak, didn't know about it.…They actually said if we didn't go in, if we didn't find him, give him 2 hours he would have been dead.*" (Edible Living participant 005).

One participant expressed how people show some reluctance to independently respond to their own inquisitiveness, and as such have to be encouraged to engage, "*there are some people who wander by, you have to encourage them to come in, they've been isolated and are so shy, to talk to people they find it a lot harder. When you find someone hovering outside you have to welcome them in. We have the gates wide open*." (Community project participant 014). The importance of 'being part of something with other people' is also apparent in the survey data as all respondents value this (75% a lot and 25% a little). Similarly, the sense of community, experienced via project participation, was valued by most all respondents (73% a lot and 21% a little).   These findings show consistency with place-based CG where there is emphasis on CG as positive spaces for the community (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Firth *et al.,*

2011; Comstock *et al.,* 2010). Furthermore, the data shows CG can foster 'reconnecting the self' with community and environment (Crossan *et al.,* 2016).

6.4.2 The importance of the social dimension of projects

The social aspect of projects (through social contact) was a key factor for people in terms of their engagement and would look for a similar 'social' project should (hypothetically) their current one cease to exist. "*Yes if I can do it [food growing] with people in the community. I would try to find other things in the area, with people.*" (Community project participant 011). The food dimension was important for some but for others, although food is of interest, it is not a strict criterion, "*I do like the foody aspect but certainly I would be open to other things.*" (Community project participant 008). In addition to the emphasis on how the projects are contributing towards addressing social isolation (and promoting a sense of community), participants also commented on the different types of people the project brought together, reflecting the demographic of the borough, "*So I think it's [the project] important to make people grow a bit closer and make people care about each other a bit more and to make things a bit nicer for everyone. There's also lots of people from different backgrounds you wouldn't normally hang out with.*" (Edible Living participant 002). Also shown in the previous section is the socio-cultural nature of projects, reflective of local areas and suggesting that projects are attractive for a wide range of the local population (see Table 6.2 and Appendix 8):

> "*I think, because it's a very mixed area this is, economically and ethnically, and it does bring people together, you know there's a lot of Portuguese, West Indian, and stuff, and different languages. There's that lady from Nepal over there, she comes. It's quite small I suppose, around 30 people involved, maximum, but it brings people together, it's kind of like a nucleus.*" (Community food project participant 009).

The use of food growing as a tool for community building, is reflected on by one stakeholder:

"I don't think any of it is so much about food, it's about building a community building society. Consensus building, custom friendships, I think food is just a vehicle, but I don't think it is the most important thing at all. You could do the same, the thing is everyone eats, not everyone does sport for example, not everyone rides a bike." (National organisational actor 6).

These findings highlight the strong importance placed on the social dimensions to participation in CG, and local community over other aspects (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2012). This is associated with CG as cultivating 'relational experiences' (Hale *et al.,* 2011). The significance of these specific aspects of community food growing should not be overlooked / taken for granted.

6.4.3 Participation in community food growing as a hobby

The search to participate in an enjoyable activity or hobby for some, was driven by experiences of social isolation. The survey data demonstrates how the majority of people view participation in the projects as a hobby and 91% of respondent's place value on how their participation is an enjoyable hobby. Respondents divulge how their initial and current participation in the project relates to a dissatisfaction with living in a socially isolated (urban) society, and is an enjoyable hobby used as a means to detract from the dominant aspects of their lives:

"[Why do you think community food growing projects like this are important?] Just for the wellbeing of people, it's really therapeutic, it helped me just getting out of my flat every Saturday instead of just sitting and watching TV, and there's only so much art work you can do." (Community project participant 014).

The same respondent continues to say, *"I just got a bit sort of fed up and bored at home ... I mainly just wanted to get out more and be outdoors and I think at one point I was slightly depressed."* (Community project participant 014). There is general appreciation that project participation can be of wider benefit to society, *"When I was unemployed it didn't occupy me.*

I stayed at home, listed to the radio (I don't watch TV) but it [the project?] gave me time to think about things, to plan things. If it could help other people in such a way then it is a good thing for society as a whole." (Community project participant 012).

These positive dimensions related to project participation were reported by those experiencing an absence of 'work' either through retirement or unemployment, as it increased the desire to do something productive, and to have social contact, "*I also come along to meet people, I'm not used to not working, it's only my second year of retirement, and I do battle a little bit to fill my time sometimes. Life used to be so dynamic and the change is rather enormous."* (Community project participant 013). The same respondents goes on to say, *"I do appreciate the company, I must admit."* (Community project participant 013). Another respondent states how they rarely had time for social interaction with local people whilst working, *"they've decided I'm too old to work, it's fantastic, I've got all this time! ... I didn't know local people because I was just busy with family and work. When you retire it's good to meet local people."* (Community project participant 010). Other participants reflected on recently facing retirement:

> "*now I've reached an age where they basically retire me, so well at least now I've got something to do, I can't lay in the house all day doing nothing. [...] I can come over here, spend a couple of hours over here, do what I have to do and go back and I'm feeling OK. So it's no problem. [so it makes you feel good coming out here and doing this?] Oh yeah. [In what way?] Well, it just make, at least, in a way, it gives me something to do. It gives me something to do, something to look forward to. More than you know in all day 'I'm bored, I ain't got nothing to do'. I'm not a TV person, so I don't bother, to me it's a waste of my time. So, I'd rather come over here, plant this, put something down, watch it grow and say at least well you see something when the summer finished I can see something, at least I can eat what I grow [...] it's twice happy."* (Edible Living participant 006).

Before their involvement, participants reported the negative consequences of being indoors leading them to look for something enjoyable and purposeful to do, a hobby, to help combat the dissatisfaction associated with social isolation, with community food growing appealing to them.

Those participants who were employed also highlight the prominent role work had or currently has in their lives; coupled with family commitments they rarely found time for enjoyable activities. One respondent, currently in employment states how involvement in the project has added a new dimension to his life, "*I can't really define it, I suppose it's err, I suppose it gets me away from the work I do. Because I suppose my life was just about work and family before, whereas now it's a bit broader and I've met a few more people.*" (Community food project participant 009). Furthermore, the flexibility of the projects provides a 'ready-made community' (comprising people from the neighbourhood) for people to enter into who have other commitments such as a job. For one respondent, being estate-based was of particular importance, *"I just don't simply have the time to do anything to be honest. But it's nice if you have something that people participate in and can meet there."* (Edible Living participant 002). It should be recognised that in some instances where participants have regained employment, participation in the projects was not halted; therefore, participation is not substituted but rather sustained. The data in this section resonates with CG as therapeutic places (Pitt, 2014) for those who are experiencing the pressures of life, whether that be retirement, unemployment, or work, and to some extent city life (isolation) (Nordh *et al.,* 2016).

6.4.4 Project participation – escapism from responsibility

Participants sought to escape further responsibility through participation suggesting that they are reluctant to take on more responsibility or commitment, reflected in how they describe their participation as a hobby in comparison to a job, "*I'm feeling happy. For me I told you for me it's a hobby not a job, I really like to work with plants. Makes me feel happy, don't have the stress, relaxing. Nice and relaxing.*" (Community project participant 011). The

majority of the community-based project participants explicitly described their involvement in the project as a hobby, rather than a job and some participants spoke about their initial apprehension towards becoming involved due to concerns over the level of commitment it would entail:

> *"especially because teaching in central London and London is so fast paced and stressful and teaching can be really stressful it's just really nice to do things outside, where it's not like, specifically training for a marathon or something else which is a big hard thing to do it's just like being outside with no pressure environment."* (Community project participant 007).

There was clear evidence around participants specifically not wanting to take on any responsibility. *"I don't open up, I've got keys but I don't open up."* (Community project participant 014). Another participant informs, "*No I don't go to anything like that* [anything that requires a formalised commitment]*, I don't tie myself down, always on the go."* (Edible Living participant 001). As such, participants enjoy turning up and being told what to do, with no responsibility, additional pressure or stress, "*I have no prior gardening knowledge I'm very much here as a monkey*!" (Community project participant 008). Another respondent informs of their involvement. *"Each week [the community gardener] gives me a small job and he always explains what the overall project for this time is and where my chores fit into that."* (Community project participant 013). In line with this, respondents report being able to take a flexible approach to their participation, "*the fact that it's on an entirely ad hoc basis and that I've got no specific commitment is a big incentive."* (Community project participant 008).

Being 'busy' was stated as a potential barrier to future engagement and for some, impacts on the extent to which they are currently involved, illustrating how participation fits into people's lives. For example, one respondent reports that the project could have more of an impact on their life, but she is quite busy at weekends; they thought that *"time pressure or*

having to do something else at the weekend" would be a barrier in terms of future participation (Community project participant 007). This shows that involvement in projects is an additional activity to undertake but does not take top priority in people's lives, and participation isn't perceived to be based on a regular commitment. This finding is also supported by the survey data; high proportions of respondents value 'a lot': a project they can just turn up to (73%), the people that run it (and take on the responsibility) (81%), and the organisation and running of the group (69%). Less than half of respondents valued having some degree of responsibility (42%). The non-committal aspect of the project is thus attractive for participants (who are not necessarily involved in initiating the project), and is something also recognised by the organisational actors who identify that people enjoy the hobby and the undemanding aspects of their participation. "*I think it's something, for some people it's a hobby, it's a nice thing to do. People like things to do. You know, we're all busy, but we're also always looking for things to do.*" (National organisational actor 3).

Despite the fact that particular members of the community or estate initiated and took responsibility for running the projects, the general sense of shared ownership and a communal element from all participants involved, shouldn't be overlooked. What is also shown by the following quotes is how participants (mostly in the community-based projects) participate to gain something from their (non-committal) involvement including 'knowledge' and 'produce'. There are nuances in the data from community-based project participants and those from projects on estates; in general, community-based project participants want to get something out of their involvement ('self-interest' motivation), whereas those on estates have more altruistic motivations (as previously ascertained). For example, the following quote is from a participant involved in a community-based project, *"[do you think more can be done to get people involved in projects like this?] I suppose it's more to do with incentives, asking yourself what you can offer them, and given a reassurance that is a professionally run outfit that sort of thing."* (Community project participant 008).

Whilst 'incentives' was a suggestion from one participant, another reflected on having a no-pressure ethos, *"[what do you think should be done to get more people involved?] I don't know, it's difficult isn't it. I think just like having a really open door policy and you don't want it to become a job for anybody obviously so making that really clear."* (Community project participant 007). Another participant reports being able to have a share of the produce, *"It's good and if you're a volunteer you can take stuff back with you."* (Community project participant 010). This view of getting something from involvement and not taking on too much is also commented on by one community gardener. *"They're not really volunteering, they're growing it for themselves, that's not volunteering."* (Community Gardener 081). They go on to reflect, *"I think it's a social thing ... It just depends on who is around and what's in their lives. It's quite casual. I think it's social. It's something to do, it's a hobby and it's social."* (Community Gardener 081).

The data demonstrates that there is some degree of caution regarding involvement as participants expand on how people like to see what is going on before they commit or get involved; they may be testing the degree of responsibility which is perceived to be less if they can see it is already happening / up and running:

> *"[So do you think the people here in the area, do you think anything's changed since you've started the garden?] [Talk together]. They're sort of coming out their shell, first they didn't want to know. But now more and more people are less sceptical about it* [participant 083] *... I think once they've seen it up and running a bit. Then people are interested. They needed to see it actually happening before they started to get involved. [And now they see it...] Every time I'm going there now, people ask me. But as I, I say to them all the time that when I get so many, we'll arrange to do more plots. We can't just build for one at the time."* (Edible Living participant 095).

The data indicates that people are perhaps reluctant to get involved in, or invest in, a conceptual idea but are interested in something tangible. *"The thing with this is you go round and knock on people's doors and talk to them about it. It's really hard. What has to happen is, people are only attracted if it's tangible stuff."* (Edible Living participant 001). These findings point towards the importance of the tangible aspects or the 'aesthetic experiences' of CG (Hale *et al.,* 2011) in terms of engagement. The findings suggest that participation is not a political or activist activity (see Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014b), but that participants are driven by a desire for place attachment (Pitt, 2014; Agustina and Beilin, 2012), based on emotional bonding and a connection to the community (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Comstock *et al.,* 2010). This is out of a care for where they live and their neighbours and as respite from the pressures associated with everyday life (Nordh *et al.,* 2016).

6.4.5 Project as spaces to address social needs

In contrast to apprehensions around taking on additional responsibility (and satisfaction with being *given* tasks to do, particularly apparent in data from community-based participants) is the inherent sense of responsibility participants generally have towards others, notably through an 'ethic of care'. Participants are using skills gained within the community for a common good. *"I'm not a guerrilla but I asked a neighbour if I could plant up in her garden. I planted strawberries so people can help themselves and they do that."* (Community project participant 010). The benefits of using skills and knowledge learned can extend beyond the spaces of projects into the community. Whilst much of the evidence around abstaining from additional responsibility is from participants involved in the community-based projects, respondents involved in the organisation of projects, from the estate-based projects welcomed a sense of responsibility. This is based on people taking a sense of ownership towards the area and to some extent, meeting some societal needs through the project spaces:

> *"all the stuff that I've had to deal with in life and that, I can give my experience,*
>
> *I've usually solved them or and I can give my experience to help others and I really,*

really relate to people who are going through problems of isolation, being a lone parent, living, you know, problems with benefits, problems with, I mean, housing, I mean my main passion is housing. The housing is such, and especially in London and major cities it's such a huge issue." (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

The same participant goes on to say, *"one of the things I was thinking of doing in here at some point, it's just some simple cooking, so that if anyone on the estate is sanctioned, and they can't afford electricity, then they can come here, but it's trying to think of everything at once."* (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

One organisational actor reflects on how these projects *"are bearing the front line"* and how the groups often 'targeted' for such projects comprise:

"*a really hard to reach group of people you know. That perhaps young men and women that have been bullied at school or you know they just don't feel interested in learning or they feel disengaged or whatever and it's like these projects are, because you know, you have to fill in an application as well, it's like a vision, but I don't think anyone has a real grasp of how to deal with the psychological problems that those people may have or you know, their feelings or the context in which they live … I don't think that anyone within the sector has the grasp. [Do you mean the food sector?] Yes, to understand and deal with those issues … but yet all the money is towards dealing with those issues, so it's not fair and people you know, I don't blame organisations for trying to do it because that's the money which is available.*" (National organisational actor 6).

This supports the notion of locally run projects (by local people) in being best placed to meet local needs. The notion of an ethic of care is seen when participants speak about wider consideration for people's needs as demonstrated above, but also thinking about making places more easily accessible for people with limited physical ability. Furthermore, the

survey data shows how all survey respondents felt projects to be important spaces for the community, older people, and those with mental health needs were 'important' (over any other attribute - see Appendix 9). Apparent in the interviews is how participants have a desire and a vision to proactively do something on their estate socially (and aesthetically), for the benefit of the wider community. *"My involvement is that I love to be part of the community, that's in my nature. I felt like Canterbury Gardens hasn't got anything going at all, and the garden is quite a focal point if people were aware of that I think it could then lead to better things and more involvement."* (Edible Living participant 001). The need for something positive on estates is also recognised by one community gardener. *"There's nothing here that is communal, there's no community centre. Well there's the garden. That's a start."* (Community Gardener 080). Creating a positive space for the local community to enjoy collectively is summarised by another participant:

> *"we were all pinching each other's stuff, and that's how it should be. It's a community garden for everybody to enjoy. We had people coming past and we was giving them... you know, you can have some. And that's the aim of it, is to build it bigger and so everyone can have a little bit of what we've got. And I think for me, anyway, is giving a little something back to the community. And it's enjoyable anyway, I love it. I'm out there in my element sometimes.* (Edible Living participant 095).

These findings indicate how CG possess the opportunity for participants to 'give something back to the community' or to express a care for others (e.g. Lanier *et al.,* 2016). This is predominantly apparent for those involved in estate projects as is consistent with place-based projects (see Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015) and the importance of the neighbourhood scale in 'performing community' in this way (Drake, 2014).

6.4.6 Summary

This section has illustrated the key motivations apparent within the data around projects as social spaces and creating a sense of community and place. This points towards self-interest and expressive values in terms of a desire to experience 'community', in the face of a largely socially isolated society, regardless of the length of residency in the area. Such self-interest values, and being interested in CG, are indeed recognised as an important factor for participation (Brodie *et al.,* 2011; Drake and Lawson, 2014). The social dimensions of projects are very much to do with self-interest values; projects provide a sense of escapism from responsibility and present as 'low commitment', showing that participation is largely regarded as an enjoyable hobby, an informal activity and a way for people to exercise expressive values. . The estate-based projects are largely seen by participants as importance places (built on attachments to place and people – see Lanier *et al.,* 2016; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015), ideal for expressions of community (Drake, 2014) particularly regarding spaces where social needs are met. This demonstrates a range of values built on an ethic of care, a responsibility towards others, and a desire for positive spaces. Explicit political or radical motivations are not present, which is the case for some CG (see for example Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014b).

6.5 Place: Motivations regarding the local urban neighbourhood

This final section regarding participants' motivations presents data in relation to the theme of the local urban neighbourhood using the following themes:

- neighbourhood beautification and transformation
- the significance of the neighbourhood scale.

6.5.1 Neighbourhood beautification and transformation

The chapter so far has uncovered how participants perceive projects to make a positive contribution to their area (namely at the 'neighbourhood' scale), socially; this is also the

case physically. For survey respondents, being involved in something that contributes to improving the area where they live was important for 100% initially, and 97% (3% somewhat important) at the time of survey completion. As previously indicated, such efforts are part of an intentional strategy of those on the housing estates taking responsibility for their locality (in a 'co-productive' effort with the council, see Chapter 7), *"we sat down and worked through what we could do. Lots of different ideas came up. One of the first ideas that came up is that we wanted to do things on the estate to make the estate look good."* (Edible Living participant 003). Participants expressed how much the project(s) have transformed and beautified the local area, and make comparisons before and after. "*Before our growing group - the place was left open with weeds, it did not look good. If you see now it is completely transformed, it looks nice there is something to eat as well. So it does make a difference, completely."* (Community project participant 012).

Others involved in community projects also reflect on area transformation, *"Do you know Loughborough Junction? There's a bit on the corner there that used to be a dump and they've planted there, the kids were there, and it's transformed it, it really is a beautiful place"* (Community project participant 010), and their active role in contributing towards this change, *"I remember it being a completely empty jungle like space so when they told me about it I thought I'd like to go along and help."* (Community project participant 014). Moreover, participants show how project spaces provide a sense of tranquillity in the midst of urban environment, "*there was one guy, he must have been, I can't think how old he is, probably ten or eleven, [name], he was sat out there one summer, just sat in the chair, and I said 'oh are you alright there [name]?' and he said, 'yeah, I just like sitting here'."* (Community project participant 082). Another participant also reflects on the positive atmosphere created by projects:

> *"it's nicer than an area that a council has just put in loads of geraniums or something. People are working on it, and it's good that the volunteers care about it, it's got a nice atmosphere, it's nice small and peaceful atmosphere. People who*

are walking past come in and have a look and walk around, it's like an interesting little spot, without it, it would definitely be a bit more dreary." (Community project participant 007).

This is also noted by an organisational actor:

"There's something aesthetically pleasing about growing and what you grow and what it looks like and we live in an urban environment and so I think there's part of our soul that is always reaching out for that little bit of nature, how do we bring nature back into the city? You know, it makes, it makes your area look nicer, feel nicer, it makes your street worth more money if you've got a beautiful planting scheme and it's something that is inherently got a value to it. I think that, you know, a lot of people feel that connection and a lot of people are looking for ways of just making their area feel a little bit nicer you know, and coming out of a time when you know, a period of time when you know, everything is getting more and more built up and industrialised and more and more paving ... everything covered up." (National organisational actor 3).

Therefore, because of the projects, residents commented on how the area felt safer, *"the whole greening project has made Loughborough Junction, well it's given it a sort of lovely quirky community feel. It makes the place feel generally safer, and a nicer place to be.... it has improved the area. It's given it a nice feel and all of that."* (Community project participant 008). Participants also commented on how projects have contributed positively towards the reputation of the area:

"I have a friend who when I mentioned it [MFP project] went 'NO!!', she said 'I'd be scared to go through there', this would be 30 years ago, but now it's wonderful! I said to her, 'you've got to come, you've got to, to see how beautiful and peaceful it is. So when I heard it was Myatt's Fields I was very keen to come and see what it

was all about. It's such a joy to come, it's such a beautiful park." (Community

project participant 013).

Thus, through the projects, improvements to the public realm are believed to have impacted positively on the area and perceptions of the area more widely, with further potential to utilise spaces on estates, as reflected on by one community gardener, "*I think it's really good, and there's so many unused green spaces on estates, that just aren't used at all, I think more and more, I want to see more and more being used for food growing."* (Community Gardener 080). Based on strong place-attachment, although these findings are in line with the transformation of urban space and greening the city (e.g. Kransy *et al.,* 2014; Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Crossan *et al.,* 2016), political motivations (e.g. Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015) are not apparent. Moreover, whilst some of the community-based projects are located on more 'temporary' spaces, participants are not concerned with 'reclaiming' space; estate-based projects are seemingly more permanent which is significant in helping to overcome issues of temporariness (Drake and Lawson, 2014).

6.5.2 The significance of the neighbourhood scale

The importance of the projects being situated (as well as developed and run) at the neighbourhood level was apparent within the data (Firth *et al.,* 2011). Regarding the estate-based projects, residents are already on-site which enables instant access to growing spaces (as opposed to arranged sessions in the case of community-based growing spaces). Participants from community-based projects spoke about the importance of living relatively close by; all participants lived within a maximum of a ten-minute walk. "*It is 5 minutes' walk from where I live, it's close, it's very important to live very close."* (Community project participant 011). Being able to walk to the projects was valued by all respondents (90% valued this a lot and 10% valued this a little). Being locally situated is convenient for participants who lead busy lives and do not want to take on additional responsibility (as mentioned in section 6.4.4).

The importance of projects being at the local (neighbourhood scale), was favoured (along with the social side of projects as previously identified in section 6.4) above the food aspect of projects. Respondents spoke about how important a 'local' project was should the community growing project hypothetically cease to exist; when asked if they would look for another project to be involved in, one participant responded: *"If local, local area rather than food growing. I go to book at breakfast because it's local."* (Community project participant 010). As one community gardener reflects, due to the neighbourhood dimension, participants feel embedded in the project. *"Well a tiny amount have been here since the beginning of the project, so it's kind of their home from home. It's cool. And they're kind of, I think they've got this, they're curators of the space, and they live locally."* (Community Gardener 081). The neighbourhood scale is not only important for aspects of social connections, but also for physical connections.

Having a project in the local area, comprised of and run by local people is seemingly important to the participants, and allows for a 'natural' community to develop. The visibility of projects was important for participants in terms of being inclusive for others to see and to potentially join:

> *"I live a three minute walk that way and that's my railway station and I've been walking past it for about a year, and I've been meaning to pop in then over the summer they had an open day and I thought right this is the perfect opportunity, I'll go in. [name] who is one of the main growers here, walking around it, and I though yeah this looks like a great fun thing to be part of."* (Community project participant 008).

Some participants felt the need for the more secluded projects to advertise more, to attract local people (representing a care for others). *"I think there should be some other outreach person, some other person going out there and telling them what it's like. They should advertise it. They should talk to people."* (Community project participant 014). There is a desire for

other local people to be aware of the project showing how participants want others to benefit from it too, as well as a sense of pride:

"The thing is people keep to themselves because they don't want everybody knowing their business. Something like growing and planting food, people would walk past the garden and say I'm not going in because I don't know who planted it. So what I'd like to see ideally is some laminated things around the garden saying this is a project run by the residents, everyone's welcome to participate, for further information contact dah dah dah, or these are the dates people will be here...we need signage, we need signage for everything. Because even if people don't go past, if people go past, if people are housebound, carers walk past ... So the people that go past, if there's a sign saying please help yourself people will stop and if you say it is free, people will stop." (Edible Living participant 001).

Signs for the estate-based projects were commonly talked about which may promote, and increase awareness of the project, but also add a sense of esteem. Thus, the physical use of space, particularly around the access to the space and how it is used and shared arose in the interviews. The projects are also perceived to impact on the wider local area and community, with people noticing and benefitting from it indirectly, even if not directly participating:

"most people would have some involvement, as I say, even if it's just walking past, people I've noticed really enjoy looking at the passion flowers and stuff. So I would think, you know it's difficult to quantify, but if you just counted people who walk past and have the pleasure of seeing it and enjoy that, then I would think it's a fair amount of the population of the estate. I mean there's one lady, there's a lady who walks up and down here, she's trying to get back her mobility after a stroke I think, she doesn't speak very much English but we all say hello to each other of a

morning and she's really happy to sort of just go past here." (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

The respondent goes on to say, "*we've been told that the [project] has even increased the property prices around here because people are more inclined to move here because of the [project] and they think it's a positive thing."* (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

Bearing in mind the geographical (and cultural) composition of Lambeth, as outlined in Chapter 5, it is important to recognise that, geographically, distinct neighbourhoods are significant, for example, *"people in Stretton have nothing to do with people in Vauxhall, they're just not related other than municipally. Administratively, the physical neighbourhood connections just aren't there"* (Local organisational actor 1). This underpins the importance of having a local focus, local knowledge and local networks in project development, reinforcing the importance of local projects situated at the neighbourhood level. Lambeth's socio-geographic composition, as asserted by one actor, creates difficulties in terms of providing an over-arching structure in the borough, *"it's a very strange place to work Lambeth. You know, there's such a mix, you turn a corner and you're in a completely different place. It makes it hard to have an overarching organisation and I think Incredible Edible have got it exactly right."* (Local organisational actor 2). On the ground knowledge and understanding reflected in the local models (i.e. the food hub model in enabling locality-specific activities to organically form and operate) shows the importance of appreciating local level differences, and tailoring projects to accommodate these; this shows that a one size fits all approach is likely to fail.

6.5.3 Summary

This section has shown that the local 'neighbourhood' is an important and appropriate and amenable scale for participation in place-based CG (Poulsen *et al.,* 2014; Drake, 2014) and for the expression of a range of motivational values. This is particularly relevant in Lambeth

due to the significance of different neighbourhoods across the borough. The desire for neighbourhood beautification and transformation is an indicator of instrumental and expressive values (also altruistic for some participants), and participants calling for enhanced visibility is out of a desire for others in the community to participate (also called for by Witheridge and Morris, (2016) regarding the 'normalisation' of CG spaces). The desire to participate in projects at the neighbourhood scale points towards self-interest and expressive values, emphasising the importance of local scale projects comprising local people, allowing a natural geographical community to develop, out of a care for community (physically and socially). The importance of context (at this micro-scale) and place is emphasised, as where people are is as important as what they do, as the freedom to pursue a preferred activity in a preferred place is significant (Pitt, 2014).

6.6 Summary of Chapter 6

This chapter has shed new light on the internal drivers of participation in CG, by focusing on the individual scale of participation (Figure 3.1). Overall, it is clear that project-participants possess a range of motivations for participating in community food growing projects, relating to the activity, people and place, which are indeed interconnected and complex to disentangle (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Pearson and Firth, 2011; Brodie *et al.,* 2011). A number of initial motivations are present which generally relate to participating in a social activity, wanting to feel more socially embedded or connected, or for others or wanting to do something positive in and for their local area or other people in the area. CG participation is shown to be an informal activity, which isn't part of an alternative or oppositional discourse (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015).

Interestingly, once participants had been involved in their community food growing project, they reported a greater sense of wellbeing, enjoyment of food growing, and associated activities, feeling more connected to their community (socially and physically), as well as

knowledge gain. CG participation is seen to comprise primary and secondary motivations, which reflect people's initial motivations to become involved in CG out of an interest to learn and to be more connected to their community, and how secondary motivations develop once CG is experienced. Chapter 8 will further discuss and reflect upon the presence of primary and secondary motivations, as well as the underlying motivational values that are present within the data. To summarise, the evidence shows that the 'people' and 'place' are more important to participants than the 'activity'; however, the analysis shows that activity is implicitly conducive to supporting the significance of local place and local people (attributes which comprise community). Chapter 7 will now focus on the external drivers influencing participation, before Chapter 8 discusses the significance and implications of the data.

Chapter 7

The External Drivers of Participation in Community Gardening

7.1 Introduction

Building on the internal drivers of participation (Chapter 6), this chapter presents the findings from the primary data (see Table 4.1) in relation to the external drivers of participation, to meet the study's fourth objective: 'To extrapolate and examine the external divers influencing people's participation in community food growing'. In applying the conceptual framework which utilises scale, a number of themes arising from the data are presented in this chapter, ordered by scale, in three sections: 1) relationships and social networks, 2) groups and organisations, and 3) wider societal and global influences, as shown in Table 7.1 (all within the context of the case study). The first scale, 'individual' and the fourth scale of local environment and place' have predominantly been addressed in Chapters 5 and 6. However, data is presented which teases out some of the contextual information given in Chapter 5 regarding partnership working. This chapter uncovers the various perspectives regarding working towards the notion of change (which means different things to different groups), and findings shed light on collaborative working in practice, with a focus on community. This chapter therefore provides insight into the external factors influencing participation.

Scale	Themes in the data
Relationships and social networks	• Partnership working: local government. • Community gardeners and knowledge. • The provision of physical resource. • Local level community food projects and networking.
Groups and organisations	• Community food growing projects: perspectives on responsibility. • Food governance: evolution and partnership working. • Community representation in partnership working.
Wider societal and global influences	• Food as political change: viewpoints on community food growing. • Food as political change: viewpoints on 'grow to sell'.

Table 7.1: Themes in the data relating to the external drivers of participation

7.2 Relationships and social networks

Applying the framework of participation, the scale of 'relationships and social networks'
follows the 'individual' scale (addressed in Chapter 6). This initial section comprises four
themes arising from the data:

- partnership working – local government

- community gardeners and knowledge

- the provision of physical resource

- local level community food projects and networking.

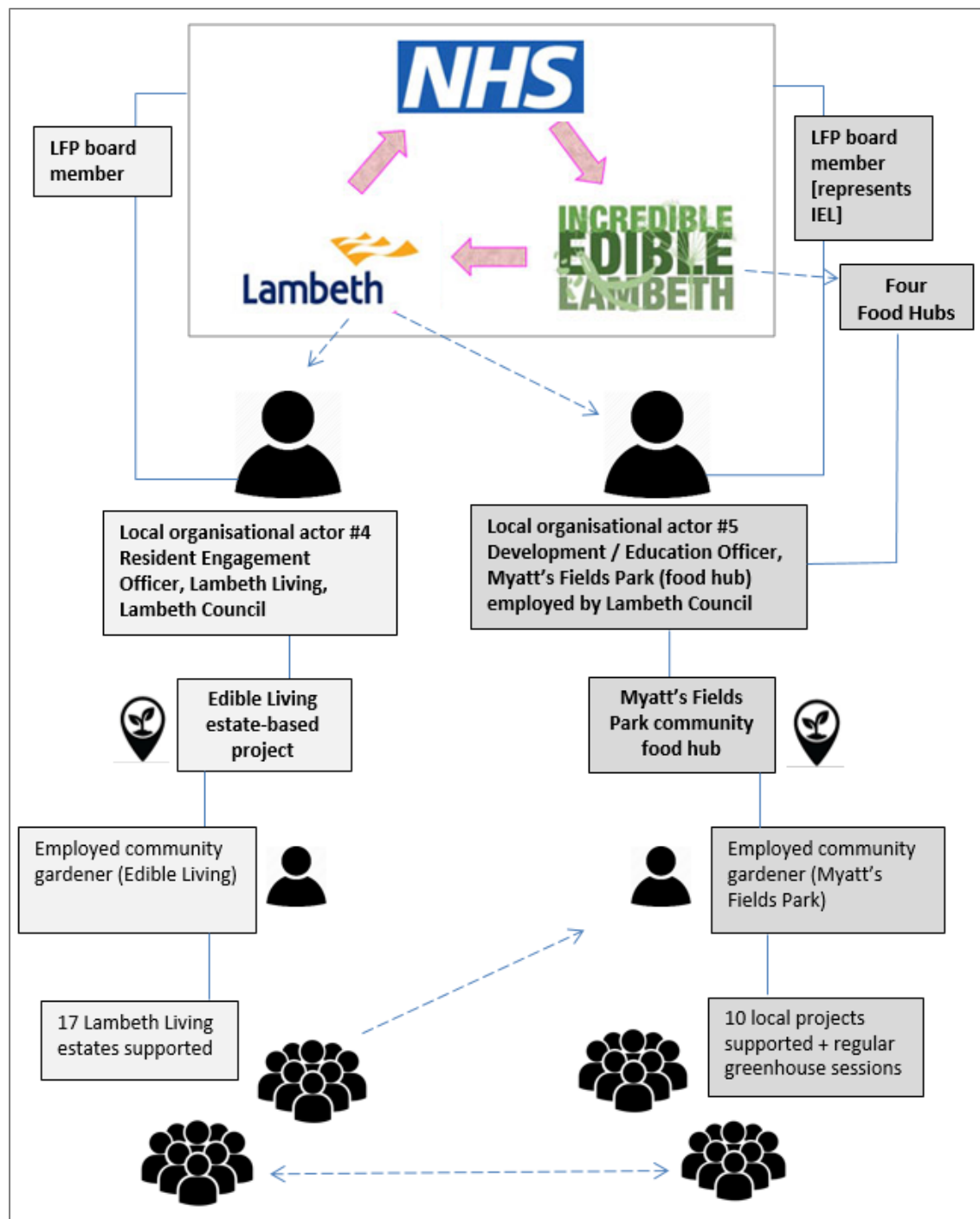Figure 7.1 visually demonstrates the structures in Lambeth referred to in this chapter.

Figure 7.1: Key people and their roles (Source: Author)

7.2.1 Partnership working - local government

The role of local government, present in all projects, is fundamentally underpinned by the notion of localism. EL is based on a direct relationship between the council (via the Resident Engagement Officer) and residents; supporting those tenants who are interested, the aim is

for tenants (largely those involved in the TRAs[35]) to essentially manage food growing on estates:

> "*I work with a couple of teams of people who come in and as I say, build the beds, get them filled with compost and then at that point, I'll link the residents up with a community outreach worker [community gardener] and it's then for them to coordinate between themselves about you know, maybe a session in the evening, just to get the activity underway.*" (Local organisational actor 4).

EL works with willing residents establish and support the development of food growing spaces, and by creating a partnership with residents, to encourage the management of projects.

The retraction of local state service provision can be seen in the case of MFP; regarded as a community resource, volunteers have taken on more responsibility in the running of activities at the site originally provided by the council, *"the council used to run the retirement lunches, now we've taken it over."* (Community project participant 010). Another respondent was largely critical of this approach "*the cooperative parks idea is part of the cut backs isn't it? They said because we can't afford to run the parks and we want to keep them beautiful you'll have to come and get involved.*" (Community project participant 013). Localism, whilst to some degree is welcomed in the context of 'progressive localism' (Bailey and Pill, 2015), in the example of EL, is for some a cover for the withdrawal of state support ultimately due to cuts to resources and funding. This has resulted in apprehension and uncertainty, creating tensions and a negative view of the council for some participants involved in the community-based projects:

> "*[MFP] only gets funding for so many times … The council don't understand the value you know, they want to knock it down and build something with concrete*

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[35] Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) are operational on a large proportion of social housing estates.

and make money but they don't understand the values. ... Since I've been here

there have been so many difficulties created because of the, the funding, the money

– people in a position of power they don't understand because they may have their

own gardens you know. What ordinary people enjoy might not be their concern.

... It makes me angry to be honest. My understanding is the people that assess what

you do, is being done are not people who know the lives of ordinary people."
(Community project participant 012).

There may be reduced support for the park due to the austerity context, but whether this underpins the reason for EL is uncertain (in terms of the management of greenspaces on estates in the long term); this however seems unlikely due to the investment from Lambeth Living (the council's social housing management organisation). This also highlights the possible level of disconnection within the council, with some departments (such as social housing) supporting and investing in the notion of community food projects, and how different types of localism, progressive and austerity (Bailey and Pill, 2015; Featherstone *et al.,* 2012), can be present within the same context.

Partnership working in the case of EL, being supported by the council, gives kudos to projects and adds an element of pride for the residents, "*It would be nice to have something with Lambeth Living on the bottom and the logo so people can see it*" (Edible Living participant 001). This also enhances the reputation of Lambeth Living (i.e. 'the council'); one respondent reflects on how the EL project has changed their view of the council, *"Lambeth Living, I've heard so many things about them that are negative ... I've had nothing but help from them."* (Edible Living participant 003). Through the project, a positive experience of Lambeth Living is generated as one community gardener reflects, *"trust and delivering is important"* (Community Gardener 080). On a number of estates, residents said that they had the idea of food growing before the project began, *"I had this idea for ages you know"* (Edible Living participant 005). However, support from the council has enabled this to be a reality; such an appreciation was commented on by respondents, and suggests a degree of

empowerment, "*if [name] didn't come on board it wouldn't have happened. I know that for a fact.*" (Edible Living participant 001). Another respondent expands on how EL has been essential in terms of organisation and support, "*otherwise it would be very difficult to organise everything and to get the materials, to prepare everything, and then you'd probably have to go back to the council anyway to get some kind of permission.*" (Edible Living participant 002). Another respondent comments on the necessity of EL support:

> "*To be honest we wouldn't be where we are now if we hadn't got [name] to begin with, and then [name] coming down and joining us as well, we wouldn't be where we are. That's absolute honesty ... [Name's] come up and we're getting more encouragement. ... we wouldn't be where we are now if we hadn't started with Edible Living, not at all.*" (Edible Living participant 003).

The following quote shows how in the case of EL, in some instances support extends beyond the project where the key person (from the council) has supported community groups with funding applications:

> "*[Name's] helped an awful lot on this ... We are getting a fair bit of support off him, especially over the last 2 months. It's been pretty busy but now it's sort of, well they've rearranged all of the different departments and he's doing other stuff ... he's actually the one doing our Lottery application for us ... He knows what he's doing, he puts his heart into it. If he's not sure of something he'll find out. He's gone through all different departments to find out this, to find out that.*" (Edible Living participant 005).

This demonstrates the key role that the Resident Engagement Officer (in representing the council) has in the case of the EL project, the estates they work with and their level of

personal investment to focus on residents' wellbeing, all contributing towards a wider change.

Partnership working in the case of EL is exemplary and unique according to one community gardener, *"I think it's pretty good I think it's pretty amazing that Lambeth Living are doing this because all the other projects I work on there's no housing association providing this stuff for free basically to residents on their demand."* (Community Gardener 080). On the estates, there is a core group of people in contact with the community gardener and who take responsibility for the growing space. The difference between working with people engaged in projects and those involved in food governance organisations (covered in section 7.3) is reflected on by one actor who reveals how this approach to partnership working isn't always easy:

> "*but that's the nature of this working … with social residents, social landlords, it's quite challenging. It's not quite the same as working with what I call the usual suspects in the public realm … You know, the food activists, they are very white middle class, very good at making their voices heard, getting stuff done, whereas people that live on estates quite often… their circumstances are quite different.*" (Local organisational actor 4).

As alluded to is the key role of the council's Resident Engagement Officer in creating the opportunities for resident participation, through empowerment. The key actor involved in MFP, too provides opportunities and resource for the local community via the greenhouse and support for ten local community food growing projects; although the food hub was an IEL initiative, it is a collaborative approach with the council, for example, the council fund the development worker role.

Focusing on the (pro-active) role of the public sector in partnership working, this section has highlighted collaborative approaches regarding the development of relationships with the community within a progressive localism approach. MFP shows a different experience

of working with the council (reflecting a difference in council departments) which is more of an 'austerity localism' context. Rather than hindering CG development and participation, the austerity context has appeared to have created opportunities in this regard (see Milbourne, 2012). The vital role and support of 'key people' has been recognised, in the establishment of CG, and this example of 'social innovation' has scope to move beyond being 'small scale' (Franklin *et al.,* 2016), for example EL are now working with 17 estates. Furthermore, having 'political' representation from the council was seen to raise esteem and give the projects kudos (Franklin *et al.,* 2016), and creates a degree of empowerment. It is apparent that working with citizens (project-participants) requires a certain understanding, and also presents challenges, as does partnership working (Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015). The next section presents evidence which showcases the important role of the community gardeners in both initiatives.

7.2.2 Community gardeners and knowledge

The desire to learn and obtain knowledge was shown to be one of the key drivers of participation (as shown in Chapter 6). This is primarily achieved though the role of the community gardeners, a dedicated resource provided by projects as part of their model, who teach participants skills and knowledge to facilitate their food growing activities and also promotes collaborative working due to such positive experiences. Participants reported how much they had learned from their community gardener: "*I've learnt a lot about, [name] is really good with about what things grow, how things grow, how to plant things and grow things on, he really is a valuable teacher, excellent. And he's just so good with the kids and the young people when they came. They just love him."* (Community project participant 010). Another respondent reflects on how valuable the community gardener is which impacts their participation.

> "*I also come because he teaches all the time, he can't stop teaching, he's wonderful,*
>
> *he's absolutely saturated with knowledge and he just passes it gently on. So you're*

just learning in transit, I don't know what the word is, it's not deliberate. I find it

extremely encouraging really." (Community project participant 013).

As outlined in Chapter 5, MFP support 10 food growing groups (which are continuously recruiting participants, or 'volunteers'), and EL is expanding to other estates across the borough. As the models have developed, community gardeners are starting to tailor their support, on reflection, which includes more skill development:

"*there's a lot of potential because there's so many estates and I think there's going to be another nine next year [...] Eighteen, yeah, so it's quite exciting so there's, we're all going to sit down in December and work out a really more detailed schedule programme of workshops where there'll be very specific learning and skills development sessions and maybe join them up as well."* (Community Gardener 080).

From undertaking their role, community gardeners feel they have learned how to best support communities:

"I assumed that I was there for eight three hour sessions where I was there to impart as much knowledge as possible. So I kind of go in hard with the talking and a lot of people just wanted to plant things. So I think I'll try and do it a bit more like that this year ... the thing is it's constantly checking up on people because lots of people doing all sorts of little things and the more you're around the better" (Community Gardener 081).

This demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of community gardeners to respond to the needs of the local communities they are working with. Another community gardener reflects on their role, *"from my experience it is, just to have someone come in whether it's just on a monthly basis, or even less regularly it, its, often the residents are just keen to show you what they've done and ask you particular questions or they want, they need help from the beginning, some that got involved a bit later, so it just depends."* (Community Gardener 080).

As such, a key aspect of these models is to work with groups to advise, encourage and support what they want to do, supporting the notion of ownership; this approach is also reflected by one participant who informs it should be about what local people want. "*Get things that people are interested in, don't plant it if they're not interested."* (Edible Living participant 001).

This section has highlighted the role community gardeners in providing resource for and in the community (via skills and learning), to enable participation in community food growing projects, and to go one step further in empowering residents. This is in response to, or linked to a decline in skills associated with the development (and dominance) of the conventional food system, and living in an urban environment (see Chapter 6). The community gardener role is based on individuals with the right kind of skills - community engagement and food growing; this enabling support role has received little attention in CG literature to date, although there is recognition of 'garden leaders' which is seen to have an impact on the success of CG (Drake, 2014). The findings show how through such relational processes (Hale *et al.,* 2011), community gardeners support and envision the users of the space (Drake and Lawson, 2014).

7.2.3 The provision of physical resource

Not only are communities provided with free access to knowledge (via community gardeners), they are also equipped with physical resource; for example, having access to resources and equipment was valued by 91% of survey respondents. This is a barrier for a lot of groups in terms of being able to source various tools and equipment, and initially setting up the space, as well as obtaining permission (for access and development). As such, many of the participants not only reported the value of personal support, but also commented on the physical resources necessary to create spaces and participate, provided via MFP or Lambeth Living. As well as the actual growing space, this also includes seedlings, soil, tools, and materials. This is of importance not only due to the barrier of a lack of physical space but also because participants reported being unable to afford the cost of such

resources, *"I did want to learn, and I'm hoping that I'll get some seeds or plants or something from somebody. Ah yes, resources, that's the word. Because that can be a problem, it's all very well saying grow your own veg but you've got to get all the stuff – and soil of course!"* (Community project participant 013). Thus, this type of support in terms of resource, coupled with the mentoring / educational support is essential in enabling participation.

Living in inner city London, a highly urbanised area, participants reported having limited personal outdoor space; as shown by the survey, 94% of respondents value having the space to grow food (73% of survey respondents valued this a lot and 21% a little). As such, projects provided access to outdoor greenspace, which allow people to grow food, *"I started coming down here because my balcony wasn't big enough in the end for planting stuff."* (Community project participant 014). The few that did have a garden expanded on the inadequacy of personal space, *"our normal garden is too small to grow vegetables."* (Edible Living participant 096). Another participant reported how the projects therefore created opportunities to be outside, *"we don't have gardens, we don't have balconies, so it's that kind of have a chair, you know, somewhere you can sit, somewhere you can read a book, somewhere you can just you know just be outside."* (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

The suitability of utilising greenspace on estates for food growing was discussed and there was consensus around the fact that *"there's a lot of green space that's wasted on estates."* (Community / estate project participant initiator 082). This is also recognised by a local actor, who feels that a better use of greenspaces on estates could widen participation, *"the one thing that estates do have is in some cases lots of open space and yes, it's getting people to engage with that, to come out of their doors."* (Local organisational actor 4). The provision of spaces and project infrastructure at the local neighbourhood level is a key aspect to participation.

It was observed that plots on estates are largely 'hybrid' (as opposed to individual plots, or completely communal) with people for example tending to a specific area, based on a loose

arrangement, with produce shared informally. This communal dimension is enjoyable and appreciated as it reduces individual's responsibility to care for a plot, "*when it all started everyone put stuff in some of the beds so it was like a joint effort it's not like one person has one bed. I don't think it matters. It wouldn't work anyway because there were too many people for everyone to have their own bed but also it would be too much to eat I think.*" (Edible Living participant 002). The community-based projects are communal with one person (community gardener or project initiator) responsible for delegating tasks to the group (which as 6.4.4 shows, is ideal for some participants). The provision of space and infrastructure is significant as a resource for participation; the following quote from a survey respondent shows the multiple benefits this has provided:

> "*I've always wanted a garden. These projects have enabled that. … I have learnt a lot over the seasons by just being hands on. It's hard work yet very rewarding. I have met similarly minded people from being outside in the garden, it's 'the best place' to be. Peaceful, uplifting, communing with nature, just walking through a wood or park is too brief to touch.*" (Survey respondentpaper_2).

Thus, investment in physical resource in urban areas (especially in areas experiencing deprivation) is significant, as it opens up opportunities for participation and for people to exercise a number of motivational values (as shown in Chapter 6). As urbanisation (land pressures, costs, ecology) is not necessarily conducive to food growing – a notion which CG challenge, support to some extent is required. An increased access to (communal) greenspaces goes someway to meeting a number of public health objectives, and has impacts on community health (in its broadest sense) (Kransey *et al.,* 2014; Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Lanier *et al.,* 2016). However, whilst participation promotes processes of learning (section 7.2.2), and space transformation (including involvement in engaging with spaces), this does not appear to be part of a political gardening discourse to do with re-claiming rights to the city (see Purcell and Tyman, 2015).

7.2.4 Local level community food growing projects and networking

The provision of resource has resulted in projects which create opportunities for (various degrees of) participation. This has fostered the desire for people to want to network with other local level projects and initiatives:

> *"[so what's your link with Myatt's Fields Park?] Yeah well that's been a great thing because you do feel, and it was feeling, although we have built up some good links over the years, you do feel, you know, again that isolation of, where are we going? And what are we doing? And I've never professed to be an expert, I mean you know, I kind of understand what you can grow and what season now … I learnt about this scheme [MFP] and it was like yes, this is exactly what we need, because we need somebody who knows what they're doing to come out, make a plan, make the sessions, communicate with people which you know I do as well, and it's given us that seasonal momentum. So, instead of us having to pre-empt, we know there'll be seedlings, we're told when to grow the seedlings, not everyone needs to know that, but we're told when to grow the seedlings, the seedlings are in the greenhouse and then when it comes to that bit…"* (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

The desire to connect with other local projects is so activities are not undertaken in isolation (to extend community, and learning), **"***With all the garden projects happening around I mean we should be able to feed off of each other. I go and look at what [the MFP community gardener] is doing in the garden and I'm learning.* (Edible Living participant 001). As such, there is scope for more organic networking to take place via local people, suggesting that the type of networking currently taking place in the borough is not accessible for project participants.

Being linked to other organisations in Lambeth was supported by the survey data and was important for 83% of respondents. Therefore, whilst networking may take place at a more

strategic level under IEL's remit, there is scope, opportunity and an aspiration for local projects to be better connected, driven by and undertaken by the users of these spaces (Drake and Lawson, 2014). This follows Firth *et al.*'s (2011) recommendation that CG participants should be encouraged to network and to share best practice, based on the premise that citizens possess local tacit knowledge (Curry and Kirwan, 2014). The next section moves on to discuss the scale of 'groups and organisation' in Lambeth involved in CG activities.

7.3 Groups and organisations

Focusing on the scale of 'groups and organisations', this section draws on data ordered in the following three themes:

- community food growing project: perspectives on responsibility
- food governance: evolution and partnership working
- partnership working, and community representation in partnership working.

7.3.1 Community food growing projects: perspectives on responsibility

The chapter so far has illustrated predominantly positive examples of partnership working and how the provision of resource has created opportunities for participation. Apparent within the data is the theme of responsibility; participants put forwards mixed views about whose responsibility it was to run community food projects. This section provides insight into what project-participants envisage the role of the council and the community to be. Some respondents saw it as their duty, as part of the community *"I think it is the people's responsibility, rather than the government, because it's our responsibility, not the governments to take care of ourselves."* (Community project participant 011). Others also held this view, but felt it was the responsibilities of others in the community, who are willing and capable (and not necessarily theirs):

"it's good here because the people who run it have got ownership over it, although I don't know whether... [name] does the most work so I don't know if she would want more support if that was available. From a volunteer point of view it is really nice that it is led by the community and not too organised." (Community project participant 007).

For others, community food growing projects are more the community's responsibility as they are outside the council's remit, *"that's probably a community responsibility. It's lovely if the council can be involved but I don't think it's their primary function."* (Community project participant 008). Another respondent had a similar viewpoint and said "*I'm guessing the council has enough to do anyway with the cuts and everything.*" (Edible Living participant 002).

Others feel strongly about the council funding and supporting such projects, "*I think the council should do it all the time and fund it all the time, I really think that.*" (Community project participant 014). Another respondent expressed how he felt the council was responsible but ineffective in supporting projects:

"The council don't understand the value you know, they want to knock it down and build something concrete here. The project is overall from the council but the project is run by volunteers. Since I have been here there have been so many difficulties, the funding, the money ... since I came here the problem has been every year, the funding is going to stop. That worry is a problem. The funding people who decide the funding are not people who live around here ... The financial worries are discouraging, I was discouraged! It's not about giving to MFP or Brockwell Park [but supporting people to grow food], it should be part of a plan to push this plan forward by unfortunately it's not." (Community project participant 012).

Rather than hold a dualistic sense of responsibility, other respondents, commonly expressed the need or opportunity for partnership working (in terms of a shared responsibility) with ideas coming from the community, with support from the council, *"I think the council need to make it easy for it to happen, so I know with here, having some protection over the land, so communities don't have to rent a really expensive thing … So like helping in that way by allocating some areas I think would probably be the most useful thing."* (Community project participant 007). This rationale for partnership working is in part due to a self-recognition of lack of resources within the community, *"I think it's both our responsibility. I think it's both. [talk together] If they can help us do it, which they have, and then we keep it going. [Talk together] See the problem is we don't have the means to get everything ourselves."* (Edible Living group interview).

Another respondent felt as though the council have a role to play in working with community food projects, in trying to help promote engagement, *"I think it's two-fold, I think it's a combination of both really, residents tend not to know how to get involved in community… so it's education by the council and then commitment by the rest of them, so really they have to marry together."* (Edible Living participant 001). Another respondent highlights how it should lie with "*the community [for] new ideas*" but how *"this must be the priority of people in power, to encourage people."* (Community project participant 012). Thus, the debate around the role of local government and communities appears to be complex with a range of viewpoints held by participants but with a view that the council do have influence.

Throughout the interviews, respondents on their own accord also spoke of examples of unsuccessful community food growing projects, where there hadn't been a local desire from the community (i.e. no local ownership):

> *"[they] tried to hand it over to them, but it just didn't work, there weren't enough people there situated really, it was right on an estate where people didn't particularly ask for it to be put there I think and there wasn't that group of people*

who lived there who were interested in it in the beginning so really we, other

people came and did training there, like I did and there wasn't that, it just wasn't

the right place." (Community Gardener 080).

This illustrates how projects involved in the study are built on a community desire and good collaborative relationships. The survey data supports this notion of collaborative working as 97% stated that receiving support from organisations in Lambeth was important. Whilst data in this section has reflected different opinions regarding political involvement, there is a general consensus that activities should be co-productive, and have some sort of support from the council. There is some degree of empathy from participants regarding austerity, and a sense of anger from other respondents regarding the impact of this. Nevertheless, there was agreement that projects should predominantly be 'community' projects, with a general welcomed vision of co-productive working (Franklin *et al.,* 2016), in recognition that communities do not want to go bear ultimate responsibility, or drive for projects. Finally, it is important that such partnership arrangements are based on the availability and accessibility of land (Drake and Lawson, 2014).

7.3.2 Food governance: evolution and partnership working

This section uncovers further data on food governance structures in Lambeth (outlined in Chapter 5) by highlighting some differences in viewpoints (expanding on the process of partnership working in practice). Whilst ultimately the organisations involved in the LFP are united by the common focus of 'food', there is diversity in terms of how different organisations approach this (through the example of food growing) resulting in a range of working practices and viewpoints.   Whilst the proliferation of community-based food growing activities across the borough has resulted in a range of positive outcomes for those engaged (discussed in Chapter 6), it has caused some degree of tension at the strategic level.

These tensions, apparent throughout the data are ultimately to do with, as one organisational actor informs, working out 'who does what', as organisations in the borough

developed at different times, *"all of the issues that we have, IEL, we have the Lambeth Food Partnership and we're still working out where they fit together at the moment"* (Local organisational actor 2). All actors recognise the challenges of partnership working, *"it's a lumpy old business. It's like lumpy porridge there's a lump here and a lump there"* (Local organisational actor 5). Tensions around territory are noted, particularly as IEL was the first organisation in the borough to support food growing related activities as their remit, and with the proliferation of a number of initiatives around food, increasing the sense of competition. *"I think there's elements within IEL that have a little bit of, why do we need the Food Partnership? Especially as IEL is working on kind of expanding its remit anyway"* (Local organisational actor 2).

Perspectives around the lack of diversity in food governance structures in general are also present. For example, one organisational actor questioned the inclusivity of IEL and its representational ability:

> *"I don't know if its [IEL] a constitution an organisation or what it is, but I feel like it's inclusive I don't feel like it is a clique, but it's about whether it has got the ability to reach out and really represent all of the groups that maybe don't necessarily naturally want to go and sit in a meeting and talking about food growing."* (National organisational actor 3).

Access to resources and funding applications is another reason for some of the tensions for one actor *"it's this awful conflict all the time … we were all competing and there were all these models and there still are to some degree and that's what we're trying to iron out a bit by working together"* (Local organisational actor 5). One actor reflects on how they are largely responsive to the funding environment, *"the organisations are led by money and by what is available because they have to keep paying themselves salaries and you know… the thing is*

people have their own objectives but they are at the mercy of what the funders want to fund." (National organisational actor 6).

The council implementing their own initiative has also caused some degree of tension. The EL project, whilst hugely positive for those engaged in it, is not viewed favourably by some involved in other community food projects, which is due to the issue of territory and ideas, thus:

> "*...undermining community group partnerships which we've already got going. Because there's [the hubs], Incredible Edible was trying to get going ...it would be natural to, to just sit down with them and say how does Lambeth [council] support the hubs? How do we not reduplicate? ... I don't know ... four sessions, [they're helping] with the materials, [they are] doing things that I'm not doing and they wanted other things on the estate anyway, so, there's so much to do anyway. I don't know where [they're] going, what [they] want to do ... and then it's silly inasmuch as everybody else has been geared up to start setting themselves up to do this too with exactly the same client base.*" (Community Gardener 081).

This shows tensions around competition in terms of using similar approaches aimed at the same communities. This section has illustrated that tensions are apparent between local organisations and groups, suggesting that the influence of wider factors are largely at play (around various aspects of competition). Thus, in one respect, there is potential for better co-productive working (Franklin *et al.,* 2016) at the strategic level, despite the presence of the LFP. There is scope to, reflexively, share learning from experiences regarding the development of such new governance formations (for example in the case of Jones *et al.,* 2016) for learning in Lambeth, and for other contexts comprising similar arrangements.

7.3.3 Community representation in partnership working

As alluded to previously, community food growing has transitioned from a theoretical concept to a practical method for engagement. Actors reflect on how food growing is a useful tool to achieve a range of objectives:

> *"Sometimes it's the gateway drug, the food growing to communities, it's often a good way to bring in people that wouldn't otherwise come together… I'll come and do a bit of digging. Especially children or older people, why bother going to a meeting if they don't feel that they'll be listened to? Or don't think they'll have any influence. But they can be helpful or have something to teach, so useful as well."* (Local organisational actor 1).

It is recognised that there is little community representation within the (strategic) organisations in terms of the people engaged from the food growing projects in governance structures:

> *"We definitely don't [reflect the diversity of Lambeth] at the strategic level. [Why do you think that is?] I think a lot of communities stay in their communities. So there is still people doing stuff but they're doing it at a local level and we link with them at the events that we are, when we have a big event that does reflect Lambeth, but actually, they're, generally if you're from a poor area you're focussing on your local [area] … it tends to be more white middle class people living around less connected to… I don't think it really matters, as long as you're, it's not a barrier between the community and the organisation which we're, I don't think it is. You're never going to represent everyone who lives in Lambeth. I think Portuguese is actually the second language of the borough, which is quite well spoken. I don't think I've ever met anyone who is Portuguese on any of these events, you know"* (Local organisational actor 2).

Another actor reflects more on the disconnection between the people who are involved in food growing and those who are at the strategic level, holding the view that better (or more) participatory ways of conducting the partnership are needed:

> *"I think it's a lot of middle class white women what have all these ideas which is good because they are women who have power and have the time and money to dedicate to these issues, but the borough is made up of 100 different social classes and races, so I wish that they would do more participation and try to understand what people think about food and how they can enhance the good things that are there instead of saying well we are just going to change it all. The community food growing projects like that are fantastic and they generally do include people from different backgrounds and they celebrate when people come with their countries recipes or whatever they are very warm and good places that have that kind of integration. So I don't understand why don't you take those people's opinions and say what do you think food should be in the borough? However, it's more like, well we're helping in the partnership because we know about it and we have time and we are not a single mother with 3 kids that has to work."* (National organisational actor 6).

This comment suggests that further research or consultation is needed regarding understanding community participation at this level. Data shows a general lack of awareness at the community level around food governance organisations in the borough. Figure 7.2 demonstrates that a small number of survey participants were fully aware of various food organisations and initiatives and there was more awareness of two out of the four food hubs (MFP and Brockwell Park) (although this could be due to a greater involvement of MFP in the study). Throughout the interviews there was also a lack of awareness regarding local food governance structures in the borough; only two participants had heard of the LFP but were unaware of what they do. In terms of IEL, two participants had heard of them and a further two participants knew what they did; one of these

respondents had attended a few meetings, but with little practical or actual fruition from that involvement. Ultimately, these findings suggest that there is a degree of disconnect between those people in a strategic position and those involved 'on the ground' in community food growing projects. This draws on debates around community representation generally in the context of community-based activity (Chapter 3).
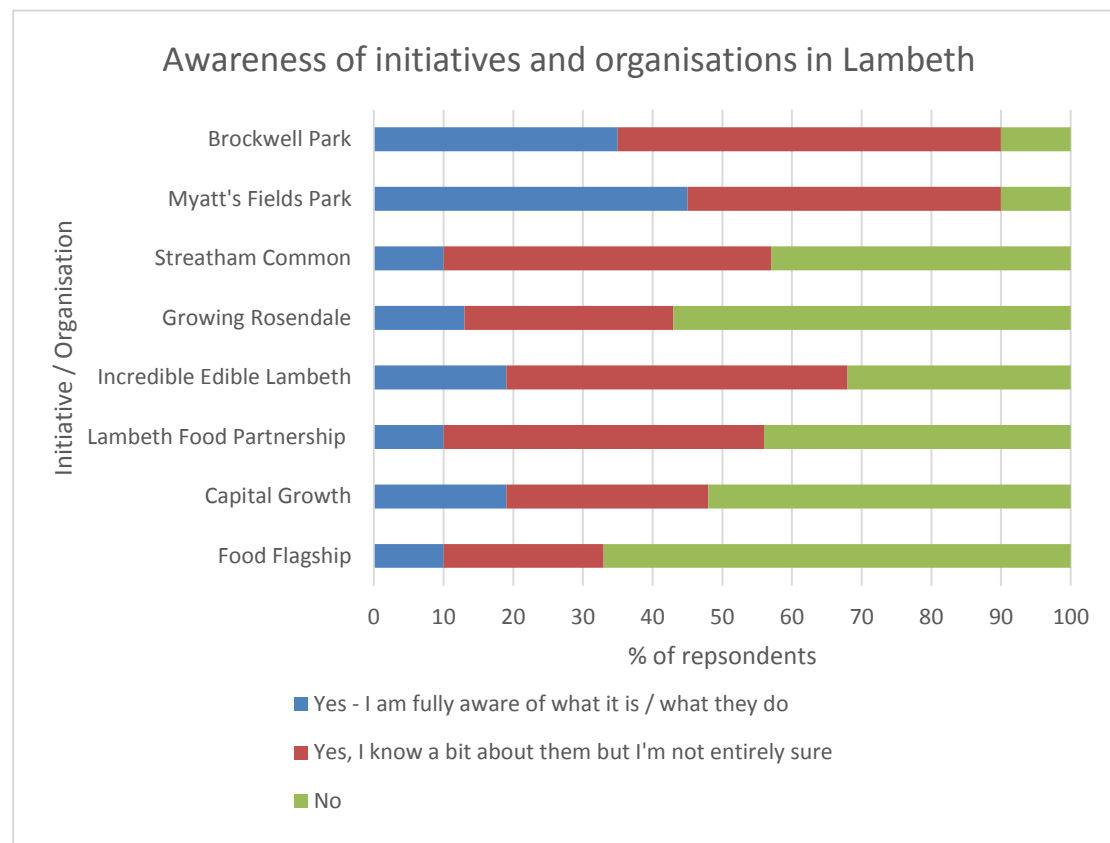

Figure 7.2: Awareness of organisations and initiatives in Lambeth (Source: Author)

Whilst it is recognised that community representation at the strategic level may be lacking for a range of reasons (for example lack of desire to become engaged in such activities, or a lack of awareness) it should be recognised that it is still locally-driven in the sense that it is still Lambeth citizens (organisational actors for example) who have worked to form and currently drive these structures. These have been informed by the activities at the grassroots level and the wider (food system) issues, out of a care for the locality, local people and to see transformative change. Moreover, it is not to suggest that there necessarily needs to be representatives from local food growing projects at the food governance level, but a

genuine understanding of the community and their desire for projects. It is particularly important for communities which lack a voice in formal structures and organisations to be able to have input into what types of spaces are created in their area and what they are used for; positively working with and involving the users of spaces, is thought to enhance social rights (Drake and Lawson, 2014; Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Lanier, 2016). As stated in section 7.2, participants' desire for change in their local area should not be underestimated (Drake and Lawson, 2014), and there needs to be a recognition that the processes to achieve this may vary across the borough.

7.4 Wider societal and global influences

The final scale draws on themes in the data relating to food as political change, namely:

- viewpoints on community food growing
- viewpoints on the concept 'grow to sell'

7.4.1 Food as political change: viewpoints on community food growing

There is a perception from organisational actors that the motivations of those involved in governance structures are to do with 'political' change, whereas project-participants motivations are perceived to be about improving the area where they live, as well as the associated benefits obtained through participation (as shown by the data presented in Chapter 6). A discourse throughout the organisational actor interviews centres on 'political' awareness and 'political' change. It is apparent that the 'political' throughout the interviews is about working towards food system change at the broader level. "*So the strategic level… definitely people who are a bit more politically aware, big picture aware … want to do something about obesity or climate change or, you know, big issues.*" (Local organisational actor 1). Another actor reflects on how they see politically framed change are being more abstract:

> "*So I think that actually, that the motivation ... is much more politically framed. I think they're much more about changing the system. I think they're much more about a bigger objective ... it's almost more of an abstract argument than the one about just going and doing it... whereas other people, growing food is part of a bigger dialogue about environmental sustainability, about people, about all of those other things, about political structures, so I think that that's quite interesting.*" (National organisational actor 3).

The same actor goes on to say how engagement in food growing is a tangible way to help raise awareness of wider issues, "*I think that until you engage people in that model of growing food, they don't understand the realities of growing food.*" (National organisational actor 3).

In contrast, overall, participants do not see themselves in terms of their involvement in the projects as necessarily 'political', regardless of how organisational actors perceive their engagement, for example "*it's about connecting food and place and people you know, people, it's about locality, people being able to grow food where they live and understanding the role that they have in the system, in the food system.*" (Local organisational actor 4). However, some participants (although a minority) do state how they feel 'part of something bigger' since engaging in food growing projects (evident from a couple of community-based project participants). "*There's a movement about eco-friendly this, that and the other; I'm not political, but I do understand it and want to be part of it.*" (Community project participant 014)*.* Another quote shows how people, from engaging in the project, feel as though they are working towards achieving a greater good:

> "*I feel I am part of something whereas before I felt very alone. People would say 'oh you're wasting your time picking up the litter on this bad corner' you know, or they'll say 'oh it's lovely' and I'll say 'come and help me'. But when I come here, I feel that growing things is a normal thing to do and also that it's a very exciting*

thing to do because you can see what he's achieving and he's also explaining it."

(Community project participant 013).

Some of the community-based project participants informed that being with like-minded people, contributed towards feeling part of something bigger (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015). This was not common across all participant interviews (especially those from estate-based projects) and thus deserves further research to fully substantiate.

Figure 7.3 shows how people stated the importance of specific attributes, considered as wider or political, in terms of their initial and current involvement in the projects; attributes include: being part of a wider movement, an alternative to supermarkets, to improve the local area, to contribute positively towards the environment. Of most importance to respondents, was to improve the area in which they live (important for 100% of respondents initially and 97% of respondents since involvement), followed by contributing positively towards the environment (important for 94% of respondents which stayed the same during involvement in projects). Being part of a wider movement was important for 85% of respondents initially. Projects as creating an alternative to supermarkets mattered the least to people (however it was still important for over 60% of people). Throughout the interviews a lack of regard for 'political involvement' also chimes with the lack of awareness and understanding around food governance structures in the borough (as discussed).
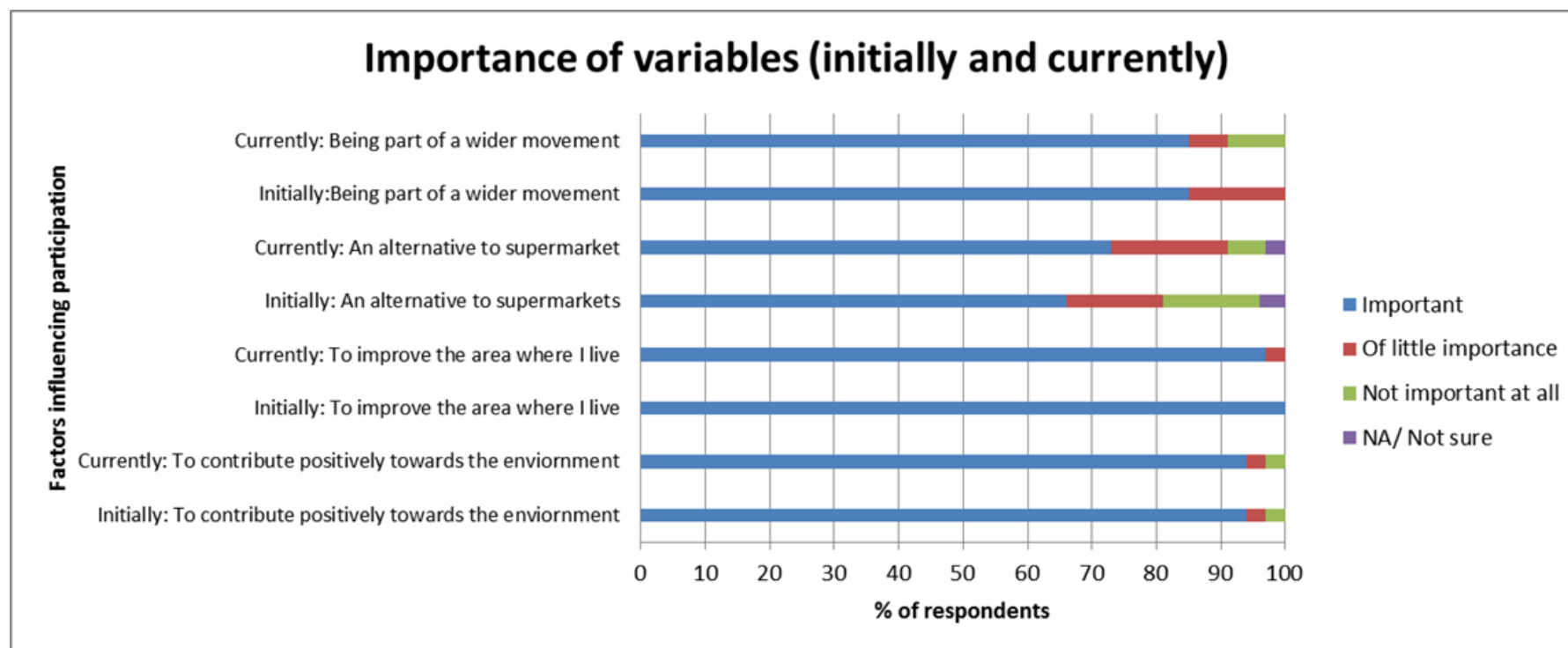
Figure 7.3: Importance of variables influencing participants' initial and current participation (Source: Author)

It is evident that the more strategic actors hold more instrumental (political) reasons for engaging in the area of food systems and food governance compared to the participants included in the study. However, as one actor notes, participating in food growing is likely to raise awareness of the realities of food production generally, which can be observed as a secondary outcome (see Chapter 8). Whilst survey participants value the environmental contributions and feeling part of a wider movement, this is not a strong theme within the qualitative data. Rather than being driven by more conceptual ideas or as part of 'political; discourses, the data shows a desire to participate in something tangible and has aesthetical outcomes for participations and their local community (place and people), which generates meaning and stimulates engagement (Hale *et al.,* 2011). Although the data does not fit with more strategic level political discourses, this is not to suggest that on the ground project-participants and actors working with them, do not desire 'change' and 'working towards the greater good'. This is to some degree consistent with findings that show that CG participants do not frame their participation as political (Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2015).

7.4.2 Food as political change: viewpoints on the concept of 'grow to sell'

This final section shows that there are clear differences in viewpoints regarding the role of participation in community food growing projects, and the vision for projects, with the data highlighting a key discourse in relation to how strategic actors view the ideal purpose of such projects. Many of the organisational actors debated the potential of community food growing to contribute towards the local food agenda particularly in terms of economic/environmental sustainability; within most of the interviews, the notion of 'sustaining' community food growing in terms of 'growing to sell' was revealed. This opinion was strongly held by the more 'strategically' focused actors, those not directly engaged with projects at the grassroots level:

> "*And growing food to sell, finding it, making it, trying to… we've actually got quite*
>
> *a lot of people who want to buy the food particularly restaurants … There isn't*

quite enough food yet and there's not enough confidence in the community to

think that they could actually grow to sell. So we've done a few projects ... but

we're struggling to find the right financial model and the right kind of leadership

for those projects." (Local organisational actor 1).

For one actor, community food production from this point of view positively impacts the food system which in turn, generates social outcomes:

"*And I think the thing, obviously being a community can be a motivation in itself,*

but actually the community stuff needs to happen on the way to doing something

else so that you're focused not on I'm here because I want to make friends, I'm here

because I want to grow food and I want to do this. And I'll make friends as a point

of being here.... I don't think you go right, I'm going to join this because I want to

socially interact, or if you do you're going to probably be socially awkward. ...if

you actually get involved in something that's saying right, well what we want to

do is grow this much food for this purpose or we want to raise money or we want

to work with young people to do X, Y and Z. If there's a sort of bigger motivation

that leads you to be more productive, I think that they are the gardens that tend

to sort of thing." (National organisational actor 3).

However, as has been shown, project-participants' data challenges this viewpoint. The survey data also highlights the lack of interest in the grow to sell dimension of community food growing projects, with only 15% of survey respondents at the start of their involvement, (16% of people at the time of survey completion) stating they feel this is important. On the contrary, the sharing or giving away of produce was considered important by 100% of respondents, for community food growing projects generally (88% important, 12% little importance). Furthermore, 97% felt it was important for people to take home the produce grown (91% important, 3% of little importance) which illustrates the value of the communal nature of projects as opposed to growing for other enterprising

purposes. The following quote from a participant who initiated a project shows the reason behind why they wanted to be less focused on production due to a community ethos:

> "*it was taken on by one of the guys who would take over the whole plot and grow tonnes of potatoes, tonnes of onions, tonnes of everything and then it would be for everybody. Which was nice but it meant only he was working on there. So we said … our vision, it's a place for, I mean I've got a friend who says 'it's not about the plants, it's about the people', it's a neighbourhood community development. I mean this is an awful neighbourhood, but it's the kind of neighbourhood where you don't often get the chance to say hello to each other, and you know there's a lot of people who are isolated or have isolated times, I have had them myself, and it's been a place to, I use that word 'hub' but it's been a place that people can come.*" (Community / estate project participant initiator 082).

Whilst some advocate that grow to sell is a viable activity for community food growing projects, some actors however recognise that grow to sell may be an attractive aspect to existing projects, should project participants wish to pursue this (reflecting an appreciation for local ownership):

> "*It's responding to what people tell us that they'd like to do … we've all got different ideas about food growing and for me I want it to be meaningful, so it's not like a potato here and a carrot there, it's like we're going to grow some food here because I'm very interested in supporting grow to sell initiatives. This is something that I want to look into where there's an appetite for that.*" (Local organisational actor 4).

Although commonly acknowledging the need for a local food economy, some actors, who work closely with projects, feel strongly that it is not the role of community food projects to be tasked with this, as the 'grow to sell' principle in this context is unrealistic and unachievable:

> "*I guess the biggest flaw is that there's been a lot of spaces, this idea of becoming commercial for food growing and it's not a realistic, unless, it's not a very realistic vision in London. [name] talks about grow to sell. Unless you can sell it at a very high margin because it's just around the corner, your margins are tiny anyway … as far as I know, there is no one making a living off of that, people are just selling some stuff. And that's what it is, it's a hobby … it's not ever something that's going to take you out of the need of other sustain, I think that's sometimes lost in it. … I think it's good to sell the excess to help fund projects. I don't think it's, you won't have a career as an urban farmer unless you have five or six hectares with it.*" (Local organisational actor 2).

This debate is one which the community gardeners also had opinions about. Recognised as separate things, one community gardener is interested in the notion of how to combine the two (without neglecting the support for either):

> "*coming from working commercially on farms, I've also got an issue with funding for community groups doing things on a commercial scale, I don't quite agree with that. I think you've got to concentrate on being educational and I don't think they should step on the toes of people who are growers, I think that's quite important.*" (Community Gardener 080).

Another community gardener has stronger views about the role of community food projects for food supply or for commercial activity, *"the idea was to grow stuff for local restaurants and things, but again, you're not going to get anything done on the spaces like that. Why the fuck are you going to grow for restaurants? It's an addled concept from start to finish."* (Community Gardener 081). This community gardener goes on to talk more widely about commercial food production and the city, with it needing to take place on a larger scale than community food growing:

"*go to the market garden areas in the green belt and do it on a scale where it makes a difference. Basically, local food is Kent. In south London. … That's partly why I don't go to meetings because it's sort of a different kind of things. When it comes to landscape architects or that sort of thing, they're always on the right page, they always see it in terms of looking what the users want and trying to design the space around that. So that's a very similar way of looking at problems.*" (Community Gardener 081).

Interestingly, the same person takes a more critical view towards strategic partnership working; from their point of view, the more conceptual perspectives are not necessarily in line with the grassroots ethos of community food growing.

"*They're quite… it's all about carbon footpath and this kind of stuff, a carbon tax, that's what you want … but nothing is going on stream fast enough to make a difference. And stuff like the Caribbean's growing some turnips isn't going to make no difference whatsoever, really isn't. Stop worrying about carbon, stop worrying about food miles, stop worrying about recycling and start looking on these spaces on estates and thinking well how do we make these liveable spaces, and that's more a kind of community landscape. It's not even about vegetables, it's about how, people use the spaces, making sure they're well maintained, making sure there's the budget to do that, having the community involved, having playgrounds, having this, having that, if people want to grow flowers, let them bloody grow flowers. And if people want to grow vegetables, let them do that, think about having communal spaces, not all being kind of privatised out to people's little plots … It's about living well in the city is ultimately what it's about, wellbeing, living well in the city, community, people who might be on the margins finding a way back in.*" (Community Gardener 081).

As demonstrated by this section, engaging in more strategically focussed aspirations isn't a commonly held desire and, for some appears to be too abstract and disconnected from how some of the 'on the ground' actors and project-participants view community food projects. Some participants are aware of the wider objectives of food growing generally, and appreciate the value of small local projects, whilst others place value on supporting local businesses:

> *"why are we so keen to grow our own food and I know it's lovely, but why are we still trying to grow food when people are trying to make their living selling food … To me it's a very odd thing. There's a lot of uncomfortable assumptions behind a project like this, like when we're growing food here, we're not buying it in the market; that's a bit basic but its more or less it, because our market is part of Brixton."* (Community project participant 013).

What has been demonstrated here is although the importance of local food has been recognised, there is some level of contention around the role of community food growing projects in being tasked with this agenda.

Resident's desire for engagement in projects based on a 'co-produced' ethos (discussed in section 7.3) is also supported by the community gardeners. "*Getting people to use their spaces in a way which develops them, that's good for them. Of course it's about the people, it's their fucking land!!*" (Community Gardener 081). As such, as one actor states, it is about local control, *"it's about empowerment and just making people feel that they don't need to say oh let's do this and let's do that, they can just get up and do it themselves if they want."* (National organisational actor 6). As has been shown, the project models included in this study support this notion. This final section has ultimately emphasised tensions around envisioning community food growing spaces as self-sufficient models - a future vision for some, but recognised as unachievable or undesirable by others, particularly community gardeners and project-participants. This warns of the contested nature of the use of urban

space for food growing, and local 'control' of these spaces (especially for those who lack a 'voice'), and the importance of the approaches taken in the case studies. The models in the study support local residents in a variety of ways, in having aspirations for their community and the area in which they live, which is increasingly important in light of the numerous issues urban residents currently face. Whilst the selling of produce may be an emerging type of CG and thought to broaden conceptions of community, for some (see Drake, 2014), existing projects shouldn't be given over to strategic actors' desire for CG spaces to be economic spaces. The desire for CG to be social and not economic (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Pourais *et al.,* 2016) demonstrates that such CG approaches can be successful in transforming urban spaces for the common good, emphasising the overall importance of genuine ownership to ensure communities have control over CG in their neighbourhoods (Pearson and Firth, 2012; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Drake and Lawson, 2014; Nolan and March, 2016).

7.5 Summary of Chapter 7

This chapter has revealed a number of external drivers of participation in community food growing projects, at various scales; it has illustrated successful partnership approaches (i.e. progressive localism Featherstone *et al.,* 2012; Bailey and Pill, 2015) in establishing 'new forms of community involvement' via community food growing projects, founded on collaboration with, and an understanding of the users of spaces, which promote community ownership and empowerment (Drake and Lawson, 2014; Pearson and Firth, 2012; Firth *et al.,* 2011). This is demonstrative of progressive approaches however, the degree of control and power participants' value, differs. The findings show that a key aspect of local level support is provided through employed community gardeners, who are skilled in community engagement and food growing; this informal and communal sharing of knowledge facilitates learning, which leads to empowerment and independence. This is coupled with the provision of physical resource to initiate projects, through the provision of space, project

infrastructure, which overcomes barriers of permission, a lack of financial and knowledge resource, in a context where there is a lack of outdoor space.

A desire for inter-project networking comes from a position of empowerment, and also suggests that current networks in operation are not accessible for project participants / do not currently reach all participants or project types. Ultimately, the data shows how such projects should be 'community' projects, driven by the community, but supported by the council. This chapter has shown that strategic level partnership working is not without challenges (Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015) as it has proved to be competitive on the ground level / in practice regarding community food growing; there is scope for Lambeth (and other contexts), to learn from such difficulties in this area. Finally, the data shows how there is a difference in perspective regarding strategic-level actors whose perspectives centre on wider scale (food system) change, and participants who are concerned with local level change, in the sense of neighbourhood or personal change. As shown, there is a lack of desire for projects to be economic spaces (Veen *et al.,* 2015; Pourais *et al.,* 2016), and findings do not suggest that projects fit into the discourse around alternative urban agricultural practices for wider food system change, however this is not to say that projects cannot contribute towards this to some degree.

Chapter 8

Developing Communities' Gardens

8.1 Introduction

The practice of community gardening is becoming increasingly acknowledged and recognised for the multiple positive outcomes generated including for example health, social and environmental benefits, particularly in urban areas where multiple forms of deprivation exist (see Holland, 2004; Caraher and Dowler, 2007; Lovell *et al.*, 2014; Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Nordh *et al.*, 2016). To deepen understandings of the social aspects of CG, and to further knowledge on motivations, this study explored participation in informal CG from a person-centred perspective, and as situated practice. It did this within the case study context of Lambeth by focusing on participants from two CG 'models' - the council's Edible Living scheme on estates, and Myatt's Fields Park food hub supporting local community food growing projects. This revealed the importance of CG as reconnecting and embedding spaces – socially and physically, and the provision of resource not only through supportive governance arrangements but also through principles associated with participation and community empowerment.

The study's conceptual framework was informed by literature from within the fields of community development (from a regeneration perspective), participation and alternative food networks. This unique intersection of ideas from different literatures has developed knowledge on CG, particularly in terms of understanding 'causation' through understanding the wider multiple drivers and processes that influence participation. To show how the study's research question and objectives have been met, this concluding chapter firstly summarises the study's approach and key findings before outlining the development of the conceptual framework and how the study has met the four objectives. It then closes by providing some key recommendations for research and practice, which given the applied nature of the topic of community gardening, are largely connected.

8.2 Furthering understanding of community gardening participation: key contributions to knowledge

This research comes at an opportune time where activities such as CG are becoming more popular features of urban landscapes, reflecting their many different expressions, internationally (Eitzenberg and Fenster, 2015; Firth *et al.,* 2011; Veen *et al.,* 2015). It contributes towards understanding the emergence of new governance arrangements, seen namely through public sector interest and support for CG, given their contribution towards a wide range of policy objectives (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Franklin *et al.,* 2016). Crucially, in highlighting the socio-political nature of the case study context, this study embeds CG activity within wider urban food related governance activity and, in applying more 'progressive' framings, reveals the presence of multiple narratives within CG activity – demonstrating the complexities of *community* and *food* activity.

The conceptual framework utilises a multi-scalar approach to explore the various drivers influencing participation, informed by a critical realist philosophy concerned with causation. In meeting the study's first objective, the framework was applied to the case study of Lambeth, an active and innovative 'food' borough, and one which has high levels of deprivation – a prime example of heightened city living. Participation was explored with people from two CG 'models' to provide an insight into the multiple drivers of participation; the key themes deriving from the empirical chapters are summarised in Table 8.1. Although two models have been the subject of this study, many other expressions of CG exist – this study advocates for further in-depth research into these different formations.

	Scale (of factors influencing participation)	Themes in the data (interwoven)	Chapter
1. Internal drivers	Individual	• Reconnection and experiences of growing food (activity). • Social dimensions to participation (people). • The importance of the local urban neighbourhood (place).	Chapter 6
2. External Drivers	Relationships and social networks	• Partnership working: local government. • Community gardeners and knowledge. • The provision of physical resource. • Local level community food projects and networking.	Chapter 7
	Groups and organisations	• Community food growing projects: perspectives on responsibility. • Food governance: evolution and partnership working. • Community representation in partnership working.	Chapter 7
	Local Environment and Place	• The city of London and food governance in London. • The borough of Lambeth and Lambeth's food context. • Evolution of food governance structures in Lambeth. • Evolution of food growing in Lambeth. • Case study projects.	Chapter 5 (6 & 7)
	Wider societal and global influences	• Food as political change: viewpoints on community food growing. • Food as political change: viewpoints on 'grow to sell'.	Chapter 7

Table 8.1: Key themes in the data in relation to the conceptual framework

As will be shown throughout the remainder of this chapter, this study makes three key contributions to knowledge, which are now briefly summarised. Firstly, the design, initial implementation, and subsequent development of the explanatory conceptual framework is a unique tool in furthering understanding of CG from a personal centred, situated

practice, rooted in space and place (Cornwall, 2002; Gaventa, 2006; Brodie *et al.,* 2011), which recognises the influence of a number of drivers. By taking into account a broad range of factors from the individual to the global scale, the framework has responded to calls from the CG literature regarding the need to explore the influence of local contexts (Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Mintz and McManus, 2014; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Milbourne, 2012) and has also developed understandings of motivations (Veen *et al.,* 2012; Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Scheromm, 2015; Veen *et al.,* 2015). In moving beyond singular accounts of CG activity, the application of the conceptual framework has resulted in the identification of the internal and external drivers, and underpinning processes, across various scales to provide a holistic insight into people's participation in CG. As such, applying this new framework incorporating community development and regeneration literature, has generated new knowledge on the topic of CG participation, but may also have relevance for participation in other forms of activity. As this literature on CG, and food system change is inherently 'applied' in nature being concerned with real world change, the findings have relevance for practice. As such, this study contributes insight and learning on how to support and develop neighbourhood based CG, particularly when aiming to involve residents / non-traditional activist citizens.

Secondly, this study has revealed how CG participation enables people to (re)connect to, or to be more embedded in various aspects of society which they are currently disconnected from. This is made possible through the tangible site of the urban neighbourhood, promoting a 'reconnecting' or 'embedded' participation, developing the notion of '(re)connection' traditionally applied within an AFN framing (Kneafsey *et al.,* 2008). Such participation is driven by a number of urban negativities, and as such, CG offers respite from the everyday experiences of city living, and are spaces of care for the community. As such, the 'community' aspects of CG spaces, namely connections to *people* and *place*, initially take precedence over the food dimensions to projects. In line with a

rise in informal expressions of participation more generally, CG spaces enable the practice of a local, informal 'political action' centred on a desire for local level change. Therefore, although supporting claims that CG have the ability to produce 'political agency' (Crossan *et al.,* 2016), this study furthers understandings of, and debates surrounding food growing as acts of 'quiet' sustainability (Smith and Jehlička, 2013; Kneafsey *et al.,* 2017; Pottinger, 2016), as opposed to overtly political spaces. This study therefore reveals how CG projects are a conduit for empowerment, local level change, and new expressions of community within contemporary city life, and shows the various meanings attached to CG for participation to occur.

The third key contribution centres on CG governance and the approaches and principles to partnership working to support CG participation, informed by community development and UK regeneration literature (e.g. Fraser, 2005; Brednt, 2009; Bailey and Pill, 2015). This study contributes to existing studies focusing on the more prominent role of the public sector in CG development (Witheridge and Morris, 2016; Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Crossan *et al.,* 2016) by uncovering some of the 'on the ground' processes within these new arrangements. The findings demonstrate how different partnership arrangements involving the community, and the third and public sectors, provide various support for communities and the neighbourhood level, to enable initial and continued participation in CG. This is predominantly enabled by a number of key actors within the borough, who have an awareness and appreciation of local participatory cultures (Williams, 2005), as well as wider issues, and have influence 'downwards' with communities, as well as at the strategic level. Of importance, is how activity aligned to 'progressive empowerment', and 'radical-activist transformative' communitarian approaches can work together within this context at a strategic, and community level, to promote change through CG activity, which in the case of the study extends beyond food system discourses. As such, within new food governance and

partnership arrangements involving various actors and approaches, *change* regarding people's life experiences must remain a central factor, to overcome some of the many pressing challenges society currently faces.

8.3 Understanding the drivers of participation in community gardening

Exploring CG participation from a person-centred perspective, and considering it as a situated practice, this study has revealed a number of factors influencing participation. Firstly, the analysis of the empirical data has identified a number of internal and external drivers influencing CG participation, demonstrated by Figure 8.1. Secondly, as well as the presence of specific drivers, the findings have also revealed the importance of associated principles and processes. As such, the development of the conceptual framework, informed by the empirical data, now incorporates and presents a number of drivers of participation as well as underpinning principles and processes. The application of the conceptual framework has provided a unique insight into the topic of CG participation, and has met the study's overall research question of: 'How can we better understand the factors that influence people's participation in community food growing activities, to in turn, support people's involvement in CG, thus extending their benefits?'

Chapter 3 presented Figure 3.1, the study's conceptual framework informed by various literatures and designed to explore participation in community gardening as a person centred and situated practice. As such, it incorporated a number of different scales as a way to explore and better understand the drivers of participation within a particular context. The generation of empirical data has resulted in the further development of the conceptual framework, as shown by Figure 8.1, which presents a number of factors influencing participation – namely the *drivers*, and associated *process* and *principles*. Firstly, the internal and external drivers of participation are shown within the circle and commonly span across the interlinking scales ranging from the individual scale to wider

global and societal influences, rather than being confined to one particular scale. Therefore, located within the circle are the specific drivers identified within the data, which enable CG participation. These drivers, as illustrated in Figure 8.1, will be subsequently addressed in the chapter via two key sections specifically concerned with the internal and external drivers of participation.

Secondly, located around the outside of the circle are the associated principles and processes, which again, as the arrows portray, are largely interconnected. These principles and processes relate to the four wider concepts of: communitarian change, governance, community empowerment and participation (present within Figure 3.1) which are situated around the outer most part of the diagram. Therefore, Figure 8.1 visually demonstrates the key principles and processes that have transpired from the data, within these four wider concepts; a discussion of these takes place throughout the remainder of this chapter. Taking a person-centred perspective and appreciating wider factors influencing participation, therefore shows how fostering CG participation is not only dependent on a number of different 'practical' drivers, but also on various, and more nuanced or hidden processes and principles which need to be considered in a holistic fashion when examining CG participation. The chapter now moves on to discuss the findings in more detail and shows how the study's four objectives have been met to arrive at these conclusions.
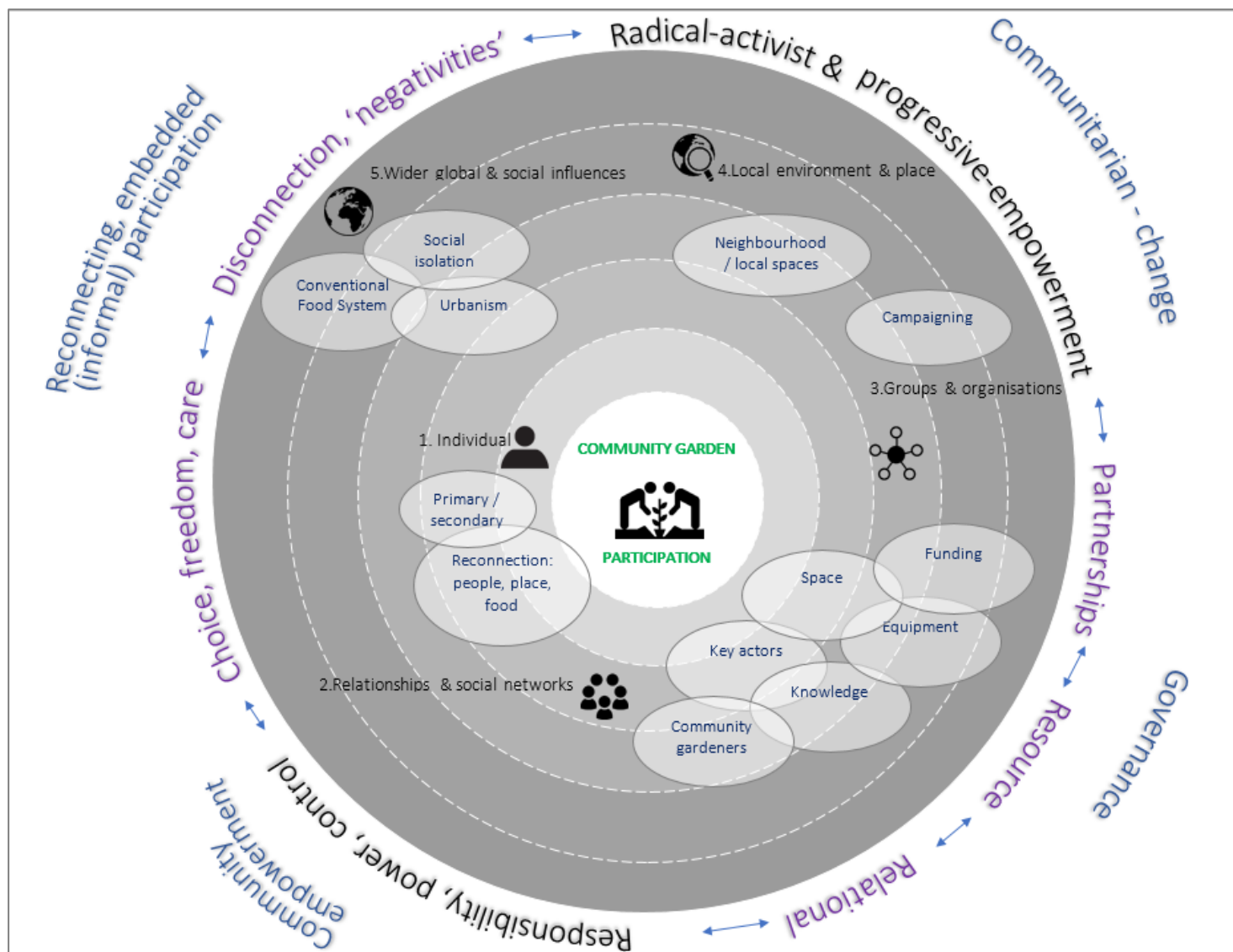
Figure 8.1: The drivers and processes of participation in community gardens in Lambeth (Source: Author)

8.4 The internal drivers of participation in community gardens: Participation as reconnection

8.4.1 Motivations for participation in community gardens: needs and care

By exploring the underlying internal drivers which determine CG participation, at the individual scale, this study sheds new light on understandings of people's motivations to participate in CG, and meets the study's third objective. This is important given their contribution towards more sustainable cities (see Chapters 1 and 2), and provides an understanding of what matters to CG participants, thus informing how they can be developed and supported. Through exploring people's motivations to participate, this study has identified four motivational values as shown in Table 8.2[36] in relation to key themes in the data, which develops and deepens understanding of CG participation. This is particularly insightful because studies show that motivations are multiple, complex and hard to disentangle, which indeed this study supports (Veen *et al.,* 2012; Pearson and Firth, 2012; Pourais *et al.,* 2016). Therefore, new knowledge is generated regarding what specifically draws people to participate in the informal practice of CG, and what they particularly value about their participation.

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[36]Self-interest, altruistic, expressive and instrumental motivational values are present within the data (based on Brodie *et al.,* 2011; Baston *et al.,* 2002).

Themes in the data relating to internal drivers	Motivational values
Activity: Reconnection and experiences of food growing Spaces which foster reconnection and cultural engagement An ethic of care concerning future generations The experienced benefits of food growing Knowledge obtained from engaging in projects	Largely driven by 'self-interest' motivations, based on the recognised and experienced positive outcomes of food growing; this this leads to 'expressive' values, out of a care for others' wellbeing and the community.
People: Social dimensions Community and a sense of place Social dimension of projects Participation as a hobby Escapism from responsibility Spaces to address social needs.	Largely driven by 'self-interest' and 'expressive' values in wanting to be embedded in the local community, through an informal activity. Also seen as spaces that address social needs, which displays 'altruistic', 'instrumental' and 'expressive' values, particularly for estate-based participants.
Place: The local urban neighbourhood Neighbourhood beautification and transformation The significance of the neighbourhood scale.	An amenable scale for participation in the local community, and to contribute towards local change shows 'expressive' and 'instrumental' values. For some, 'altruistic' values are present out of an explicit care for the community.

Table 8.2: The internal drivers of participation and motivational values

Figure 8.2 shows how this study, through the exploration of motivations and the identification of underlying motivational values, distinguishes between 'primary' and 'secondary' motivations. 'Primary' motivations are linked to why people initially decided to participate in CG activities, and are largely connected to 'self-interest' and 'expressive' values. *Self-interest* values are to do with personal benefits and developing relationships, and *expressive values* relates to exercising values and ethics (Baston *et al.,* 2002; Brodie *et al.,* 2011). The presence of these values is not surprising as participation in general has to mean something to the participant (Brodie *et al.,* 2011); participation, in the case of CG, is from a desire of personal needs to be fulfilled. Such desires, recognised as primary motivations, are associated with wanting to learn more about food growing, to be outside, to take part in an enjoyable and sociable activity, and for this to be embedded in the

immediate local community. As found by Veen *et al.,* (2012) participants explicitly articulated their involvement as a hobby, as an activity to be enjoyed, as escapism from the notion of a job, and responsibility. Self-interest and expressive values, are founded on the wish for 'social' and 'physical' connections to 'people' and 'place', which are more important to participants than the 'food' activity. These socially-based motivations echo those in the literature (e.g. Glover *et al.,* 2005).

Although the presence of self-interest values is an important starting point, participation is not just a result of these values; through the very act of CG, participation is an *experiential* process and is sustained as other values are generated – for example, the benefits of food growing are realised during participation. CG participation continues to meet people's primary motivations (or needs) which contributes towards sustaining participation. However, for many, 'secondary' motivational values, in the form of *altruistic* (helping others) and *instrumental* (influence and involvement) values, generally develop once participants experience, or see the outcomes associated with CG activity (Baston *et al.,* 2002; Brodie *et al.,* 2011). The practice of CG is therefore a real and tangible experience for participants – the creation of 'bonds' to physical and social environment fosters 'behavioural change' (Comstock *et al.,* 2010) leading and allowing them to demonstrate 'care' (Kneafsey *et al.,* 2008; Cox, 2010; Shaw, 2015).

Through community gardening, people are given an opportunity to express care for the community, out of a desire for others to benefit from CG participation (as participants themselves have), and to contribute to the wider attractiveness of the neighbourhood. Informal neighbourhood community gardens in this study can therefore be seen as developing or bringing together 'communities of care'. Such care for the immediate (social and physical) community, in terms of people and place, illustrates how participants experience a number of 'urban negativities' through a lack of personal outdoor green

space[37], urban degradation, and social isolation. The practice of CG is unique in generating multi-dimensional, direct and palpable outcomes, which fulfil a range of desires that develop throughout participation. Although the findings show the importance of 'people' and 'place' aspects of CG participation, this does not undermine the distinctiveness of food production as a 'tool', "which makes [community] gardens unique compared to other urban functions" (Pourais *et al.,* 2016: 14). Figure 8.2 shows how both 'primary' and 'secondary' motivations are needed for initial, and sustained involvement in CG, as this relates to personal desires being met, and further positive benefits experienced. Therefore, understanding participation from a person-centred (rather than institutional) perspective, sheds light on how participation is a process where values develop over time, revealing how CG are *expressive* and *experiential* spaces.

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[37] Over 70% of households in Lambeth live in flats (Lambeth Council, 2016).
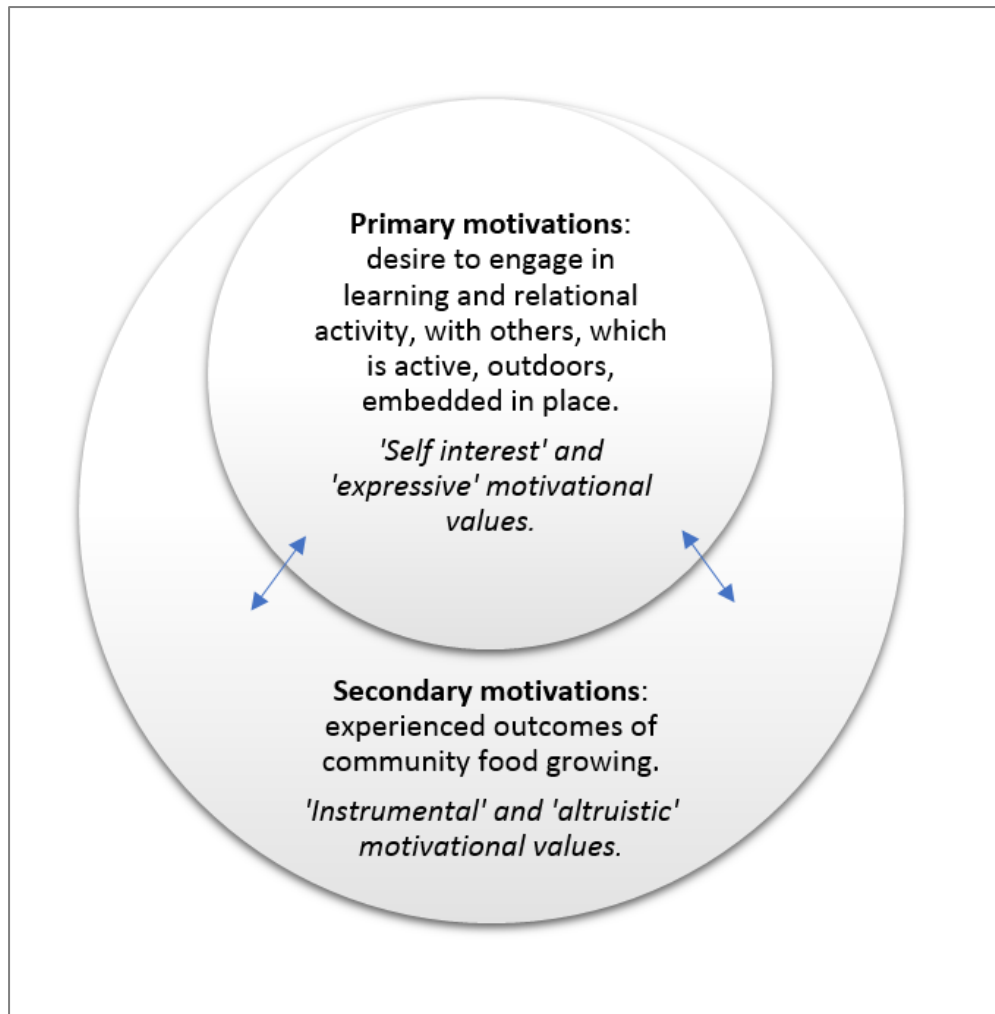
Figure 8.2: Primary and secondary motivations (Source: Author)

8.4.2 Community gardening: Community reconnections and embeddedness

When viewing CG in the context of new forms of participation (Chapter 3), this study shows how CG are part of a new emergent informal and more accessible type of participation which does not distinctly fit into categories of public, social or individual participation (Brodie *et al.*, 2011) but may in fact comprise different components of each. For example, CG participation is based on *individual participation* - a statement of the kind of society people want to live in, *social participation* - collective activities that people are involved in, and *public participation* - relationship between individuals and the state (through partnership working, discussed in section 8.5). Therefore, participation is an informal, fluid, and contextual practice, and within CG participation there is movement across these different categories of participation, which is indeed a strength of CG. This

example of a new form of participation is considered to be a result of how different factors interact, shape and alter traditional understandings of participation, including those set out in Chapter 3 such as individualism, new forms of self-expression, and a decline in formal participation. This study shows empirically how CG participation is taking place within the context of heightened forms of urban living displaying for example poor social connections and wellbeing, high levels of loneliness, diet related health problems, as a result of urbanism and a disconnected global food system (The Food Foundation, 2016; FAO, 2013; Sodano, 2012; ONS, 2012; United Nations, 2014; Steel, 2008; Putnam, 2000).

Reflecting how participation is a situated practice, focusing on local level activities such as CG makes it possible to expose local contextual factors and wider global and societal trends in shaping participation. Within this context, the findings show how CG participation enables processes of reconnection or embeddedness, not only in relation to reconnections with food, but more importantly so to people and place, central factors driving people's participation, demonstrating a desire for a *'(re)connecting' or 'embedded' participation.* Such activities developing a 'sense of place' have been articulated as occurring through relational processes (Hale *et al.,* 2011; Agustina and Beilin, 2012; Bendt *et al.,* 2013) to place and people at the site of CG at the neighbourhood scale. This type of participation is not exclusive to CG when considering the rise in participation in other activities associated with re-learning and sharing 'lost' skills and memories (Barthel *et al.,* 2015; Camps-Calvet *et al.,* 2015; Bradley, 2016; Rosner, 2013) and is not surprising given contemporary societal disconnections. For example, new spaces created through technological developments are found to be a poor substitute for real, tangible relationships and connections to others and place in the context of food (Bos and Owen, 2016). As such, CG are local spaces and sites where desires for such 'tangible' or 'lived' reconnections and embeddedness can become an experienced reality for local people.

The findings show a desire for reconnection or embeddedness, and reveal a longing for more traditional Gemeinschaft notions of community, or 'mechanical solidarity' where people feel similar, as there is a shared connection to place (Tönnies, 1887; Durkheim, 1983). This is sought after and experienced by participation in CG, which aligns to and furthers understandings of 'place-based' CG (Veen *et al., 2015;* Firth *et al.,* 2011; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015; Bendt *et al.,* 2013). This study reveals how the practice of CG is for personal gain, including the personal experiences *of* community, rather than CG primarily or directly *for* the community / common good. Through CG participation, these contemporary acts of community represent a 'dipping into or accessing community' based on convenience or how it fits into or around other (dominant) aspects of people's lives. Here, the informal nature of participation is particularly appealing (Hardman *et al.,* 2017). CG participation is therefore, in part an expression, or playing out of community within a contemporary individualistic society, which is made possible through CG embedded within neighbourhood spaces. Therefore, this opens up questions around how new forms of community are shaped and experienced in 21st century city life, where there are many factors 'eroding' community life (Putnam, 2000; Henriksen and Tjora, 2014). Participation in CG is seen to be a contemporary way to create or search for more traditional notions of community, which is partly generated through CG participation. As such, connections to, and an embeddedness within community, is part of a personal desire, amongst other aspects to people's CG participation and shows that caution is needed regarding the type and extent of community created through CG activities (Pudup, 2008). This is particularly necessary given the complexity associated with, and the different readings and nuances of 'community' by different CG stakeholders.

At a time where happiness, wellbeing and loneliness indicators reveal how London ranks poorly in comparison to the rest of England and other countries (ONS, 2012; World Happiness Report, 2016) the findings contribute towards the accumulating evidence base

showing links between food growing, green space, and wellbeing (Forestry Commission, 2012; Sustain, 2016b, Davies *et al.,* 2014; Bos *et al.,* 2016, Bragg *et al.* 2014; Brown *et al.,* 2016; Kneafsey and Bos, 2014) in urban areas by providing opportunities for reconnection and embeddedness to people, place and food. Being situated in neighbourhood spaces, CG are accessible to a range of people, including those who experience multiple forms of marginalisation (older citizens, those who are unemployed and who have health issues, and BAME citizens [38]). In addition to how CG participation can have positive effects on different segments of the population, the findings show how CG promotes participation. Evidence suggests that populations residing in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation are more likely to experience marginalisation, and are less likely to participate generally in society (Griffith and Glennie, 2014). As participation generally is argued to foster empowerment, confidence, skills and solidarity, and to have a positive influence on people's general wellbeing and quality of life (Brodie *et al.,* 2011), CG participation holds potential as 'way in' to participate more widely in society, promoting more active citizenry (Crossan *et al.,* 2016). Therefore, this study contributes towards how CG are becoming increasingly acknowledged as a 'tool' to 'develop healthy urban environments' and to enhance many aspects of human-dominated environments (i.e. cities) including green infrastructure, and human wellbeing (Poulsen *et al.,* 2014; Kransy *et al.,* 2014).

8.4.3 'Quiet' behaviours and active citizenry through community gardening

As a response to being dissatisfied with aspects of urban living, through CG participation, people are proactive in the search to 'counteract' some of these negative experiences of city life (Nordah. *et al*., 2016), displaying characteristics of 'responsible citizenship' or some degree of 'political agency' (Crossan *et al.,* 2016) in assuming some responsibility

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[38] Although more targeted interventions are often necessary and beneficial for those experiencing more severe forms of marginalisation such as drug dependency, offending history (see Bos *et al*., 2016).

for their lived day-to-day experiences. Moreover, this study shows that focusing on the internal drivers of participation reveals a connection around how wider global and societal trends underpin people's personal desires and values, and needs. However, participants did not participate as a conscious response to, or out of an awareness of wider, systemic change, thus like other studies, this research demonstrates an absence of political behaviours or motivations (Pourais *et al.,* 2016; Veen *et al.,* 2012; Eizenberg and Fenster, 2015). Participants however, did express a desire for personal and local level / neighbourhood change, showing how CG are used as a way of navigating the contemporary urban neoliberal landscape.

As such, caution is needed regarding the extent to which CG are considered as political spaces of resistance (Cangelosi, 2015; Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014a: McClintock, 2014; Barron, 2016; Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015) concerned with wider system transformation or counteracting dominant political regimes. In undertaking CG as a hobby-based activity, many participants in this study do not want to assume any responsibility, are happy to be told what to do, or are content with arrangements of partnership working. Nevertheless, small acts of local change can indeed be complimentary to wider forms of 'political' change, for example as part of actors' efforts within the borough and city, and as part of wider 'movements' but should not be regarded as the primary focus of participants' involvement in CG based on the evidence in this study.

This resonates with notions of 'quiet sustainability' and 'quiet activism' practices which are 'unforced' or 'inclusive' forms of sustainability, practiced through gentle and quiet, yet powerful acts of doing and making (Kneafsey *et al*, 2017; Smith and Jehlička, 2013; Pottinger, 2016). These 'depoliticised' acts of (re)skilling, and awareness raising are argued to have much potential for people's relationship with food (Kneafsey *et al*., 2017).

However, the findings show that CG participation as well as encompassing people's relationship to food, perhaps even more significantly has potential for people's relationship to place and people, primarily through processes of reconnection and embeddedness in a local community or neighbourhood activity. As a result, the practice of CG as an act of quiet sustainability has much potential for change - relating to people's lives within contemporary cities and empowering people to participate more in society, through sustainable practices. Whilst the broader sustainability outcomes of CG are important, a focus on CG as 'aspirational' spaces (discussed further in section 8.5.3) in this regard should not compromise or de-value the primary reason for participation, based on participants' experiences of the 'communities' / real' spaces they have created, and which have many positive outcomes. This is very much in line with readings of 'just sustainabilities' which emphasises the importance of a focus on processes and quality of life (Agyeman and Evans, 2003; Blay-Palmer, 2011).

Whilst admittedly the study has not applied a behavioural change framing, there is evidence to support existing claims around the relationship between food growing and more healthy and sustainable personal behaviours (Bos and Kneafsey, 2014; Kneafsey *et al.,* 2017; Comstock *et al.,* 2010). Such food-related practices (e.g. growing local food using organic and sustainable methods), has the potential to contribute towards healthier citizens, and therefore healthier, more sustainable and attractive neighbourhoods (and cities), particularly when CG takes place in more deprived areas which display poor health outcomes, such as the neighbourhoods in the study (section 5.2.1). 'Healthy' in this regard not only refers to changes in diet-related behaviours, but in taking a more holistic approach, considers the importance of wellbeing, based on the premise of empowerment. However, this is not to claim that CG participation will provide the complete solution to many complex urban problems, but it can go some way in alleviating several negative effects experienced as shown in this study, by fostering empowerment, and decision

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making. This relates to people's quality of life, as well as the move towards more sustainable food systems and diets, where public health and environmental sustainability is central (Mason, and Lang, 2017). Thus, the 'normalisation' (Witheridge and Morris, 2016) of the practice of CG has much potential to create more positive city spaces which local people have a part in developing, through positive participation, as a way to counteract some of the negative aspects to city living, as well as relating to strategic commitments to sustainability.

8.5 The external drivers of participation: Governance approaches to community garden participation

8.5.1 Resource: supporting participation in community gardening

This section concentrates on the identification of a number of external drivers enabling participation in CG (Figure 8.1), meeting the study's second and fourth objectives. In the case of EL, resource is provided by the public sector, through the Housing Services department supporting community gardening as part of resident engagement activities. This is an ideal avenue for engaging some of the most marginalised residents in active behaviours, and is a way to widen out participation to a significant proportion of the population[39]. Moreover, utilising spaces on estates for food growing responds to issues regarding the temporary nature of CG and creates more permanent or fixed CG situated on more permanent land in visible spaces (Drake and Lawson, 2014; Witheridge and Morris, 2016) In the case of MFP, resource is largely provided by the third sector, although to some extent in partnership with the council. In having a broader remit for supporting CG in community spaces and on estates / residential spaces - funding follows fixed-term funding cycles from charitable organisations and the council. This demonstrates a non-formalised,

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[39] 67% of households in Lambeth live in rented accommodation (both social rented and private rented), and 30% of households own their own home. Just less than one in five households rent from the council (Lambeth Council, 2016).

piecemeal or incidental partnership working between the public and third sector. This is not only seen in the instance of funding, but also in how there is a similar structure to the two models (e.g. employing community gardeners), which in some cases, unintentionally, support the same groups of participants. Whilst undoubtedly there are tensions arising from this, the mind-set to support residents and CG in residential spaces, through the implementation of these models, creates opportunities for CG participation and a network of growers across the borough.

As indicated in Figure 8.1, numerous key resources across various scales have contributed towards enabling participation in CG– whether supporting people to participate in more established projects or to helping people to adopt more of an initiating role. These resources are now summarised in turn. Firstly, *key people* in the form of employed community gardeners with a community development / food growing remit are an identified resource provided by the council/MFP. Key people also include members of the community (residents/volunteers) who, in being in direct relationship with the community gardener and members of their local community, are community intermediaries as they act as a point of contact. *Key organisational actors* are an identified resource whose strategic remit allows them to implement CG models they have initiated across the borough, and through their 'hands-on' approach, their connections to the community provide opportunities for participation. Such key organisational actors could be acknowledged as 'urban intellects' or 'innovators' (Balaz, 2012; Psarikidou and Szerszynski, 2012) and their embeddedness in the local area – through being Lambeth citizens – means that they have an understanding, and experience of local cultures and as such, they are able to navigate working 'downwards' with local communities and 'upwards' within organisations.

As shown in Figure 8.1, *knowledge* is identified as another key resource. This knowledge is typically possessed by key organisational actors and community gardeners in the form of local tacit, experienced knowledge (Curry and Kirwan, 2014; Mintz and McManus, 2014) which is important for supporting neighbourhood level CG in recognition of local participatory cultures (Williams, 2005; Bailey, 2010), as well as food growing knowledge and skills. Therefore, complementary 'community development' and 'food growing' knowledge and skills combine, which is necessary for supporting CG out of a recognition of what 'works' within communities, and meets participants' desires to learn more about food growing. Another resource is *funding* which is needed to employ key people (key organisational actors, community gardeners), and to acquire equipment to establish and support food growing spaces. This is particularly important in areas comprising low income residents as well as those who are knowledge and time poor. Moreover, the provision of accessible *space at the neighbourhood scale* is essential for CG spaces (as discussed previously) and overcomes barriers such as gaining permission. Resource in terms of *campaigning* is likely to have contributed to the 'normalisation' of CG through awareness raising and working 'behind the scenes' to influence organisations to support CG activity. As shown, participation in CG is supported by a range of resources which combine to form an 'infrastructure' to support CG participation; without these identified resources (and the other drivers identified) it is unlikely that such CG spaces would be in existence, or there would be less participation in them.

8.5.2 Approaches to developing community gardens: local participatory cultures

It is not only the provision of resource, but the *approach* taken to the development of CG, based on the identification of a number of principles. The approach relates to the governance of CG and how resource is provided – this is through partnership working with the community, rather than delivering a project 'to', or 'on' the community, by powerful actors (Williams, 2005). Therefore, in these examples CG are not a 'direct social

service to underprivileged populations', but are a 'co-produced' activity resulting in 'new collaborative social relations' which go some way in meeting a number of community/individual needs in Lambeth by supporting people to actively participate in CG activity, which they have a desire to do (Franklin *et al.,* 2016; Crossan *et al.,* 2016; Eitezenberg and Fester, 2015). Therefore, the *relational element* to implementing these models and enabling participation is particularly important, and not only relates to the relations participants have with and through the activity of CG (Comstock *et al.*, 2010; Bendt *et al.,* 2013; Hale *et al.,* 2011) but to the wider governance processes that enable such CG to exist.

In receiving initial (relational) support, their design encourages an independence for the community to have the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to run CG spaces. The initial input of resource and support enables this to happen through the creation of community ownership and providing a 'kick start' for communities to do something they want to do, creating *communities'* spaces, based on ownership. As 'top-down' initiatives, aimed at community development can actually create disempowerment (Matthews, 2014; Adamson and Bromiley, 2013), supporting communities in what they have an interest in doing is essential (Lawless and Pearson, 2012) and provides opportunities for empowerment and for people to take action; this may occur to varying degrees across individuals lives. Such supportive processes promoting a relational learning, are likely to have a ripple effect within the community via horizontal networks. This is achieved through knowledge sharing, and the tangible and visible aspects and outcomes of CG, which participants have a desire for developing.

Such approaches are founded on a knowledge of, and respect for local participatory cultures, which may differ across neighbourhoods given how Lambeth comprises different neighbourhood villages, each with their own distinct cultures and

characteristics (see section 5.2.1). The findings have shown the importance of the neighbourhood site for CG participation, as they are tangible spaces where people live and therefore hold much meaning; therefore, CG being a visible practice in accessible spaces creates possibilities for participation, and go some way in providing a solution to 'contestations' around urban spaces (Tornaghi and van Dyck, 2015). Traditionally, attempts to involve communities in government-led initiatives, and to foster a culture of participation, have been approached through institution-led attempts to transfer 'control', 'responsibility' and 'power' to local communities, to create 'empowerment', through initiatives at the neighbourhood scale (Adamson and Bromiley, 2013; CLG, 2007; Lepine *et al.,* 2007a; Purdue, 2007; Lepine *et al.*, 2007b). The same rhetoric was essentially part of the Conservative's Big Society and Localism agendas but without the amount of resource traditionally made available, during a different context – one of austerity.

The findings show how the creation of a 'participatory culture' (Blay-Palmer, 2011) in the case of CG development and participation has, like Milbourne (2012) found, not been hindered by the withdrawal of the local state. The austerity context does suggest however, the increasing importance of such initiatives for people's health and wellbeing, particularly in cities, which contributes to the creation of community, something which cannot be provided by the state. In these examples, CG participation, in this regard is not based on 'transferring' control, power and responsibility but on providing opportunities to participate, based on freedom and choice, which in turn empowers people to 'care' more about themselves and their communities. This shows how CG provide the opportunities for people to express the *freedom* to participate (Sen, 1999), in a preferred activity in a preferred space (Pitt, 2014), creating opportunities for empowerment. This contributes towards how community engagement is conceptualised and achieved within progressive arrangements in the current political context, which has seemingly moved

away from traditional institutional attempts to generate community empowerment (Bailey and Pill, 2015; Featherstone *et al.,* 2012).

There is much value in investing in key people where control and responsibility is shared with communities, through partnership working, as part of their contractual employment to create CG spaces which enable and foster initial and sustained CG participation. This is based on personal relations and creating opportunities to support communities to make decisions about their local spaces, to foster the sustainability and continuity of CG. Proactive local authority support for CG in Lambeth has also been a way to raise the council's reputation, or to re-build trust with political institutions, and like Franklin *et al*., (2016) found, political backing has resulted in acceptance from participants, rather than being a hindrance which may be the case for more radically aligned projects (discussed in the next section). Better relations with political institutions, through their commitment to CG, could therefore have a further effect on how people engage in more public or formal participation (Brodie *et al*., 2011); therefore, these new informal types of participation (such as CG participation), have the potential for a reconnection to local politics or political processes, centred around 'meaningful political engagement' (Crossan *et al.,* 2015).

8.5.3 Working towards change: the relationship between food and community

This final section discusses how CG, given their relevance to communities and individual as well as contributing towards strategic remits, are to some extent spaces of contention. Exploring CG participation as a situated practice sheds insight into the socio-political context in which CG activity is embedded, and therefore provides an insight into the link between new food governance arrangements and CG activity. The two CG models reveal an innovation (Franklin *et al.,* 2016) in Lambeth in terms of supporting CG development and participation within this new 'branch' of CG development involving different

partnership arrangements comprising the community, the public and third sector. This is part of wider food and community-orientated[40] governance activity in the borough. These CG models reflect partnerships bringing together a range of stakeholders, in line with new food governance arrangements in the borough, and in other cities, internationally (Friedman, 2007; Reed and Keech, 2016; Curry and Kirwan, 2014; Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015; Jones *et al.,* 2016). The example of the LFP which despite its aim to develop healthy food communities, appears, as a formation, to have little *direct* connection to CG in the borough. As Chapter 5 shows CG activity in the borough transpired out of a larger city-wide CSO campaign and the council's investment in a key role employed to encourage CG. Therefore, although organisations within the LFP have supported CG, this is based on the role and work of key organisational actors, who advocate for change strategically, and at the community level.

There is undoubtedly value in such 'communities of food practice' (Friedman, 2007) via borough-level and city-level food governance arrangements for wider-scale change through a food system lens, which has the ability to expose societal and economic inequalities (Moragues-Faus, 2016; Certoma and Tornaghi, 2015). However, in terms of CG development, there are apparent tensions at the governance level, as well as discrepancies over the vision of CG, showing the need to consider the experiences and viewpoints of the users of CG spaces; this reflects the multiple narratives present in such CG activity. Tensions are to do with resource competition, and different stakeholders undertaking similar activities, but could also be associated with the rise of 'progressive-empowerment' approaches which are taking place in a context where more 'radical-activist' approaches are dominant (Fraser, 2005). Although both are concerned with change, there is some degree of friction in terms of how to achieve this. Such challenges

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[40] Lambeth has a strong co-productive ethos, stemming from a historic Labour presence which boldly opposed the austerity measures under the Thatcher government.

are to be expected when a range of actors from different perspectives come together (Fraser, 2005); nevertheless, the ability to bring together different perspectives through food governance formations is a key strength of new civic movements, as part of a new food equation (Reed and Keech, 2016; Morgan and Sonnino, 2010; Renting and Wiskerke, 2010).

The fact that CG comprise many different facets could also contribute to such tensions as different stakeholders have a 'stake' in different aspects of CG activity. For example, the findings show that CG as well as being key local spaces for the community also makes a contribution towards more sustainable food systems, and thus the emphasis placed on CG activity may differ somewhat between key stakeholders / organisations / communities involved in CG. Thus, this shows a complexity associated with integrating 'community and food growing' in the context of contemporary city life, where many challenges are present. As such, the social aspects of CG are a central feature within this study and the 'normalisation' of CG activity, which draws upon progressive-empowerment approaches. This perspective should be recognised within debates around food system change as well as efforts concerned with community development. The tension between CG as *aspirational* spaces to contribute towards food system change, and CG as *experienced* or *communities'* spaces should be considered when discussing CG within food system framings (concerned with transformational economic spaces) (Ghose and Pettygrove, 2014; McClintock, 2014; Barron, 2016). Indeed, appreciating the many different types of CG currently in existence, such CG with aspirations predominantly around food system change should be regarded as a different *type* of CG, especially given the potential to explore their contribution to food systems, which at present is limited (Bell and Cerulli, 2012; Milbourne, 2012).

This study shows that CG are spaces which bring together principles of progressive-empowerment, and radical-activist transformative approaches (Fraser, 2005), which although they may look somewhat messy, can move forward in producing change. The models in the study draw on principles associated with progressive-empowerment approaches which is key to widening participation and promoting inclusivity to city populations. However, more radical-activist approaches are indeed needed, and in this study, this has paved the way for 'upward' changes through, for example, campaigning activity[41]. Food-related innovations at the strategic or governance level are seen to align to Gesellschaft notions of society, or organic solidarity, based on shared interest and mutual dependence (Durkheim, 1983; Tönnies, 1887) – i.e. coming together around food. However, the risk here is around more nuanced forms of social control, such as exclusion and moral norms, as seen through indications of a defensive community, which raises cautions of an 'unreflexive localism' *within* place (DuPuis and Goodman, 2005; Levkoe, 2011). Nevertheless, such questions are, for Levkoe (2011), productive, and thus, should be regarded as part of the learning process. This indicates (new) food governance formations need to take into consideration and be aware of power dynamics especially when working with communities, even when such *change* is for 'good' – reflecting the need to consider processes as well as outcomes (Agyeman, 2012; Agyeman and Evans, 2003; Blay-Palmer, 2011).

Finally, the frustrations experienced by those concerned with more radical change such as addressing the core root of inequality, can be empathised with as progressive approaches are considered limited in achieving structural changes (Fraser, 2005).

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[41] For example, the charity Sustain advocated for the provision of green space across borough, which is apparent in the London Plan, e.g. Policy 2.18 Green infrastructure: the multi-functional network of green and open spaces; Policy 5.10 Urban greening; Policy 5.11 Green roofs and development site environs; Policy 7.1 Lifetime neighbourhoods; Policy 7.22 Land for food (GLA, 2016e). They have also designed the Harvest-o-meter tool to assess the impact of community food growing activities.

However, achieving such wide-scale and deep-rooted change needs to be a multi-pronged approach; engaging with 'ordinary people' such as residents, extends CG participation, and provides opportunities for a number of positive outcomes and changes to be generated, which are powerful. As such, progressive and radical distinctions are helpful in identifying some of the opportunities and risks associated with such conceptualisations, and can be viewed as complementary, given how they are also towards the same end of Fraser's (2005) community participation theoretical spectrum. Furthermore, this framing is helpful in identifying the intertwined nature of 'community' and 'food' work, which is to be expected when using 'community gardening' as a tool, and shows how multiple stakeholders are all concerned with positive societal change.

8.6 Methodological considerations

This study has contributed new knowledge on CG participation but, as with all research, there are limitations to take into account. This study employed a mixed method, intensive approach to explore the drivers of CG participation and obtained data from a range of complementary sources to achieve this. Being concerned with a range of drivers influencing participation moves beyond individual's accounts of CG (Dunlap *et al.,* 2013) by taking a holistic approach to situating data within wider contextual influences at varying scales. This study focused on two models supporting CG within the case study of Lambeth, and acknowledges that many other types of CG exist and research with other types of CG may yield different results. In terms of data collection with CG participants, recruitment was informed by the role of gatekeepers (Valentine, 2005), and included people who were willing and available to take part in the research (e.g. participants who are retired). Therefore, those who were not on the radar of the gatekeeper, who were not available, who did not wish to engage in the research, or who may be considered 'hard to reach' in this regard, are likely to not be represented. However, the case study involving multiple sources of evidence intended to provide in depth accounts to uncover meaning

and explanation, rather than a representative sample (Robson, 1993; Yin, 2003; Easton, 2010).

Being situated in the case study location to incorporate a more ethnographic dimension to the research is likely to have produced a better insight into the general profile of CG participants. However, the informal nature of participation, and the number of CG projects in Lambeth, made this particularly difficult for a part-time study and the associated resource constraints of undertaking part-time research in London whilst having a full-time job based in Coventry. A 'saturation point' was reached within the data where no new themes were emerging in the final stages of data collection and preliminary analysis. However, a more ethnographic approach may, or may not, have resulted in a more diverse sample of participants - the sample of interview and survey respondents reflect a larger proportion of white British participants than the general population of Lambeth. Although the research aimed to be inclusive to all participants, it is recognised that engaging in research undertaken by a 'privileged' researcher may have been a barrier to data collection. However, there is a future opportunity to investigate whether the wider demographic profile of Lambeth is reflected in CG participation more generally, which indeed could differ between projects; appropriately designed quantitative studies would be more suitable to explore this. There are also opportunities to examine the viewpoints and experiences of people who are not engaged in CG, or whose participation stopped. This is important to consider in future research endeavours to ensure a more balanced account of CG activity more generally, which may include negative experiences, and will shed light on the drivers *hindering* participation. Therefore, a number of resource constraints affecting the methodological design are realised.

8.7 Recommendations for Practice

Community gardening activity appeals to a wide range of people and produces many positive outcomes not only for those involved, but also for the wider community. Investing in the development of such spaces is likely to have longer term impacts on the general health and wellbeing of citizens, and the production of more sustainable neighbourhoods, comprising more active citizens. Practically, investing in the development of CG activity can be done through a number of actions. Firstly, as seen in Lambeth, granting permission for un-used space at the neighbourhood level to be cultivated can overcome an initial barrier in terms of accessing space. Within public spaces, this can be un-used or derelict space, land awaiting development, or the utilisation of spaces on estates. For many city residents, access to personal greenspace is limited, and growing food in locally based communal spaces is an obvious solution to issues around the availability of and access to greenspaces. The pro-active role of the council, and other key organisations, in approaching residents regarding the use of space – as well as the provision of resources and support – bridges connections to communities and opens up opportunities for participation that people may not have considered.

As well as space, the input of other physical and relational resource is necessary to establish CG spaces and support participation. Firstly, *physical* resource including raised beds, soil, seedlings / bulbs, and netting / covering gives communities a kick start to begin growing food in their neighbourhoods; for many, setting up a growing space is not only costly but also daunting. Secondly, investing in *relational* resource is also imperative. Not only is this necessary at a more strategic level for key people to influence organisational culture, 'upwards' as well as local level change, but this is also required when working with communities. As part of this, the investment in the role of community gardeners is key to building relationships with communities, to impart knowledge and promote

learning and confidence, and to therefore have a specific skill set in the areas of horticulture and community development. Such posts require funding over a period of time which allows relationships with communities to be established and to develop, and for trust to be built. More intensive support during the creation of growing spaces and growing communities may be required, with more ad-hoc support available to groups once they are up and running and becoming more self-sufficient. Moreover, funding should be made available in a way which reduces, rather than creates, competition at the local level around these activities and makes best use of the specific knowledge local actors have around neighbourhood's needs, cultures and appropriate ways of engaging communities. Collaborative working across sectors, and local authority departments within localities to combine resources may contribute towards rolling out models, and alleviating some of the resource pressures within this current austerity context where local authority and third sector resource is at risk.

8.8 Recommendations for Further Research

Although the findings in this study derive from the exploration of two models of CG, other CG under different governance arrangements, and within different geographies for example, may yield different results, given the variety and diversity of CG. Therefore, there would be value in applying the conceptual framework within different contexts to explore similarities and differences, which would help gain a bigger picture understanding of various factors driving CG participation, to know how to best support their development and sustainability. Exploring in more detail the individual scale of participation, by examining the impact of CG participation on short and long term behavioural change in a range of areas, would generate more in depth and robust evidence around their multiple impacts, which is particularly important when aiming to support the most marginalised in society. In particular, the extent to which CG participation facilitates more sustainable food related behaviours, or more active societal

or political participation, i.e. more active citizens, is worthy of further research in a move towards healthier and more inclusive and sustainable societies. This would require the appropriate resourcing of research studies incorporating a longitudinal design, and researchers who are able to access, relate and give voice to participants who may not necessarily take part in, and be represented in research explorations (for example, BAME members of the population).

More longitudinal research is also necessary to explore the sustainability of projects to uncover how projects develop, what level and types of formal and informal support is available and accessed, and the impact on sustained participation. To achieve this, action research involving collaborative partnerships would be beneficial to monitor the 'success' of initiatives, and to share learning and best practice. Further research which critically explores the notions of power, control and responsibility from the perspectives of the range of stakeholders involved in CG would be beneficial. This would contribute towards more 'progressive' understandings of CG activity (to complement more 'radical' perspectives) and the less politicised dimensions of CG participation. Finally, exploring CG participation within the body of literature on care, to explore the extent to which CG are spaces of care, or provide opportunities for expressions of care / communities of care, would be worthwhile. Understanding the dynamics and practical aspects of communities coming together around change, would help further understandings of partnership working around the practice of CG.

8.9 Final conclusions

This study, by taking a person-centred approach to informal community gardening participation as a situated practice, has contributed new knowledge to CG research. Chapter 1 introduced the development of alternative food activities as a response to the unsustainable mass production of food, including the rise of community-orientated food

systems. It also highlighted the presence of wider contemporary societal issues affecting cities and the populations which reside in them. Chapter 2 focused on the development of CG research and highlighted the need to understand processes of participation in CG activity and the need for more UK based case studies, which considers the rise of new governance arrangements in which CG take place. Various literatures were brought together in Chapter 3 to build a unique conceptual framework to explore participation, and the methods employed to gather data was set out in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 focused on the case study context of Lambeth, London and set out the governance formations of CG projects, meeting the study's first and second objectives. The analysis of the data was presented in Chapters 6 and 7 where the empirical findings followed a structure of the internal and external drivers of participation, meeting the study's third and fourth objectives.

Therefore, this thesis has answered the overarching research question of ''how can the factors that influence people's participation in community food growing activities be better understood, to in turn, support people's involvement in CG, thus extending their benefits?'. Applying the conceptual framework allowed for the multiples drivers of participation, at various scales to be identified. Not only did the study uncover the presence of various internal and external drivers, it also revealed the importance of community empowerment principles in supporting CG participation. The appeal of CG to many stakeholders reveals a complexity surrounding CG activity. However, if CG are going to be a more permanent feature of the urban fabric, citizen participation – and how best to cultivate this as part of progressive-empowerment approaches – must be considered, to ensure that the multiple benefits of CG are more widely experienced. This is particularly relevant for those residing in more deprived areas, and experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation relating to poor outcomes. This study advocates that CG are meaningful spaces which promote reconnections to, and embeddedness within

society, which shows potential for further societal participation. Promoting participation can make a significant contribution towards healthier and more sustainable neighbourhoods and cities, as well generating much positive change for individuals.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: An overview of studies focusing on motivations (date order)

Authors	Design of study	Results specifically relating to motivations
Scheromm (2015)

France | Qualitative: 40 interview surveys with participants from *family gardens* or *shared 'collective' gardens*, to understand their profile, motivations, agronomic practices, links with agriculture and purchasing behaviour re. fruit and veg. Participants chosen based on strong level of attendance. | Strongest motivations: 'pleasure, passion, happiness', 'to grown own vegetables', 'need for nature/being outside'. ''Meeting place' (for shared gardeners), and global/environmental preoccupations (family gardeners).
Middle ranked; past time, source of energy, to pass on gardening practices to younger generation, to build a better society.
Lowest ranked: Physical activity ranked low for both types of gardeners.
Types of gardeners: gardening for pleasure (family gardens); gardening to connect with nature and to help with the tensions of urban life (shared gardens); gardening to apply values and ideas regarding social change, conventional food production and consumption, environmental consciousness (family / shared gardens). |
| Veen *et al.,* (2015)

The Netherlands | Mixed: 247 questionnaire respondents across in 6 gardens; Semi-structured interviews with 63 people across 7 gardens (thematic analysis relating to social cohesion not motivations); 7 case studies over three parameters of 'community' (neighbourhood and non-neighbourhood bound), 'plots' (communal and individual plots), 'activities' (cultivators may or may not be consumers) | Two types of motivations: 'social' and 'gardening/vegetables'.
Non-gardening participants less motivated by social aspects of the gardens than participants who do cultivate.
Neighbourhood-bound gardens and respondents from communal plots more driven by social atmosphere motivations. Respondents from non-neighbourhood bound gardens and individual plots more motivated by the vegetables grown and the activity of gardening. |
| Pourais *et al.,* (2016)

France | Qualitative: Semi structured interviews with 39 gardeners from 12 gardens; observations. | Strongest function: 'food production' (quality of food, supply of food, diversity of food, sharing and giving food) as the strongest function.
Middle functions: social, physical and mental health (physical activity; psychological sense of accomplishment, consumption of fruit and vegetables), leisure, emancipation from urban life (escape density of city, daily constraints), contact with nature (tranquillity, peace, even for those with own garden), learn and teach (new knowledge and skills, interaction with more |

		experienced gardeners). Weakest function: 'impact on the city'.
Veen *et al.,* (2012) The Netherlands	Mixed: Two case studies looked at the motivations of people involved in urban food growing and the extent to which these can be considered political; participant observations, questionnaire (61 participants) at one site, and interviews at both sites (23).	Garden centred on collective cultivation: 1) Social / collective (gardening together, meeting others, relating to people from different backgrounds, working together is fun, easier, and for some is a way to learn more about gardening) 2) Gardening as an enjoyable hobby, leisure-time activity (not a counter movement). *Initiative where 'customers' are not necessarily involved in cultivation:* *1) Like the food (organic food is better for the environment, more healthy and cheaper)* *2) Like the initiative (want to support a sustainable project)* *3) Like harvesting (enjoyable hobby)*
Ohmer *et al.,* (2009) USA	Mixed: 48 garden volunteers, community partners, and funders interviewed; mailed survey completed by 258 program volunteers and Garden Stewards; survey completed by 560 community partners and funders.	The top three reasons (for both volunteers and partners): 1) to help beautify the community 2) give back/demonstrate commitment to the community 3) support conservation of green space. Volunteers also involved in the program because they enjoyed outdoor activities, gardening and believed the program helped them to become more knowledgeable about gardening. Both volunteers and partners felt the program increased their knowledge and awareness of green space and other conservation issues, as well as their sense of connection to the outside world.
Glover *et al.,* (2005) USA	Quantitative: Telephone survey with leaders (91) and gardeners (100) from grassroots gardens. Application of Citizen Profile (CP) measure– a 18 item psychometric test, relating to citizenship (civil, social and political).	Leaders and gardeners both driven to participate in their community gardens to socialise with other people. Significantly stronger political orientations for leaders than gardeners. Participation in the gardens may facilitate social exchange and heightened critical consciousness about neighbourhood issues, which potentially prompted the adoption and practice democratic values. Roughly half of overall sample aged 40-50, or older.
Armstrong (2000) USA	Qualitative: Telephone survey with 20 program coordinators (on the premise that coordinators have multiple opportunities to know and discuss motivations and	Common reasons reported by the coordinators for participation in community gardens: access to fresh/better tasting food, to enjoy nature, and because of health benefits, including mental health. The enjoyment of nature/open spaces, benefits to mental health, and a food source for low-income households were cited more frequently in urban areas. The practice of traditional

	program benefits as perceived by gardeners]	culture more common in rural areas. A lack of access to land, which people were permitted to cultivate, was a common theme in both urban and rural areas.
Studies where motivations are discussed but are not a key objective		
Eizenberg and Fenster (2015) Israel	Qualitative: Analysis of secondary (policy) data sources; 25 in-depth interviews with representatives of two municipalities, national government, NGOs' professionals and gardeners; observations of meetings discussing community gardens at the national level; GIS used to identify possible gaps between stated policy and actual production of community gardens.	Gardeners across the city referred to their socio-political agenda as affiliated with sustainable environment thinking and practice, not alternative or oppositional social discourse and practice - they consciously avoid bringing broader urban, socio-economic issues to their gardens. Collective actions in the garden not seen as something that unintentionally produces alternative social orientation.
Agustina and Beilin, (2012) Australia	Qualitative: Interviews with migrant gardeners across 5 gardens.	The motivations identified were more about self-actualization (e.g. as a hobby, a desire to learn new things and for exercise) and the need for socialisation.
Crossan *et al.,* (2016) Scotland	Qualitative: Participant observation, site visits to 16 gardens; 25 semi-structured interviews with garden volunteers and staff, local government and third-sector workers involved in managing the gardens.	Motivations ranged from a collective wish to re-appropriate enclosed and derelict land for community use to reconnect the self with community and environment.

Appendix 2a: Interview schedule London key organisational actors

Introduction
PIS and signed consent, approximately 45-60 minutes

1. **Please explain how you are involved in London's food scene. How would you describe yourself?**

2. **When and why did you become involved in London's food scene?**

3. Could you tell me a bit about the evolution of urban food growing in London (and Lambeth?)?

4. **Could you give a summary or overview of the different strategic-level activities taking place in London? Are you aware of different strategic-level activities in Lambeth?**

5. Could you give a summary or overview of the range of London-wide food growing activities or initiatives? Could you provide an overview of Lambeth-based activities?

6. What are your views on the range of different activities taking place in London? (For example, the coordination of activities, the types of activities taking place, is there anything missing?). What do you think of the different activities taking place in Lambeth?

7. Are the agri-food activities taking place in Lambeth linked at all to London's food growing agenda?

8. What are the main ways that citizens [in Lambeth] participate in 1) urban food growing activities 2) strategic-level activities focused on urban food growing?

9. **Focusing on those engaged food growing activities broadly, [citizens] generally, from your experience, what do you think are the main motivations to become involved in 1) urban food growing activities 2) strategic-level activities focused on urban food growing?**

10. **Focusing on [citizen] engagement generally, do you feel there are any barriers that prevent people [citizens] from becoming motivated to participate in urban food growing activities?**

11. **[Explain approach] Please look at the draft necessary conditions and local conditions diagram. Do you think this applies to Lambeth? Is there anything you feel should be included or taken out?**

Discussion of the online survey and list of actors to interview at this stage.

Essential questions in bold

Appendix 2b: Interview schedule Lambeth key organisational actors

Introduction
PIS and signed consent
Approximately 45-60 minutes

12. **Please explain how you are involved in Lambeth's food scene. How would you describe yourself?**

13. **When and why did you become involved in Lambeth's food scene?**

14. Could you tell me a bit about the evolution of urban food growing in Lambeth?

15. **Could you give a summary or overview of the different strategic-level activities taking place in Lambeth (such as the Food Partnership, Incredible Edible Lambeth)?**

16. **Could you give a summary or overview of the range of food growing activities or initiatives in Lambeth?**

17. What are your views on the range of different activities taking place in Lambeth? (For example, the coordination of activities, the types of activities taking place, is there anything missing?)

18. Are the agri-food activities taking place in Lambeth linked at all to London's food growing agenda?

19. What are the main ways that citizens in Lambeth participate in 1) urban food growing activities 2) strategic-level activities focused on urban food growing?

20. **Again, focusing on citizens, what do you think are their main motivations to become involved in 1) urban food growing activities 2) strategic-level activities focused on urban food growing?**

21. **Focusing on citizens, do you feel there are any barriers that prevent citizens from becoming motivated to participate in urban food growing activities?**

22. **[Explain approach] Please look at the draft necessary conditions and local conditions diagram. Do you think this applies to Lambeth? Is there anything you feel should be included or taken out?**

Discussion of online survey and other actors to interview at this stage.
Essential questions in bold

Appendix 3: Rational for key organisational actor interviewees

Actor Interviewed	Geographical remit	Main role	Description of actor activities
Local organisational actor 1	Lambeth	Council	Works in the area of sustainability policy. Key involvement in a range of food-related activities across the borough. Possess on the ground community growing / community engagement experience and knowledge.
Local organisational actor 2	Lambeth	Consultancy	A specialist in the area of food system sustainability. Key involvement in a range of food-related activities across the borough.
National organisational actor 3	London	Charity	Involvement in the area of community food growing across London's boroughs and the London Food Board. Background in environmental sustainability and social change.
Local organisational actor 4	Lambeth	Council	Key involvement in a range of food-related activities across the borough. Possess on the ground community growing / community engagement experience and knowledge.
Local organisational actor 5	Lambeth	Council / Charity	Key involvement in a range of food-related activities across the borough. Possess on the ground community growing / community engagement experience and knowledge.
National organisational actor 6	London	Charity	Formerly involved in community food growing across London's boroughs. Strategic and practical experience and knowledge of a range of alternative and community food growing initiatives.

Appendix 4: Interview schedule for project participants

REVISED Interview Schedule [confidential]
November 2014

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the research. Before we start the interview, please can you read and tick the following:

☐ I have read the enclosed information (participant information sheet).

☐ I am aged 18 or over and agree for you to use the data I provide in this interview.

☐ I agree for the interview to be digitally recorded.

☐ I understand that my name will not be used, and all information provided by me will remain anonymous and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.

☐ I understand that this is an independent study and the data I provide will not be shared with anyone; however, a summary of the findings will be shared with Lambeth Living and Myatt's Fields Park and potentially other organisations in Lambeth, such as the Lambeth Food Partnership.

☐ I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I do not have to answer every question and I can withdraw the information I have provided by 1st January 2014 without giving a reason and without any other effect.

☐ I have the opportunity to ask any questions about the project at any stage.

☐ **I agree to participate in this interview. You need to agree to all of the above boxes for your information to be valid.**

☐ I understand that I may be included in photographs that may form part of published material.

Your Name:

Your Signature:

Today's Date:

Researcher's Signature:

Would you like to be entered into the prize draw to win a £10 high street voucher?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes. Please provide your name and contact details:

Date: Location:

Observation notes:

A) INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT

1. In your own words, can you tell me a bit about the project you are involved it, what is it, when did it start?

2. How long have you been involved in the project? (i.e. from the start?)

3. Briefly, what is your main involvement in the project? (what are the main things you do?)

4. Thinking back, what would you say was the main reason you became involved in this project? [GUIDE]

☐	I was asked. By who?
☐	I had spare time. Reason?
☐	I heard / saw it was happening. How?
☐	I wanted to improve the area where I lived. Why?
☐	Someone I knew / a group I was involved in was doing it. Who?
☐	I wanted to get involved in something environmental. Why?
☐	I wanted to do something with people / my local community. Why?
☐	Other:

5. I'm going to read out some statements; please can you rank how important they were in terms of influencing your initial involvement in the project? *[remember to think back to the start of the project, but if these aspects are important now please expand]*

	1. Has not influenced my involvement	2. May have influenced my involvement.	2. Has influenced my involvement to some degree.	3. Completely influenced my involvement.	N/A / I am not really aware of this.	Influences my involvement now
a) To eat / access fresh (healthy) foods.						
b) To save money.						
c) Take part in an enjoyable activity.						
d) To do something out doors / active.						
e) To contribute towards something good for the environment.						

f) To do something with my local community.						
g) To work towards improving my local area.						
h) To know more about growing food.						
i) To know where my food comes from / how it has been produced.						
j) To have some control over where my food comes from						
k) [if you have a faith] Your personal faith.						
l) The cut backs faced by local councils.						
m) [some research shows] A decreased sense of community, or community cohesion in my local area.						
n) Local efforts in Lambeth regarding food and food growing e.g. Lambeth Food Partnership.						
o) Central government policies and what the government stand for						

6. What would you say *keeps* you involved in the project? *[why do you keep coming back?]*

7. What is your household composition?

Shared household	Single parent family	Single occupation	
Married /cohabiting (no dependent children)		Married /cohabiting (dependent children)	

8. Is there anyone else you take part in the project with?

9. How long have you been a resident in this accommodation?

Less than 1 year	2-4	5-7	8-10	11-13	14-16	17+ years

10. How long have you lived in the area?

Less than 1 year	2-4	5-7	8-10	11-13	14-16	17+ years

11. To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in *your / this* neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood?

☐ Definitely agree	☐ Tend to agree	☐ Tend to disagree	☐ Definitely disagree	☐ Nothing needs improving	☐ Don't know

B) MEANING AND PERCEPTION OF IMPACT

12. Overall, what impact do you think the project has had so far?

13. Personally, what impact has your involvement in the project had on your own life?

14. What impact has the project had on the local community in terms of social and relationships / sense of community?

15. What impact has the project had on the local environment?

16. On the whole, since the project started, do you think this area [where the project is] has got better or worse to live in or would you say things haven't changed much? [GUIDE]

☐ The area has got better	☐ The area has got worse	☐ The area has not changed much	☐ Don't know
Expand / how/why:			

C) RESOURCE AND OPPORTUNITY

17. Are you currently involved with any other food growing projects? (paid / voluntary)

18. Have you ever been involved in food growing project before? (paid / voluntary)

19. Are you currently involved with any other community projects? (paid / voluntary)

20. Have you ever been involved in a community project before? (paid / voluntary)

21. Imagine the growing group you are currently part of no longer existed. How likely would you undertake… [the following activities]? [GUIDE]

	1 Very unlikely	2 Unlikely	3. Don't know	4 Likely	5 Very likely	N/A	Already doing this
I would stop growing food due to lack of space							
I would stop growing food due to lack of skills / knowledge / resource							
I would grow my own food at home							

I would grow my own food but not at home e.g. allotment							
I would want to join another growing group							
I would think about starting my own growing group							
I would join another community group (not necessarily to do with food)							
I wouldn't be engaged in any community group							

Expand:

D) BARRIERS

22. Was there anything that you were a bit apprehensive about before you joined the project?

23. A) Do you feel that anything may stop your involvement in the garden? [GUIDE]

☐ Lack of time	☐ Work	☐ Conflicts
☐ Poor health	☐ Lack of confidence	☐ Disinterest
☐ Don't know	☐ Other	
Expand:		

B) Is there anything is particular you find difficult or challenging about your involvement in the garden

E) RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

24. Do you think community food growing projects like this are important, why?

25. Do you think more people should be involved in projects like this?

26. What do you think should be done to get more people involved in projects like this? / How can groups work towards involving more people?

27. Thinking about community food growing projects like this one, whose responsibility would you say it is to make sure projects like this happen? i.e. Would you say that it is the community's responsibility to ensure projects like this happen, or would you say it is the council's responsibility, for example?

F) **ABOUT YOU**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">28. Age</td><td></td><td colspan="4">29. Faith</td></tr>
<tr><td>16-19</td><td>20-29</td><td>30-39</td><td>40-49</td><td></td><td>No religion</td><td>Christian</td><td>Muslim</td><td>Hindu</td></tr>
<tr><td>50-59</td><td>60-69</td><td>70-79</td><td>80+</td><td></td><td>Buddhist</td><td>Jewish</td><td>Sikh</td><td>Other</td></tr>
</table>

30. Gender

Male	Female

31. Occupation

Employed / self-employed (full time)	Employed / self-employed (part time)	Student / in training, education	Carer
Long term sick or disabled	Unemployed (JSA)	Unemployed (not claiming)	Retired

32. Job title / area of work? _____

33. Highest qualification

Higher degree	Degree	Diploma	A Levels
GCSEs	Apprenticeship	No qualifications	Foreign

34. Please state your awareness of the following:

			Are you involved with any of these groups? If so, please tell me a bit about your awareness of them / who you know.
Lambeth Living / Edible living	Yes	No	
Incredible Edible Lambeth	Yes	No	
Lambeth Food Partnership	Yes	No	
Myatt's Field Park (Food Hub)	Yes	No	
Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses (Food Hub)	Yes	No	
Growing Rosendale (Food Hub)	Yes	No	

Streatham Common Community Garden (Food Hub)	Yes	No	

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 5: Online survey for wider Lambeth community food growing

participants

Survey: Community Food Growing in Lambeth

Page 1: A survey about your experiences of being part of a community food growing project in Lambeth

Thank you for taking part in this short survey for people involved in community food growing projects in Lambeth. The survey should take no longer than **10 minutes** to complete.

Community food projects can be those on housing estates or in a community space, and may be called community gardens or edible gardens for example.

This survey is part of a wider independent study looking at people's experiences of community food growing projects in Lambeth (as part of my doctoral research), specifically what motivates people involved in community food growing. I have been working with a number of organisations in Lambeth (such as Lambeth Living and Myatt's Fields Park) to make sure my study is as useful as possible to those involved with and supporting projects. The data collected in this survey is solely for the purpose of the study and will not be shared with anyone else. However, I would like to share a summary of some of the findings with the organisations I have been working with to help them better understand community food growing in Lambeth.

Although you may have already taken part in a conversation with me, I would still be interested in your responses to this survey. You **will not** be asked to provide your name or any other personal details - you will not be identifiable from the answers you give. You will be asked to provide your name and details if you'd like to be included in the prize draw.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you are free to withdraw (including the information that you provide) without providing a reason until Tuesday 22nd December; after this date the data is likely to have been analysed (you will be asked to provide a unique code

to enable this). You have the opportunity to ask any questions about the research by contacting me (email below). All data collected in this survey will be held securely and treated as confidential and will be destroyed on completion of the project. The survey results may be included in the final thesis, reports, papers and presentations. Individual responses will be aggregated in all analysis and presentation of the data. This research has been approved by Coventry University's ethics committee. By completing this survey, you give consent to take part in the research. You must be over the age of 18 to take part in this survey.

As a 'thank you', you will be given the opportunity to be entered into a **prize draw** at the end of the survey to win a £20 or £10 voucher to spend at a large number of high street shops https://www.love2shop.co.uk/love2shop-vouchers. There are four prizes available: the first name selected at random will win a £20 voucher, and the following three names selected will win a £10 voucher.

As this is about your experiences, there are no right or wrong answers! In order to get the best understanding possible, please try to answer these questions as truthfully as you can. Some of the questions require a response, and others are optional.

Thank you! If you have any questions please feel free to contact me: e.bos@coventry.ac.uk.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of this research then you should contact Elizabeth Bos, in the first instance. If you still have concerns and wish to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the research then you should write to: Professor Nigel Berkeley, Associate Dean for Research, Faculty of Business, Envrionment and Society, Coventry University, Priory Street, Coventry, CV1 5FB. In your letter please provide as much detail about the research as possible and indicate in detail the nature of your complaint.

Page 2: Getting started

1.   Before we start, you have the option to provide a personal identifier. This will provide a way to relate your responses back to you, should you change your mind and want to withdraw your answers. Please choose a memorable word or number which you'll be able to quote, should you need to get in touch. (e.g. COV_UNI). *Optional*

[   ]

2.   Are you involved in a food growing project? * *Required*

➕ More info

⊙ Yes
⊙ No

Page 3: Your involvement in food growing projects

3. What type of food growing project(s) are you part of? You may be involved in more than one, so please tick the options that are relevant to you. ✱ *Required*

☐ A food growing project on my estate

☐ A food growing project on another estate

☐ A community food growing project (within a 10 minute walk from my house)

☐ A community food growing project (more than a 10 minute walk from my house)

☐ Other

3.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

_____

4. What is the name of the food growing project you are part of? If you are involved in more than one food growing project, please list the names of all projects you are involved with. ✱ *Required*

_____

5. Are you supported through the Edible Living project? (Lambeth Living). ✱ *Required*

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

6. Roughly how often are you involved in the food growing project(s) you are part of?
Involvement includes all activities such as: visiting the growing space, planting, watering, harvesting etc. ✳ *Required*

- ○ Daily
- ○ Multiple times a week (less than daily but more frequently than once a week)
- ○ Once a week
- ○ Once a fortnight
- ○ Once a month
- ○ Less than once a month

7. How did you first become aware of the project(s) you are involved in? ✳ *Required*

- ☐ I saw it (when I was out and about)
- ☐ I came across it on-line
- ☐ I saw it advertised (e.g. poster, leaflet)
- ☐ I heard about it from someone who is involved
- ☐ I heard about it from someone who isn't involved
- ☐ Other

7.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

Page 4: Your reasons for participating in the community food growing project(s)

8. Thinking back to when you were **first** involved in the project, what were your **initial** reasons for becoming involved? (These may now have changed). ✳
Required

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 14 answer(s).

	Very important	Important	Of little importance	Not important at all	Not sure	Not applicable
To learn about food growing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in something with other people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in something in my local area.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To undertake a new hobby.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in an activity which I have done previously and find enjoyable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had more time (due to unemployment or retirement for example).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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To be involved in something that contributes positively towards the environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in something that improves the area I live in.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To grow food to save money.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To grow food to sell.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To grow food as an alternative to buying from the supermarkets.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To access fresh, local food.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be part of something to contribute towards my well-being (e.g. makes me feel better).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To feel part of a wider movement (e.g. political, environmental).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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9. Now thinking about your *current* involvement, how important are the following to you *now*? (These may have changed from your initial reasons) ✱ *Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 14 answer(s).

	Very important	Important	Of little importance	Not important at all	Not sure	Not applicable
To learn about food growing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in something with other people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in something in my local area.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To undertake a new hobby.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in an activity which I have done previously and find enjoyable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had more time (due to unemployment or retirement for example).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

To be involved in something that contributes positively towards the environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be involved in something that improves the area I live in.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To grow food to save money.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To grow food to sell.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To grow food as an alternative to buying from the supermarkets.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To access fresh, local food.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be part of something to contribute towards my well-being (e.g. makes me feel better).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To feel part of a wider movement (e.g. political, environmental).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page 5: Aspects of the community food project(s) you value

10. **Thinking about the project you are involved with, how do you value the following?** ✳ *Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 14 answer(s).

	I value this a lot	I value this a little	I don't value this	Not sure	Not applicable
The organisation and running of the group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A project which I can just 'turn up' to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having some degree of responsibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The person/people that started this and keep it going	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The opportunity to spend time with people I can learn from regarding growing food (and related activities)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The appropriate resources and equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A space to grow food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feeling better in myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

To be able to eat locally grown, fresh food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being able to walk to the project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being part of something that positively contributes towards the environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being part of something that contributes towards a sense of community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being part of something with other people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having an enjoyable hobby	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page 6: Importance of food growing projects

11. **Thinking about community food projects in general, please consider the importance of the following statements** (in your opinion). ✳
Required

➕ More info

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 10 answer(s).

	Very important	Important	Of little importance	Not important at all	Not applicable	Not sure
Community food projects should provide a place for children to visit or be involved in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community food projects should provide a place for older people to visit or be involved in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community food projects should provide opportunities for those with health needs (physical and mental)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Community food projects should provide a space where the local community can come together	□	□	□	□	□	□
Community food projects should provide the opportunity to grow a range of different food (e.g. from different countries)	□	□	□	□	□	□
The produce community food projects grow should be sold	□	□	□	□	□	□
Those involved in community food projects should take home the produce grown	□	□	□	□	□	□

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The produce grown by community food projects should be shared or given away	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community food projects should be linked to other organisations or food growing groups in Lambeth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community food projects should receive support from organisations in Lambeth (e.g. the council)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page 7: About you

12. Please state your gender *Optional*

    ○ Female
    ○ Male

13. Please state your age *Optional*

    [   ]

14. Please state your ethnicity *Optional*

    [   ]

15. How would you describe your main occupation? *Optional*

    ○ Full time employed/self employed in paid work
    ○ Part time employed/self employed in paid work
    ○ Long term sick or disabled
    ○ At home/not seeking work
    ○ Retired
    ○ Registered unemployed/signing on for job seekers allowance
    ○ Not registered unemployed (but actively seeking work)
    ○ In education/training
    ○ Doing unpaid or voluntary work
    ○ Carer
    ○ Registered for benefits other than job seekers allowance

○ Other, please state

15.a. If you selected Other, please specify: *Optional*

16. **Have you heard of any of the following?**

	No	Yes - I have heard the name but I am not sure what it is / what they do	Yes - I know a bit about what it is / what they do	Yes - I am fully aware of what it is / what they do
Lambeth Food Partnership	○	○	○	○
Incredible Edible Lambeth	○	○	○	○
Food Flagship	○	○	○	○
Capital Growth	○	○	○	○
Growing Rosendale	○	○	○	○
Streatham Common Community Garden	○	○	○	○
Myatt's Fields Park	○	○	○	○
Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses	○	○	○	○

Page 8: Prize Draw

17. Thank you for taking part. Is there anthing else you would like to say about your involvement in community food growing in Lambeth?

18. If you would like to be entered into the prize draw for the chance to win a £20 (first prize) or £10 (runners up) high street voucher
 https://www.love2shop.co.uk/love2shop-vouchers please leave your name and contact details. Surveys completed by **Monday 21st December** will be eligible for the prize draw. The winners will be selected at random, and the details you provide will be used for the purpose of the prize draw only.

Page 9: THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your answers will make a valuable contribution to understanding experiences of community food growing in Lambeth.

If you have any questions about this research, please contact Elizabeth Bos: e.bos@coventry.ac.uk

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Key for selection options

13 - Please state your age
    18-19
    20-29
    30-39
    40-49
    50-59
    60-69
    70-79
    80+

14 - Please state your ethnicity
    Indian
    Pakistani
    Bangladeshi
    Chinese
    Other Asian background
    English / Welsh / Northern Irish / Scottish / British
    Irish
    Gypsy or Irish traveller
    Other White background
    Mixed Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
    White and Asian
    White and Black Caribbean
    White and Black African
    Other Mixed background

African
Caribbean
Other Black background

Appendix 6: Participant Information Sheet for interview participants

PhD research project – Understanding citizen's' motivations for community food growing.

<u>Purpose of the Project</u>: This PhD research project is investigating citizens' motivations for participating in urban community food growing in Lambeth.

The PhD research project is being undertaken by Elizabeth Bos, Senior Research Assistant, Centre for Business in Society (CBiS), Coventry University.

<u>Why have I been chosen?</u> You have been invited to take part in this research because you are a key stakeholder in Lambeth's agri-food activities, and I would like to gather your viewpoints and opinions as part of the research.

<u>Do I have to take part?</u> Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary – you do not have to take part and you do not have to answer any questions that you would rather not. If you do decide to take part you are still free to change your mind at any time, without giving a reason, and you may withdraw the information you provide up until September 2014. After this date the data is likely to have informed the next stages of data collection – a survey.

<u>What do I have to do?</u> I have already arranged to see you for an interview (basically an informal discussion). The interview will last approximately one hour and will involve asking you some simple questions about your involvement in agri-food activities in Lambeth and your opinion on some aspects of the research. Again, if you do not wish to answer certain questions, you do not have to. You are also free to withdraw from the interview at any time (and withdraw the information you give). Ideally, I would like to record the interview with an audio recorder so I do not miss any of the discussion, but if you do not wish to be recorded, I would like to take some notes instead throughout the interview.

<u>What are the risks associated with the project?</u> There are no major risks at all – the information you give will remain anonymous. Your name will not be used and comments will not be related back to you. There may however be the potential for you to be indirectly identified but every effort will be made to ensure anonymity.

<u>What are the benefits of taking part?</u> As well as helping to understand agri-food system dynamics in Lambeth with regard to citizen behaviour, the results of the research will hopeful help inform some of the work of the Lambeth Food Partnership in the future. I am very appreciative of the time you have given to take part in this interview.

<u>Data protection and confidentiality:</u> The information you provide will be kept securely in a locked cabinet and/or in a password protected computer system. Your name will not be

attributable to the information you provide. The information you provide will be destroyed when the project is complete.

What if things go wrong? Who to complain to: In the first instance, you can speak to Elizabeth Bos. However, if you are still not satisfied regarding your concerns you can contact a member of my supervisory team:

Dr David Jarvis, Co-Director CBIS, Coventry University, Coventry, CV1 5FB

If you wish to make a complaint, please do so in writing, providing as much information as possible about the researcher and the research project.

What will happen to the results of this work? The data from the interview will be used to inform the next stages of research, and is likely to be included in the thesis, as well as any conference presentations and articles associated with this research.

Who has reviewed this study? This work and the materials used for this interview have been reviewed by the Coventry University Ethics Committee, and my supervisory team, to ensure that the work has been undertaken in accordance with ethical standards.

Should you require any further information about this research please do not hesitate to contact me: Elizabeth Bos, SURGE, Jaguar Building, Coventry University, Coventry, CV1 5FB. Email: e.bos@coventry.ac.uk, Telephone: 024 7765 5772.

Thank you again for agreeing to take part in the research, your input is highly valued and will make a significant contribution to the project.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the research. Before we start the interview, please can you read and tick the following:

☐ I have read the enclosed information (participant information sheet).

☐ I am aged 18 or over and agree for you to use the data I provide in this interview.

☐ I agree for the interview to be digitally recorded.

☐ I understand that my name will not be used, and all information provided by me will remain anonymous and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.

☐ I understand that my participation is completely voluntary. I do not have to answer every question and I can withdraw the information I have provided at any time, without giving a reason and without any other effect.

☐ I have the opportunity to ask any questions about the project at any stage.

☐ **I agree to participate in this interview. You need to agree to all of the above boxes for your information to be valid.**

You Name:

You Signature:

Today's Date:

Researcher Signature:

Appendix 8: Profile of project participant interview respondents

Reference	Role	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Occupation status
Community project participant 007	volunteer	Female	25-29	British	FT employed
Community project participant 008	volunteer	Male	25-29	British	PT employed
Community project participant 009	volunteer	Male	60-64	British	FT employed
Community project participant 010	volunteer	Female	60-64	British	Retired
Community project participant 011	volunteer	Female	50-54	Ecuadorian	FT employed
Community project participant 012	volunteer	Male	50-59	Ethiopian	PT employed
Community project participant 013	volunteer	Female	70-74	British	Retired
Community project participant 014	volunteer	Female	50-59	Caribbean	PT employed
Community project participant, 015	Initiator of an project supported by MFP	Female	*na*	British	*na*
Community project participant 082	Initiator of an estate project supported by MFP	Female	*na*	Irish	*na*
Edible Living participant 001	Organiser on estate	Female	*na*	West Indian	PT employed
Edible Living participant 002	volunteer	Female	25-29	German	FT employed
Edible Living participant 003	Organiser on estate	Female	*na*	British	Retired
Edible Living participant 004	volunteer	Female	*na*	British	Long term sick
Edible Living participant 005	Organiser on estate	Male	*na*	British	Retired
Edible Living participant 006	Volunteer	Male	60-64	Jamaican	Retired
Edible Living focus group, participant 083	volunteer	Female	*na*	British	Retired
Edible Living focus group, participant 094	volunteer	Female	*na*	British	*na*
Edible Living focus group, participant 095	Organiser on estate	Male	*na*	British	*na*
Edible Living focus group, participant 096	volunteer	Male	*na*	Indian	Retired

Appendix 9: Summary of the Survey Results

Introduction to the survey

Following the qualitative stage of data collection, an online survey was created in Bristol Online Survey (BOS) and administered via Myatt's Fields Park, Lambeth Living, the Lambeth Food Partnership, Capital Growth, and a number of community food growing organisations to their participants and Lambeth-wide networks through email and Twitter. This was to ensure that as many food growing project participants across Lambeth were included in the sample. Paper based surveys were also posted to Myatt's Fields Park and Lambeth Living to distribute to participants through the 10 supported projects and greenhouse volunteers (in the case of MFP); the community gardener (in the case of LL) distributed surveys to Edible Living residents. In total, 12 surveys were completed online, and 22 returned through the post. The pilot survey sent out to a sample of colleagues on 26th June 2015. The online survey was amended and administered on 9th July, with a completion date of the 8th August; this was then extended to 20th September (to account for delay in stakeholders sending out paper based surveys) and again by a few more weeks. The survey was further extended to 31st December 2015 to try to increase response rate, which had little fruition. Thus, the date for completion was extended three times to allow for more promotion and survey completions to try to increase the response rate. The surveys were also incentivised, with the option to be entered into a prize draw to win a number of vouchers to spend at a range of high street stores.

Summary of results

- All 34 survey respondents are involved in at least one community food growing project.

- Respondents informed that they are part of food growing projects on their own estate, on other estates, within a 10-minute walk from their house, in a project that is more than a 10-minute walk from their house, or another type of project (including an umbrella organisation).

- The chart below shows the number of respondents associated with a range of community food projects or initiatives; around one third (32%) of respondents are part of more than one project (some projects receive support from both MFP and EL, and some respondents volunteer at MFP greenhouse and a part of a supported project).
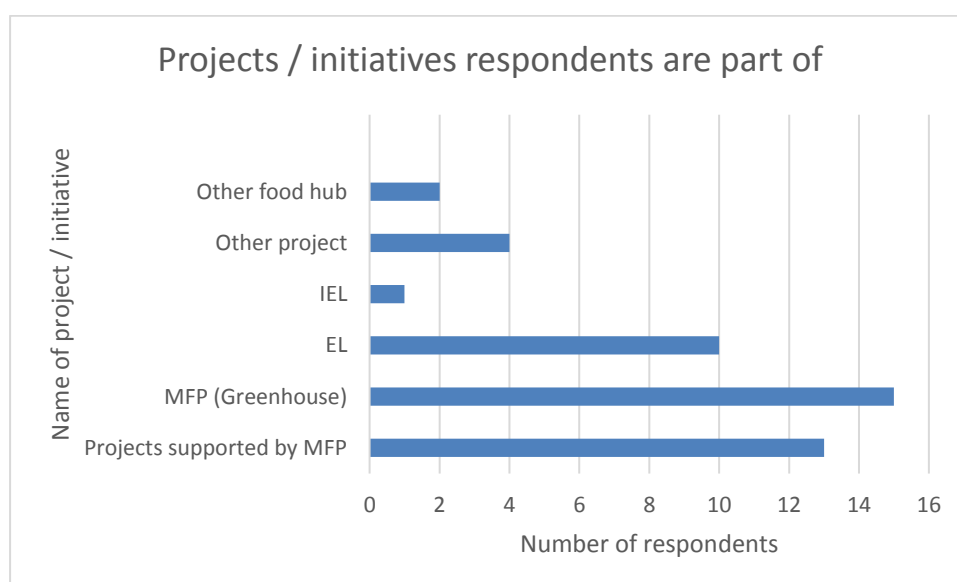

Figure 1: Projects and initiatives survey respondents are part of

- The majority of respondents are involved in their project multiple times a week (46%) as shown by Figure 2. This reflects the nature of estate based projects as participants live on the estates and access the food growing spaces frequently. The second highest proportion of respondents are involved once a week (24%); this reflects the running of community projects which have planned sessions once a

week (although there is usually one mid-week session in the case of MFP and Loughborough Farm).
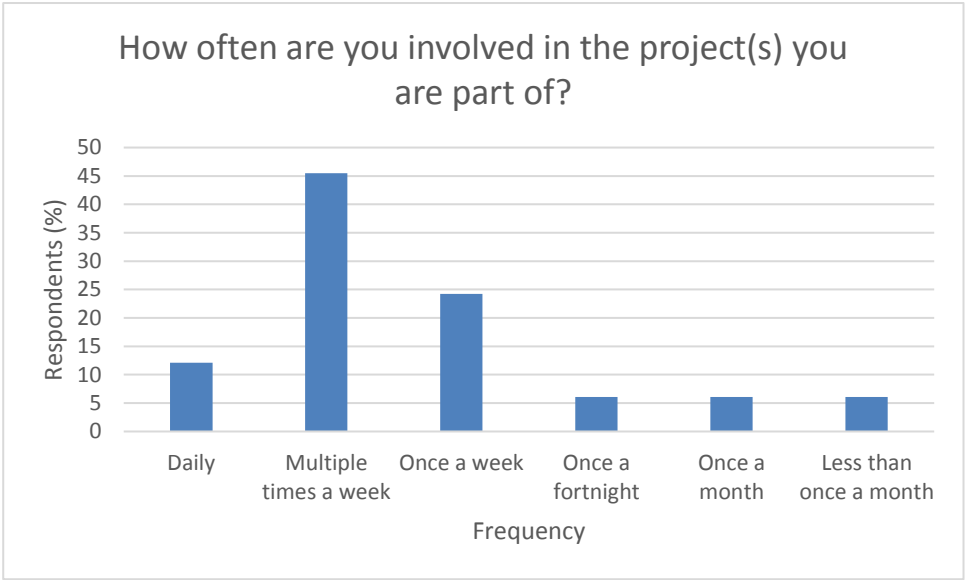

Figure 2: How often respondents are involved in projects

- There are multiple ways in which participants became aware of the projects they are involved in. In addition to those listed in Figure 3, other responses include being involved in the initiation of projects. As respondents are embedded in their communities and local area, this accounts for the several ways in which they heard about the project.
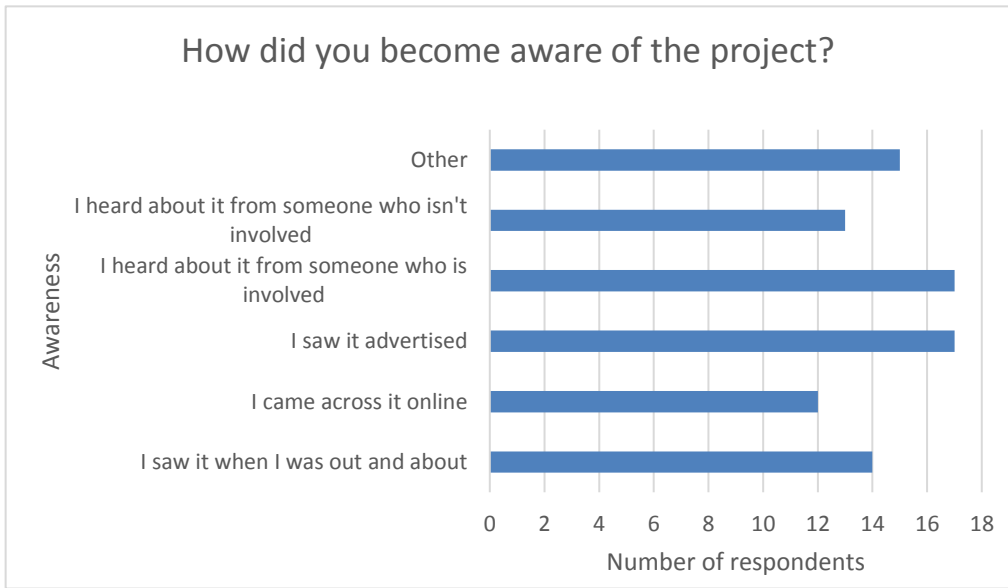

Figure 3: How respondents became initially aware of projects

- As part of a holistic approach to explore motivations for participation, respondents were presented with a range of variables are we asked to state how important these varibales are in terms of their current involvement, and to retrospectively reflect on how important these variables were when thinking about their initial involvement in the project (Figure 4). Concentraing firstly on what isn't that important to reposdents, both currently and initially are the following (in order of least importance): selling food (the produce grown) (around 16% feel this is important), saving money (this is important for around 50% of respondents), and because respondents had more time (also important for 50% of respondents). There isn't much difference at all in the importance of valibales since initial involvement and current involvement, however, as an alternative to supermarkets is slgihtly more important to participants since their involvement (+9% in terms of little importance).

Most importantly, the results show that respondents rate the varibales associated with social and area aspects as more important both currently and initially. To be involved in something in the local area was and is of utmost importance (important for 100% of respondents), followed by to improve the local area where participants live (importnant for 97% of respondents currently and 100% of respondents initially) and to be involved in something with people (important for 96% of respondents initially and 100% of respondents currently). Also of high importance for respondents is contributing positively towards the envrionment (important for 94% of respondents currently and initially), contributing towards personal wellbeing (important for 94% of respondents initially and 97% of respondents currently), to learn about growing food (importnant for 91% of respondents initially, and 85% of respondents currently) and to access fresh, local food (importnant for 85% of respondents initially and 82% of respondents

crrently). Being part of a wider movement (important for 85% initially and currently), and as an alternative to supermarkets (important for 66% initially and 73% currently) was initially, and is also currently of importnace to respondents.
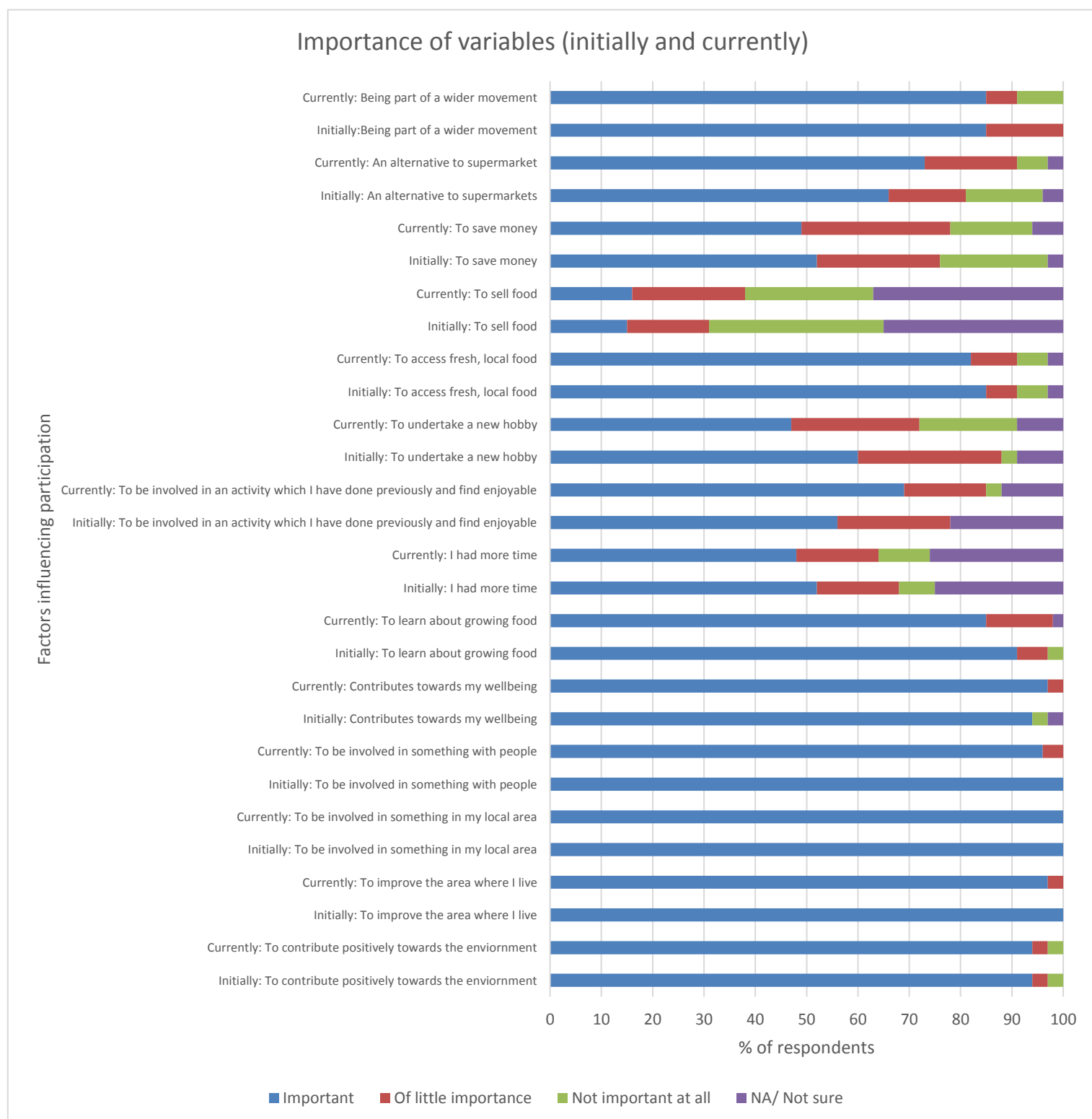

Figure 4: The importance of different variable upon participation and at the time of survey completion

- Along the same lines of what respondents feel is important in terms of their engagement, they were also asked to state what aspects of the project(s) they value as shown in Figure 5. Although there isn't a stark contrast in what respondent's value and don't value (with over 65% of respondents valuing the following aspects 'a lot' apart from one of them around responsibility), the following points can be noted. What respondents value the most is being part of a project they can walk to (90%) – so an ultra-local project. Respondents also equally value the following a lot: the sense of community (81%); the contribution towards the environment (81%); and eating locally grown food (81%). The things that some respondent least value, (although these are very few respondents) is having a degree of responsibility (13%), and seeing their involvement as an enjoyable hobby (6%).
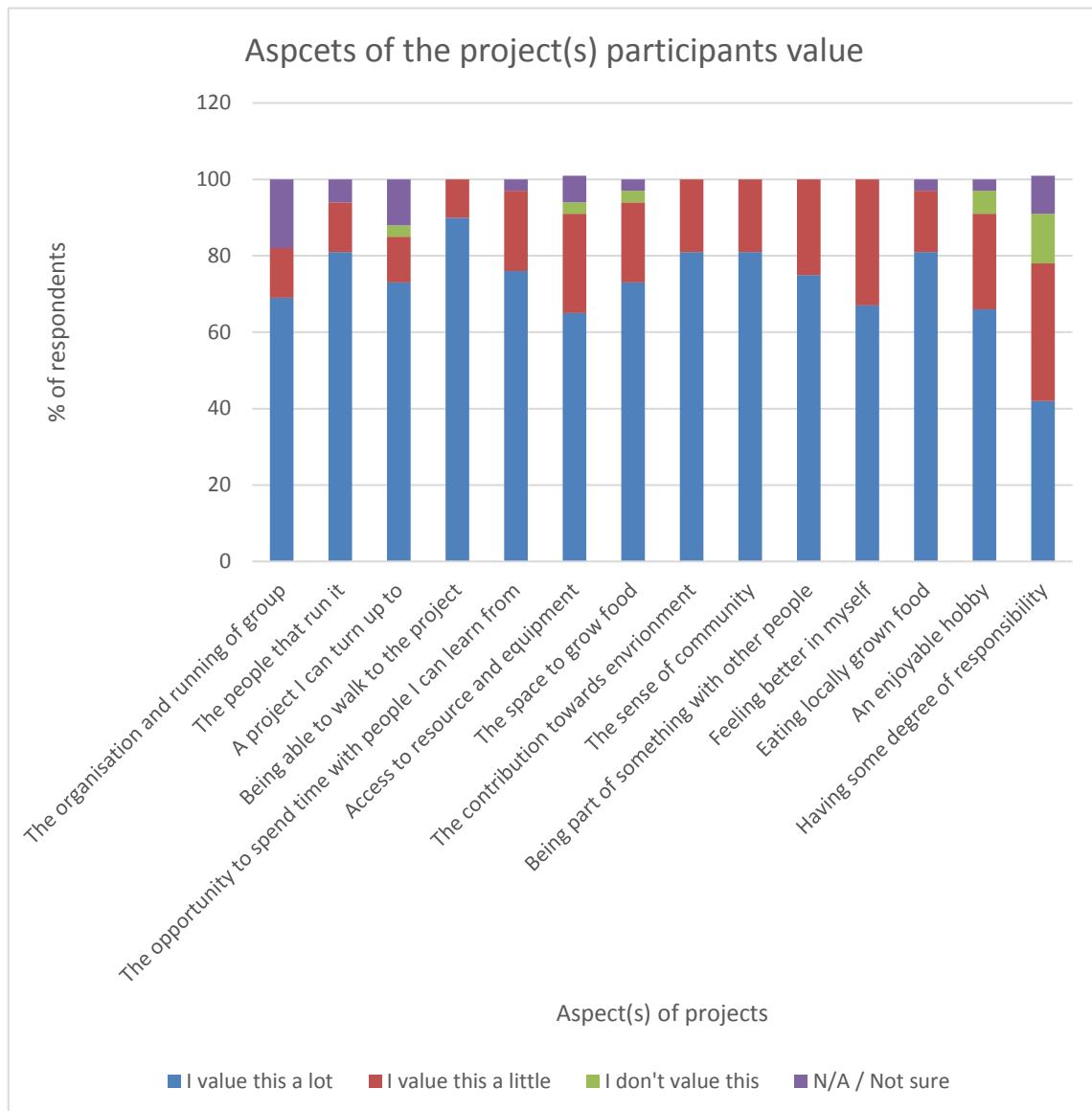
Figure 5: How respondents value different aspects of projects

- Respondents were asked what they feel is important for community food growing projects generally. The Figure below shows quite a strong preference in terms of 'selling the produce grown' as least important (important for 29% of respondents and not important for 27%). What respondents felt most strongly about was the projects as a space for the community, for older people, and those with mental health needs (all these factors are important for 100% of respondents). Also of importance for all respondents (whether important or of little importance) is the projects as a space for children, as well as receiving supporting from organisations in Lambeth (both important for 97% of respondents).
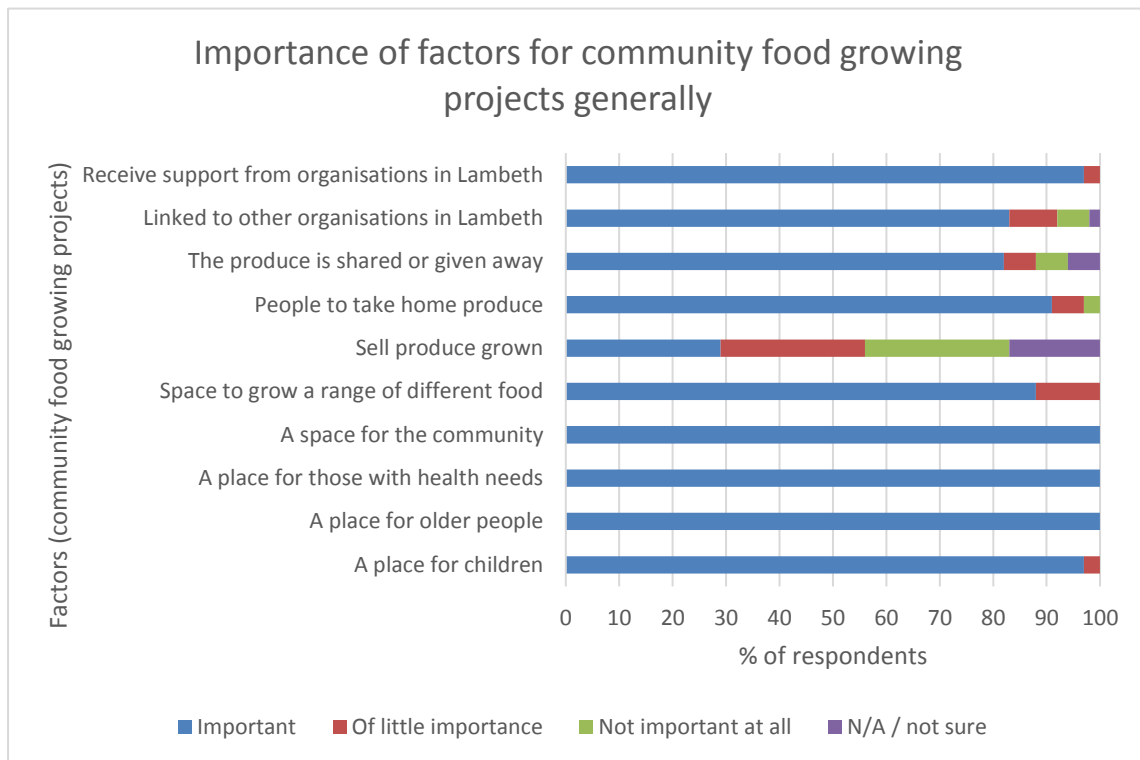
Figure 6: Respondents views on the importance of different factors of projects

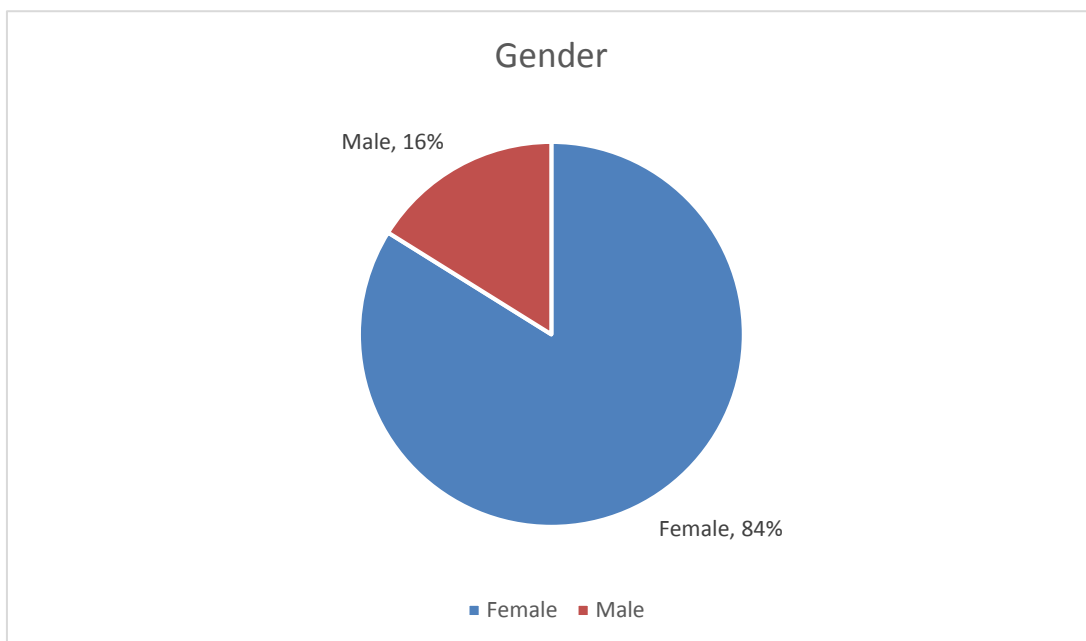- As shown by Figure 7, 84% of respondents are female, and 16% are male.

Figure 7: Gender breakdown of respondents

- In terms of age profile, Figure 8 shows that whilst 40% of respondents are aged 50-50, 47% are younger with one fifth are 40-49, another fifth 30-39, and smaller proportions 20-29 (7%). Those aged 60 – 79 also take part in projects, with 13% of respondents belonging to this age group.
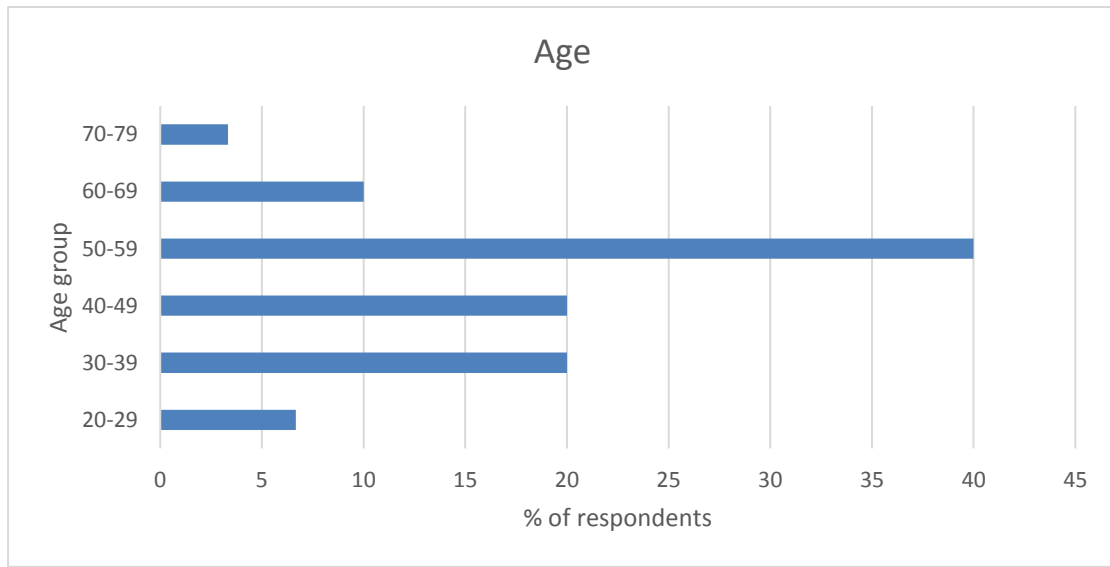

Figure 8: Age profile of respondents

- Over half of respondents (56%) are of an English or British ethnicity (Figure 9). Nearly one fifth are from another White background (19%), with small proportions of respondents (3% unless stated otherwise) comprising a range of ethnicities including: Chinese, Irish, White/Black African, other Mixed Background, African, Caribbean (6%), and White/Asian.

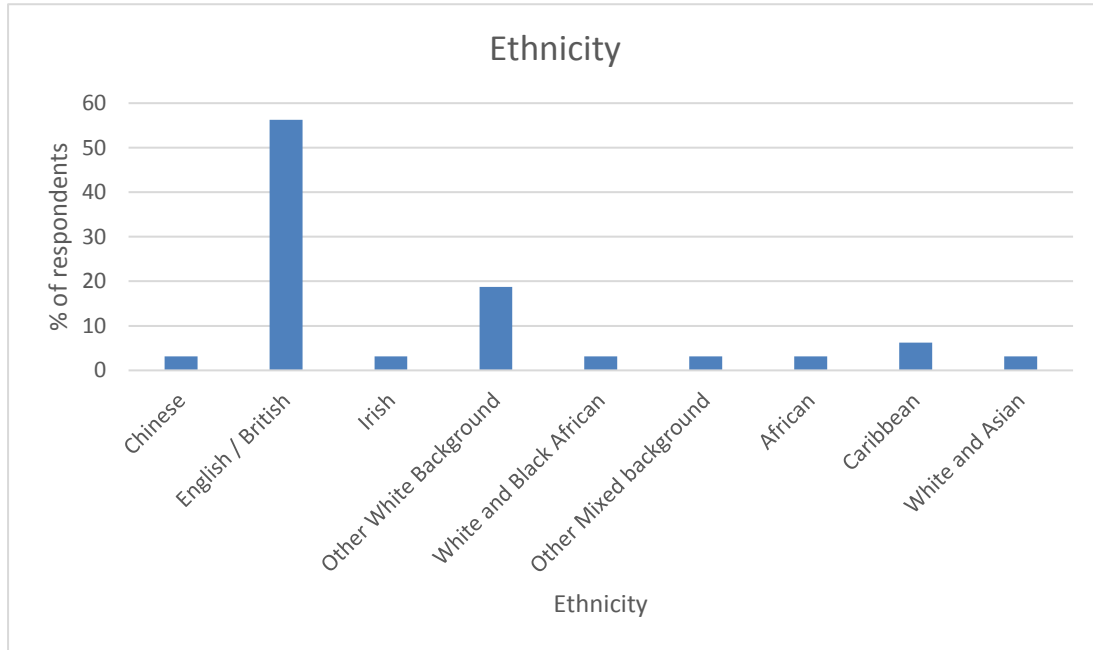Figure 9: Ethnicity breakdown of repsondents

- The majority of respondents (54%) are in employment, whether full time or part time. Lower proportions of respondents are retired (12%), at home not seeking work (9%), or stated having another occupation (9%) – i.e. a stay at home parent, or on maternity leave. The remaining 15% of respondents reported holding another occupation which can be observed in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Occupation of respondents

- Respondents we asked about their awareness of other organisations and initiatives in Lambeth (Figure 11). Respondents are most (fully) aware of two of the food hubs, Myatt's Fields Park (45%) and Brockwell Park (35%), with less awareness around the other two (on average 50% of respondents had not heard of these). The results show that on average 48% of respondents had heard of IEL and the LFP but were not fully aware of what they are / do, 15% knew fully of them, however 38% had also not heard of them. In terms of wider initiatives, again small numbers knew exactly what Capital Growth (19%) and the Food Flagship are (10%), with 38% stating they were aware tentatively, and 48% of respondents reporting not being aware of them.
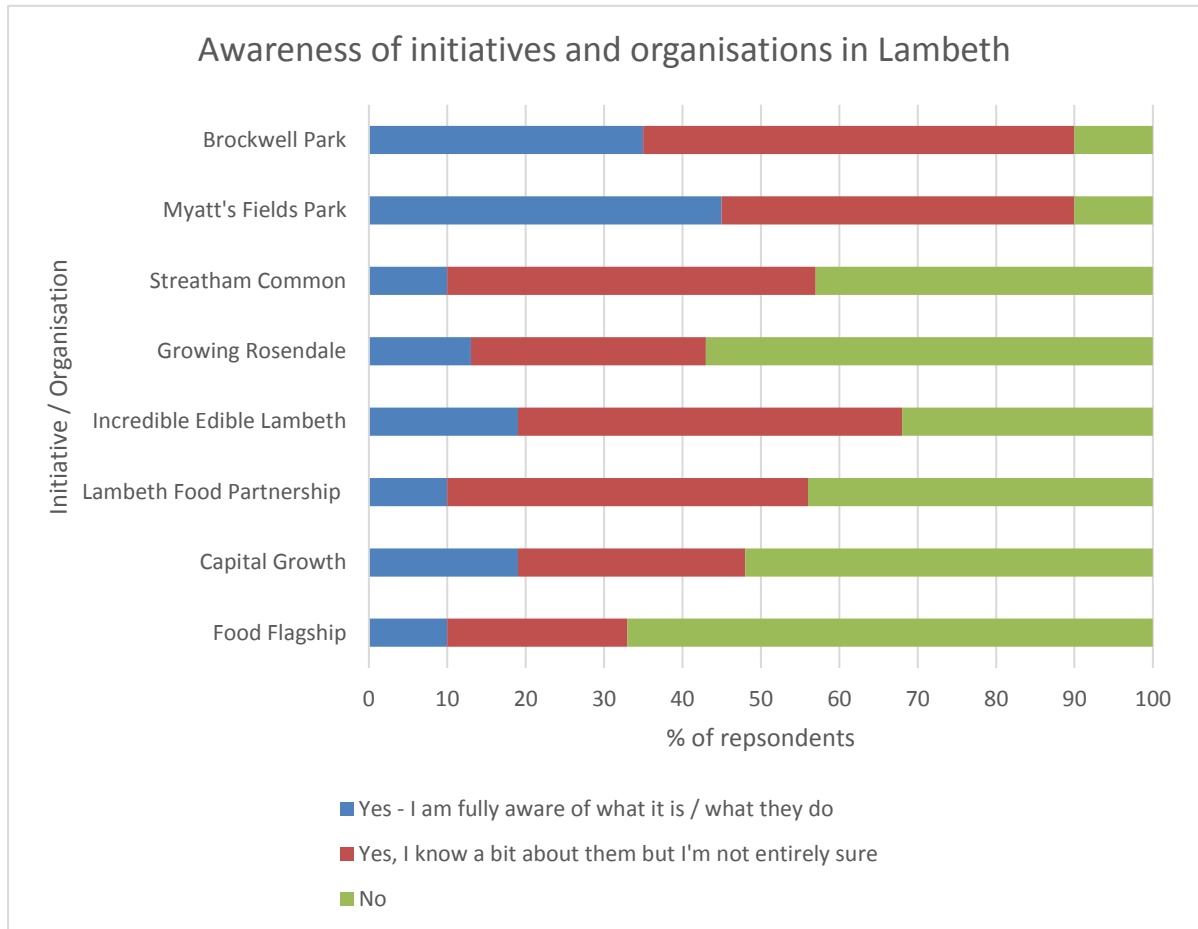
Figure 11: Respondents awareness of initiatives and organsations in Lambeth

Appendix 10: 'Showcasing Community Food Growing in Lambeth'

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) awarded £800 for the 'Showcasing Community Food Growing in Lambeth' event as part of their Festival of Social Science, November 2017. A short film was produced for the event which, drawing on the research findings, aimed to showcase and celebrate community food growing in Lambeth to a non-academic audience. The event ran on Thursday 9th November in Brixton and was attended by approximately 50 people including residents, community gardeners, council employees, community organisations, and the Cabinet member for Housing and Environment. Positive feedback was received from the attendees who valued the opportunity to gather and network with others at the community event, to learn about what is taking place in their communities regarding community food growing, and what support is available.

Link to the film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NC2q09O8-k

Ethical Approval

REGISTRY RESEARCH UNIT
ETHICS REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM
(Review feedback should be completed within 10 working days)

Name of applicant: Elizabeth Cheese ....

Faculty/School/Department: [Business, Environment and Society] Geography, Environment & Disaster Manager

Research project title: PhD (part time)

Comments by the reviewer

1. **Evaluation of the ethics of the proposal:**
2. **Evaluation of the participant information sheet and consent form:**
3. **Recommendation:** (Please indicate as appropriate and advise on any conditions. If there any conditions, the applicant will be required to resubmit his/her application and this will be sent to the same reviewer).

	Approved - no conditions attached
	Approved with minor conditions (no need to re-submit)
	Conditional upon the following – please use additional sheets if necessary (please re-submit application)
	Rejected for the following reason(s) – please use other side if necessary
X	Not required

Name of reviewer: Anonymous ....

Date: 08/02/2013 ....

REGISTRY RESEARCH UNIT
ETHICS REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM
(Review feedback should be completed within 10 working days)

Name of applicant: Elizabeth Bos ....

Faculty/School/Department: [Business, Environment and Society] SURGE

Research project title: PhD field work - first round of stakeholder interviews

Comments by the reviewer

1. Evaluation of the ethics of the proposal:
Section 6. Can you use the edit details box to explain how you are storing and securing the data. If it is being audio recorded, can you explain how that will be stored and secured; if it is field notes, again, just explain the storage security; also mention how long the data will be held and then destroyed.
- Re: the potential for identity to be compromised due to the familiarity of the individuals within the CFNs. It would be good to include a statement in the PIS to say that there may be the potential for them to be identified but all efforts will be made to ensure their anonymity. It could be included at the part about 'risks'. I don't think this will be a big issue for those involved.
Section 12 - can you explain how you are going to recruit your participants. If it is through existing organisations (rather than approaching individuals directly) you need to state in 12.2 'YES' rather than 'NO', and then explain in the edit details drop down box who the organisation are and how the people will be approached.

2. Evaluation of the participant information sheet and consent form:
~See comments above relating to Section 6.

3. Recommendation:
(Please indicate as appropriate and advise on any conditions. If there any conditions, the applicant will be required to resubmit his/her application and this will be sent to the same reviewer).

X	Approved - no conditions attached
	Approved with minor conditions (no need to re-submit)
	Conditional upon the following – please use additional sheets if necessary (please re-submit application)
	Rejected for the following reason(s) – please use other side if necessary
	Not required

Name of reviewer: Anonymous ....

Date: 19/06/2014 ....

REGISTRY RESEARCH UNIT

ETHICS REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM

(Review feedback should be completed within 10 working days)

Name of applicant: Elizabeth Bos ....

Faculty/School/Department: [Business, Environment and Society] Centre for Business in Society

Research project title: PhD fieldwork – resident interviews

Comments by the reviewer

1. Evaluation of the ethics of the proposal:
This is a very interesting project. The researcher has clearly considered the potential ethical issues involved in her study and addressed them appropriately.
2. Evaluation of the participant information sheet and consent form:
The participant information sheet and consent form documents are fine.
3. Recommendation:
(Please indicate as appropriate and advise on any conditions. If there any conditions, the applicant will be required to resubmit his/her application and this will be sent to the same reviewer).

X	Approved - no conditions attached
	Approved with minor conditions (no need to re-submit)
	Conditional upon the following – please use additional sheets if necessary (please re-submit application)
	Rejected for the following reason(s) – please use other side if necessary
	Not required

Name of reviewer: Anonymous ....

Date: 29/09/2014 ....

REGISTRY RESEARCH UNIT
ETHICS REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM
(Review feedback should be completed within 10 working days)

Name of applicant: Elizabeth Bos ....

Faculty/School/Department: [Business, Environment and Society] Centre for Business in Society

Research project title: PhD (part time) - Critical Discourse Analysis

Comments by the reviewer

1. Evaluation of the ethics of the proposal:
The application has been anonymised as requested.

2. Evaluation of the participant information sheet and consent form:
N/A

3. Recommendation:
(Please indicate as appropriate and advise on any conditions. If there any conditions, the applicant will be required to resubmit his/her application and this will be sent to the same reviewer).

X	Approved - no conditions attached
	Approved with minor conditions (no need to re-submit)
	Conditional upon the following – please use additional sheets if necessary (please re-submit application)
	Rejected for the following reason(s) – please use other side if necessary
	Not required

Name of reviewer: Anonymous ....

Date: 11/02/2015 ....

REGISTRY RESEARCH UNIT

ETHICS REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM

(Review feedback should be completed within 10 working days)

Name of applicant: Elizabeth Bos.....................................

Faculty/School/Department: [University Research Centre] Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience

Research project title: Survey (PhD) citizen motivations for urban food growing.

Comments by the reviewer

1. Evaluation of the ethics of the proposal: Good proposal	
2. Evaluation of the participant information sheet and consent form: Good	
3. Recommendation: (Please indicate as appropriate and advise on any conditions. If there any conditions, the applicant will be required to resubmit his/her application and this will be sent to the same reviewer).	
X	Approved - no conditions attached
	Approved with minor conditions (no need to re-submit)
	Conditional upon the following – please use additional sheets if necessary (please re-submit application)
	Rejected for the following reason(s) – please use other side if necessary
	Not required

Name of reviewer: Anonymous...

Date: 06/07/2015..