

Digging over local garden share schemes

**investigating the
factors that influence
participation and satisfaction**

***a summary of
the research findings***

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Introduction

The following document offers a summary of the main findings from the thesis of the same title, which has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Science at the Graduate School of the Environment, Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth. Please contact the author at katestott@yahoo.co.uk with any queries or for an electronic copy of the thesis in full.

Background

In a world of rising global food prices, declining food reserves and erratic harvests, urban agriculture offers the hope of, amongst others things, improved food security and access to fresh and nutritious food. Within urban areas competing demands mean that identifying land suitable for urban growing can be a challenge. Garden sharing, a form of urban agriculture, is unusual in that it targets making more productive use of residential gardens.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of local garden share schemes through a mixed methods study. The overall objective is to add to the limited body of research, by enhancing the current understanding of who does it, why they do it, what factors help or hinder the decision to participate, and what community organisations or groups can do to make participation more widespread and more satisfying. The intended output will take the form of evidence and recommendations for host organisations running or wishing to run a local garden share scheme.

Research questions

The overall objective for this study gives rise to five research questions, which this study will attempt to answer:

- RQ1: What is the extent and nature of local garden share schemes within England, Scotland and Wales?
- RQ2: Why garden share: what drives people to garden sharing and what benefits do they derive from it?
- RQ3: What assists garden sharers in garden sharing: what encourages them either to start garden sharing or to stick at it?
- RQ4: What problems do garden sharers encounter: what concerns do garden sharers have before starting and what difficulties do they experience once they start?
- RQ5: What strategies should host organisations adopt to attract and support garden share participants?

Literature review: in brief

A thorough literature review provided an account of global food price increases, environmental damage and competition for land, which goes some way to rationalise the recent upsurge of interest in urban agriculture as a way of using conventionally non-agricultural land to increase food production.

Urban agriculture has a contribution to make in respect of major environmental concerns associated with conventional agri-business and in reconnecting urban dwellers to their food and its production. The impacts of community growing go beyond carbon reduction and food security and include a range of improvements to health, well-being and social capital. Increasing competition for urban land has generated innovative forms of community growing including garden sharing. The success of local garden schemes will partly depend on an understanding of the drivers, enablers and barriers to participation. To date there has been little published material about the extent and reach of garden share projects nor

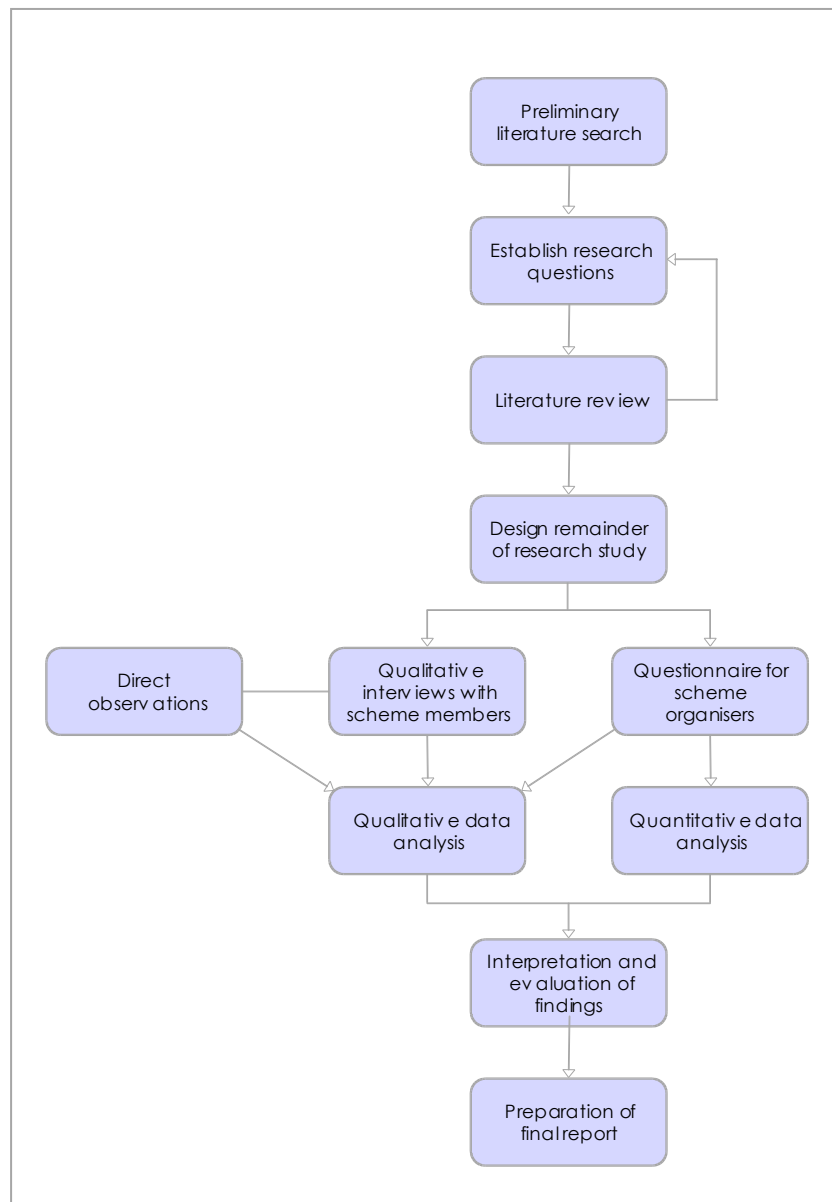
academic research into this activity (McKee nd; Toth 2011, p20). These arguments, together with the unique characteristics of garden sharing, justify the focus of this piece of research.

Garden share literature is sparse with specific gaps as identified in the preceding sections. Mostly qualitative in nature, data has been collected from a small number of garden sharers using interviews, observation and focus groups (Blake 2003; Jackson et al 2012; Toth 2011). Although the three research studies discussed investigate aspects of the research questions posed above, the scarcity of available data justifies the further exploration proposed within this study.

Methodology and methods used: in brief

Following consideration of researcher disposition and experience, the nature of the research questions, participant access and anticipated response rates, as well as time and resources available, it was decided that data collection would take the form of an in-depth qualitative interview study supplemented simultaneously by a predominantly quantitative questionnaire and, where possible, limited direct observation. The design for this research was influenced strongly by best practice in small-scale social science research studies. An outline of the resulting design is given in Figure 1 below. The research project was conducted over the six-month period August 2012 to January 2013.

Figure 1: Outline of research design



Qualitative interviewing

The interviewees were participants, gardeners and garden owners, from four local garden share schemes based in Macclesfield, Sheffield, Stratford-upon-Avon and Wakefield. The schemes were located within medium to large urban areas, demonstrating a mix of housing stock and incomes familiar to northern England and the Midlands. The garden share schemes thus sampled ranged from popular and well-supported schemes to less obviously successful ones. They were chosen specifically to provide a contrast to Toth's 2011 study of garden sharing within a London borough. In this sense the choice of sample is considered to be 'purposive' (Robson 2011, p275) and appropriate to the research objectives and project constraints.

Based on best practice for small-scale qualitative interview studies (Kvale 2007, p44), twelve was chosen as the target number of interviewees. Ideally, the interview subjects would be split evenly between gardeners and garden owners with a number of interviewees from each selected garden share scheme; no further requirements were established within the study design.

Questionnaire

A thorough web search was conducted during July to identify as many local garden share schemes as possible. The search focused on England, Scotland and Wales only. In total 77 local schemes were identified, of which seven were known to be no longer in operation. A database of contact details was prepared (see Appendix). Email addresses were found for the organisers of 68 garden share schemes including the seven closed schemes.

Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent by email to organisers of the 68 local garden share schemes for which email addresses had been found. In this way the sample was intended to be a representative sample of local garden share schemes past and present, albeit those with a web presence or press coverage from the web-based media.

Results and analysis

Introduction

The results presented below were drawn from questionnaire responses received from 46 garden share scheme organisers and from 11 qualitative interviews with five garden owners and eight gardeners, representing nine different garden share partnerships.

The research and analysis activities generated a mass of raw data; many tough decisions were needed to reduce this large quantity down to an amount more appropriate for this report. Presented within this chapter, therefore, is the data considered to be most relevant in helping to explore, and ultimately answer, the research questions. Except where specifically mentioned the questionnaire data presented here comes from organisers of active garden share schemes only. Further data is available in Appendix 1 to the full thesis; see page 5 for contact details if an electronic copy of the full thesis is required.

The sections which follow this introduction consider each research question in turn, drawing data from both the questionnaire responses and the interview transcripts. To avoid any confusion about the source of the data used, questionnaire and interview findings are presented under separate headings. The results section for each research question concludes with a short summary of the key findings relevant to answering that particular research question.

Interview quotations used below are accompanied by a letter and number. For example, ‘when it works, it’s incredible’ (H9). Here it is interviewee H who is talking and the quotation comes from page 9 of the interview. Questionnaire quotations are also credited, for example, to organiser 24.

Brief biographical details about the interviewees are given in Table 1 below. Interviewees D and F were a garden share partnership as were G and H, and M and P’s father. Interviewees A and B were a married couple who gardened the same garden share plot.

Table 1: Interviewees: a snapshot

Interviewee	Region	Gardener/ garden owner	Gender (M/F)	Age (yrs)
A	Yorkshire & the Humber	Gardener	F	> 60
B	Yorkshire & the Humber	Gardener	M	> 60
C	North West	Gardener	F	20 - 40
D	Yorkshire & the Humber	Gardener	M	40 - 60
E	North West	Gardener	M	40 - 60
F	Yorkshire & the Humber	Garden owner	M	> 60
G	Yorkshire & the Humber	Gardener	F	> 60
H	Yorkshire & the Humber	Garden owner	M	> 60
J	West Midlands	Garden owner	F	> 60
M	West Midlands	Gardener	M	40 - 60
N	West Midlands	Garden owner	F	40 -60
P	West Midlands	Garden owner	M	> 60
S	North West	Gardener	F	20 - 40

RQ1: What is the extent and nature of garden share schemes within England, Scotland and Wales?

Data from questionnaires

Overview of existing schemes

Figure 2 below and Figure 3 overleaf provide a snapshot of current British garden share schemes derived from the questionnaire data. A brief summary of key points follows.

Figure 2: Overview of local garden share schemes

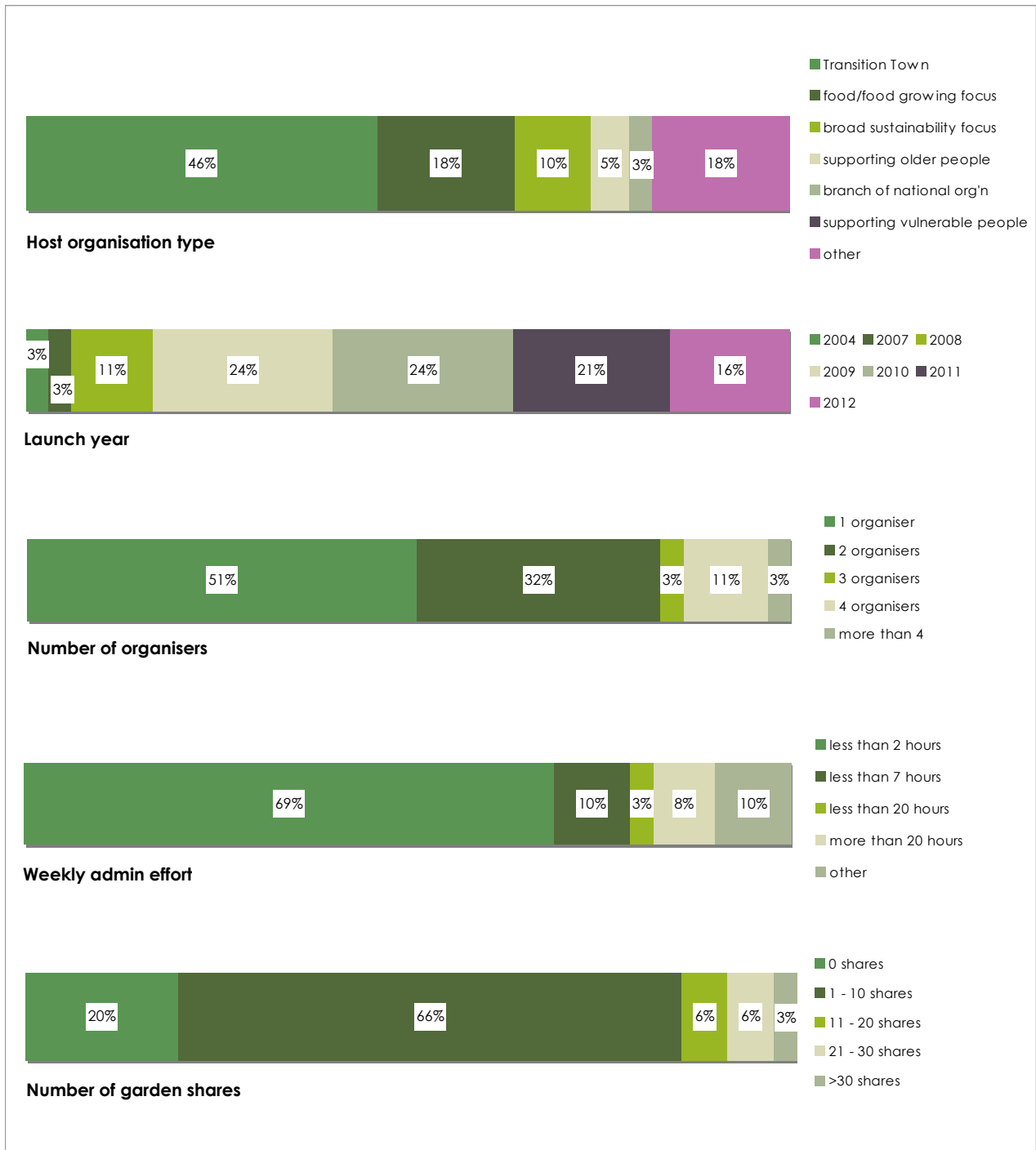
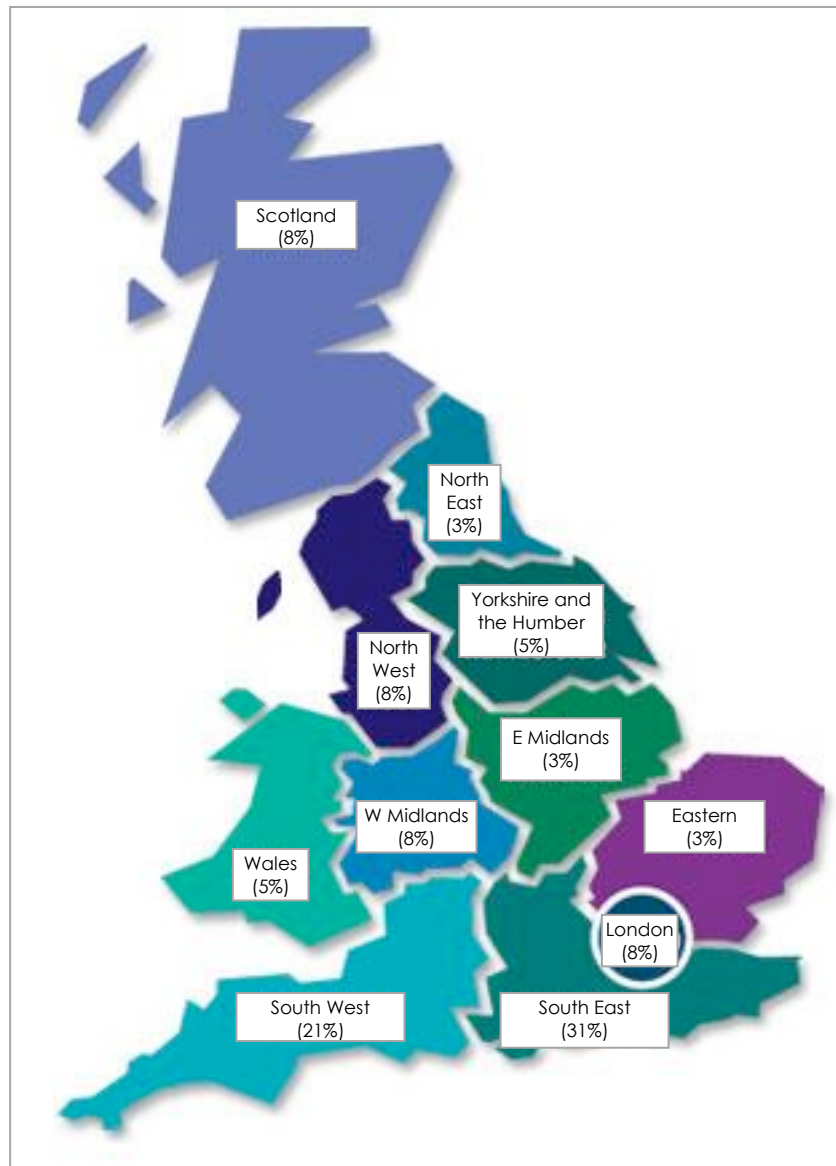


Figure 3: Garden share schemes by region



Original image © Road Safety GB

Organisation type

Transition Towns were the single most common type of organisation to run a garden share scheme, responsible for just under half the schemes (18 out of 39). According to the literature, garden share beneficiaries tend to be elderly. Despite this, groups or organisations with a focus on supporting vulnerable people (including the elderly) accounted for only two of the schemes identified (5%), although organisers of a further two such groups had checked the 'other' option.

Launch year

2009 saw a jump in the number of schemes launched from four in 2008 to eleven, with a slight increase the following year. Since then the trend appears to be downwards although it is possible more schemes were launched later in 2012, after the data collection period. The longest running scheme was launched in 2004.

Administrator input

The vast majority (83%) of garden share schemes were run by one or two organisers, with over half relying on just one person. Two thirds of schemes (67%) were run on less than two hours a week of organiser input. The range, however, is quite wide with three schemes (8%), all with paid administrative

staff, allocating more than ten times that amount of time to their scheme and one spending 'less than an hour a month' (organiser 35).

Number of garden shares

Two thirds (66%) of garden share scheme organisers indicated that they were currently supporting between 1 and 10 garden shares, while a fifth had no active shares. This seemingly poor level of success is, however, not seen across the board with three schemes with over 20 partnerships on their books.

Geographical spread

At four each, Devon and Hampshire were the counties with most garden share schemes. However, when grouped by region it was the South East that had the most garden share schemes. No region of the country lacked a garden share scheme although the numbers were significantly greater in the South East and South West, possibly indicating a lack of representativeness in the interviewee sample.

Due to time constraints and despite its obvious appeal, no analysis was undertaken to investigate the existence of links or correlations between these or any other scheme characteristics. Similarly, the ability to compare schemes in terms of success was considered a potentially interesting subject for future research but unfortunately beyond the scope of this research.

Who participates?

Figure 4: Overview of garden share participants

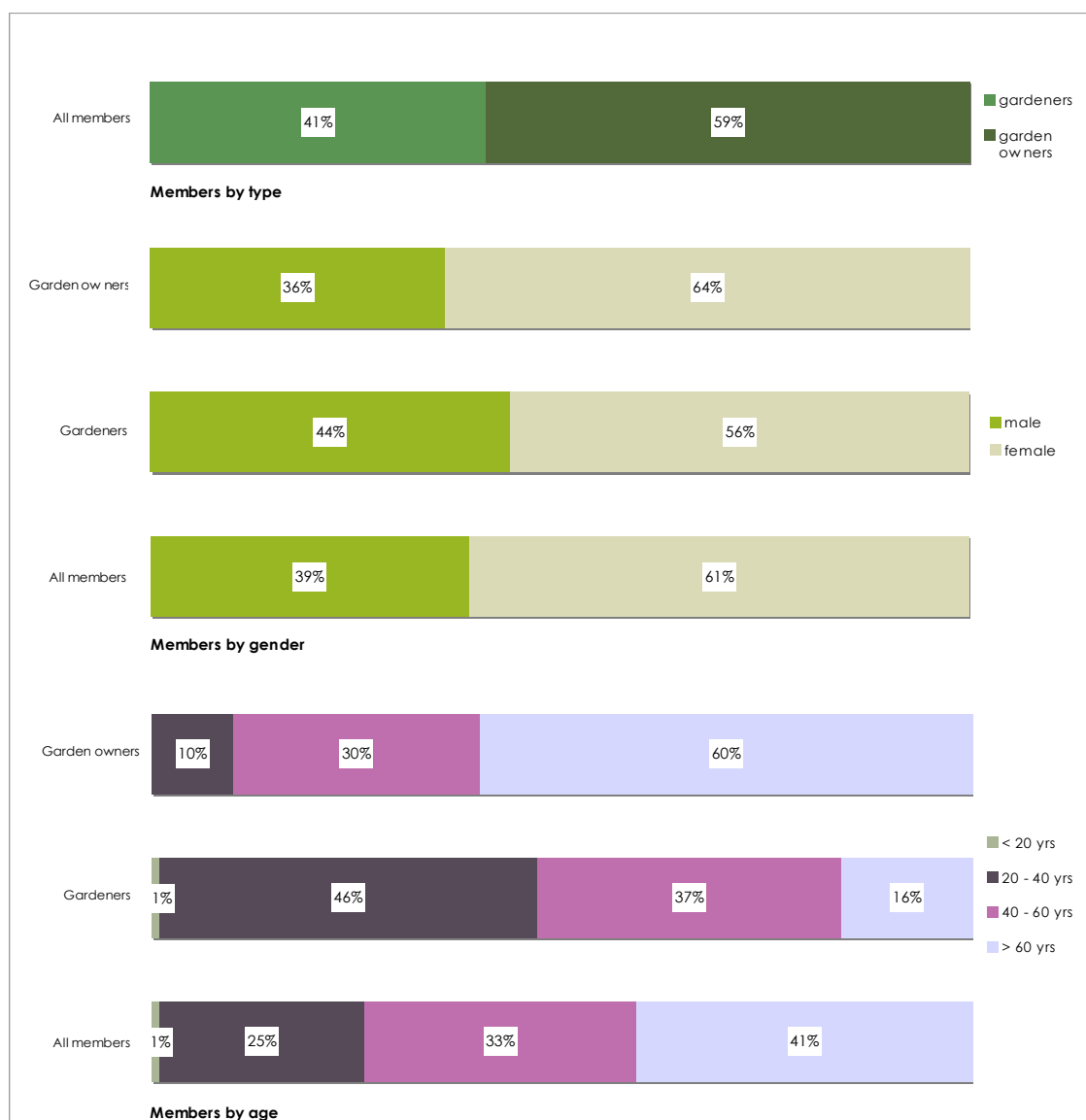


Figure 5 on the previous page shows demographic data about scheme members. Taking all schemes together there was a rough 60:40 split between garden owners and gardeners (see below for more on the garden owner / gardener split). More women than men were involved in garden sharing: over a quarter more women than men were signed up as gardeners and over three quarters more as garden owners. Pensioners were in the majority (60%) in the garden owner category. Over 50% of the prospective gardeners were over 40 and nearly a third of that number were over 60.

Looking more closely at the data obtained in response to questions B.1 and B.3 the balance between gardeners and garden owners can be investigated. Overall, 22 out of 34 garden share schemes (65%) had more garden owners than gardeners, 9 (26%) had more garden owners than gardeners. The remaining 3 schemes (9%) had the same number of gardeners as garden owners (see Figure 5 below). More detail is supplied by calculating the ratio of garden owners to gardeners (see Table 2 below). Nearly a quarter of all schemes have at least twice the number of garden owners as gardeners and about 10% of schemes have more than twice the number of gardeners as garden owners. This analysis could be thought to give some indication about where the marketing effort of scheme organisers needs to be focused.

Figure 5: Balance between garden owners and gardeners by scheme

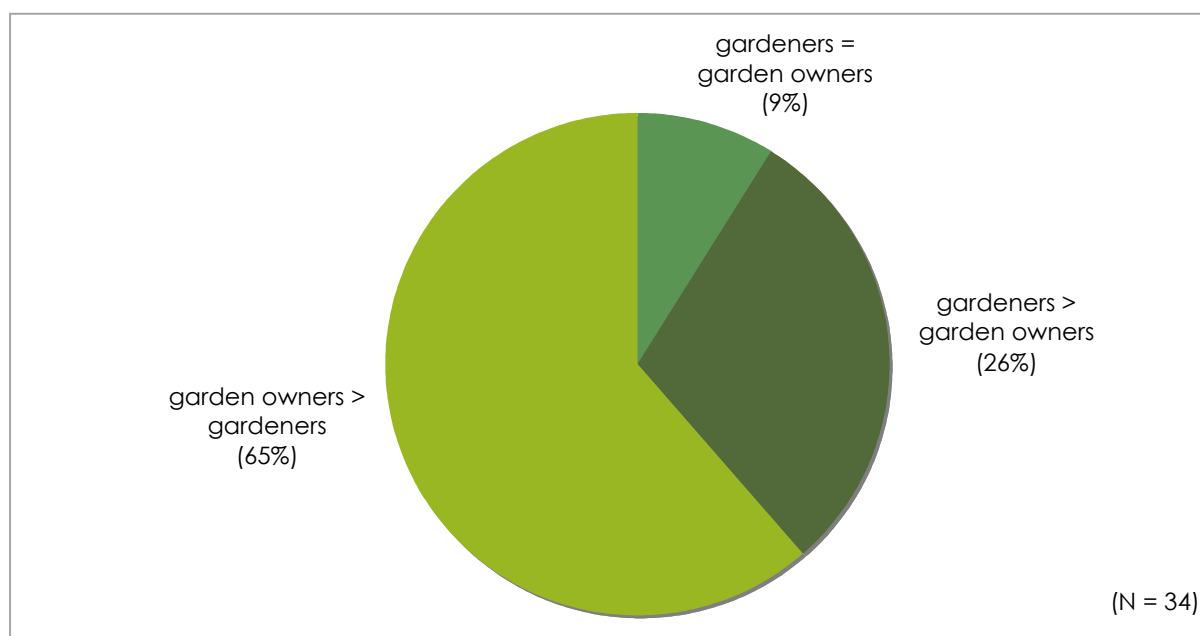


Table 2: Ratio of garden owners to gardeners by scheme

For every gardener how many garden owners are there?	n	%
greater than or equal to 2	8	24
greater than or equal to 1 but less than 2	17	50
greater than or equal to 0.5 but less than 1	6	18
less than 0.5	3	9
Total	34	100

Data from interviews

The interviews with thirteen garden sharers, representing nine separate partnerships, shed some light on the specifics of garden sharing and the variety of experience encompassed within the simple phrase, garden share.

Partnership arrangements

Two plots were worked jointly by both gardener and garden owner: G and H; and J and her gardener. Variations of this arrangement existed, for example, E had been allocated separate beds within a larger plot cultivated by his garden owner and D had prepared a small portion of the plot for F to plant what he wanted, as his arthritis prevented him from digging himself. For the remaining five partnerships the garden owner did not work the plot at all. In seven out of the nine partnerships the gardeners took the bulk of the harvest and offered small portions to their garden owner. The two exceptions to this were J and her gardener who shared the harvest they had jointly tended and G and H, whose arrangement seems unusual in that G, the gardener, left most of the harvest for H. When asked about this she mentioned she already had access to fresh food from the community allotment she also worked at.

Plot specifics

All plots were described as being close to where the gardener lived; the closest was 'just across the road' (J1), the furthest a 15-minute drive for C. Six of the nine plots were less than ten minutes' walk for their respective gardeners. Not all the plots were strictly part of the owner's home: one was an allotment garden across a road and one a plot of land retained by the owners when they had sold a house. The remaining seven, however, were located within the boundary of the garden owner's house. Some of these were separated from other areas by walls or fences; some made up a majority of the garden area, some only a small proportion. Absolute size of the shared plot varied too from about 100m² to a more modest couple of small raised beds. Only three out of the nine plots were well-maintained at the time of hand-over, the majority being either previously uncultivated or overgrown: 'and I mean it was in a mess, a real mess' (A6).

In brief

Key findings relevant to the first research question are summarised below.

- Local garden shares were found across England, Scotland and Wales with more in south of England but nowhere near total coverage suggesting there is plenty of potential for new schemes to be launched.
- Some evidence was found to indicate that the interest in setting up garden share schemes might have peaked.
- Some schemes had lots of garden share partnerships but most schemes had ten or fewer on-going partnerships during the 2012 season. This implies that the total number of active garden sharers across the country can be counted in hundreds. At a fraction of, say, the 330,000 allotment holders in the UK in 2008 (Vidal 2008) this in turn implies that garden sharing currently makes only a small contribution to overall British urban agriculture outputs.
- Most garden share schemes were found to be hosted by volunteer-led Transition Town groups but other types of organisations were involved including food-growing groups and older people's charities or services. A few schemes employed full- or part-time scheme administrators.
- People of all ages were shown to take part in garden sharing. Garden owners were largely over 60 years' old but gardeners tended to be somewhat younger. Nationally, there were more female than male scheme members, whether as potential gardeners or garden owners. There were more schemes with more garden owners than gardeners, and a quarter of all schemes had at least twice as many garden owners as gardeners.
- The precise nature of individual share arrangements ranged from planning and cultivating together to solo gardeners with very little contact with their owners. A wide variation was seen in the type of plots under cultivation too.

RQ2: Why garden share?

Data from interviews

Figure 6 below shows the key themes that emerged when discussing with interviewees what they got out of being garden sharers.

Figure 6: Key themes: why garden share?

Gardening	'it's in my blood' C2 'I got the taste for it' D3 'he became very depressed that the garden wasn't being looked after' P1 'someone to make use of it, keep it under control and in production' S1
Lack of growing space	'I'd never had the space' B7
Home-grown food	'I'd eaten them before I'd got as far as the house' J8 'it's fresher and it's natural and it's not sprayed' J5 'vegetables that you could never see in the shops' M6 'it's part of my dream to be self-sufficient and live in an eco-friendly way' S1 'most of the time he doesn't want anything' M4
Outdoor activity	'it's great to get back and be physically knackered' C1 'I go down and work out in the middle of glorious sunshine' M6 'gets us outside, lets us wind down, keeps us fit' S1
Sense of achievement	'it's such a swell of satisfaction that you've completed something, that you've achieved a goal' M7 'just learned a lot really about what works and what doesn't' G3
Social and community benefits	'I've also got to know [him] better, which has been nice' J5 'living alone I get a bit lonely and it breaks that aspect up' F1 'I think we've encouraged more of the plots to be used' C6 'allows you to talk to neighbours more but you don't really need a garden share to do that' C5

Gardening and growing

The gardeners were all keen on gardening and growing things: 'I'm a gardener, truly' (A4) is how A described herself. During the interviews it was sometimes hard to stop them talking about what they grew or how they grew it. For some, gardening was part of their family history: 'it's in my blood' (C2). Some, such as A, B, G and M, had been gardening for many years; others, such as C, D, E, and S, were relatively new to it but had 'got the taste for it' (D3).

Garden owners were also keen growers. P's dad and F had become increasingly concerned that, due to advancing years, they were no longer able to tend plots they had maintained for over 40 and 20 years respectively: 'he became very depressed that the garden wasn't being looked after' (P1). By sharing her garden J was able to carry on gardening after an operation which had restricted her mobility.

Elsewhere owners had looked to garden sharing as a way to keep land under cultivation when they did not have the time themselves: 'someone to make use of it, keep it under control and in production' (S1).

Lack of growing space

In the main the gardeners had turned to garden sharing as they had insufficient growing space of their own. For example, B had been previously unable to grow peppers as 'I'd never had the space' (B7). C and M had considered municipal allotments but had found local waiting lists too long. D and G both already gardened at community gardens but wanted something more challenging.

Home-grown food

There was a common interest in food amongst the ten active gardeners although reasons for 'growing their own' varied. Most, like J and H, took delight in the freshness afforded by their own produce: 'I'd

eaten them before I'd got as far as the house' (J8). Six were keen on organic food: 'it's fresher and it's natural and it's not sprayed' (J5). The health benefits and taste of fresh vegetables were also mentioned.

A and E disapproved of the cost of shop-bought vegetables and, along with two others, questioned the quality of vegetables available in supermarkets. Garden sharing allowed M to 'try out vegetables that you could never see in the shops' (M6).

Half the gardeners talked about growing food as part of a bigger personal plan, linked to self-sufficiency or low carbon living: 'it's part of my dream to be self-sufficient and live in an eco-friendly way' (S1). Environmental concerns were not restricted to the more youthful. Elderly garden owners J and F were both knowledgeable and personally active in supporting environmentally friendly lifestyles.

For some non-active owners access to fresh food did not seem to be such a driver. D and M talked about the difficulty they had in giving their garden share partners some of the harvest: 'most of the time he doesn't want anything' (M4).

Outdoor activity

There were active gardeners, such as C and G, who relished the physical side of gardening: 'it's great to get back and be physically knackered' (C1). D, A, S and G all mentioned that garden sharing keeps them fit and active: 'I go down and work out in the middle of glorious sunshine' (M6).

Being outside in the garden was also linked with more general well-being benefits by A: 'if I'm not very well or I'm angry or annoyed [it has a] calming effect' (A15). S, who emphasised the contrast between gardening and her office-based day job, saw it as a stress buster: '[it] gets us outside, lets us wind down' (S1).

Others, such as E, C, H and S, took pleasure in the natural world: 'just the fact when things are growing and there's a lot of greenery ... that's really really nice' (H9).

Sense of achievement

Four of the active gardeners described their garden share in terms of a purposeful activity that generated a feeling of accomplishment: 'it's such a swell of satisfaction ... that you've achieved a goal' (M7).

Several active gardeners, including D, G, H and M, commented on their improved gardening knowledge, by 'learn[ing] about growing at the same time as doing it' (D3). G had gained confidence in her own knowledge and recognised that she had 'just learned a lot really about what works and what doesn't' (G3).

In the case of garden owners P's dad, F and N, they took satisfaction from the achievements of their gardeners: 'he gets real pleasure from seeing the garden put to good use' (P3).

Social and community benefits

Eight garden sharers mentioned the pleasure of getting to know their garden share partner: 'I've also got to know [him] better, which has been nice' (J5). S and N saw it as 'a great way to find out more about the place you live in' (S4).

For older garden owners F and P's dad, the increase in social contact alone was beneficial: 'living alone I get a bit lonely and it breaks that aspect up' (F1). For P it also acted as an extra safety net for his dad: 'another person about to keep an eye on him' (P1).

Garden owners, such as N and P, had been attracted to garden sharing as it would be 'helping somebody else out' (N3), someone who did not already have access to a growing plot. The opportunity to help someone also appealed to gardener G and was partly behind her decision to garden share with H.

For active gardeners A, B, D and H garden sharing had also enabled them to get to know other local residents. In a few cases garden sharers thought that their garden sharing had encouraged more neighbourly activity: 'we've got four houses now interconnected together whereas before ...' (B19).

Elsewhere, their example had inspired others to start gardening including other family members (in H's case), their garden owner's children (in S's case), or others nearby: 'I think we've encouraged more of the plots to be used' (C6).

For a few, garden sharing had made them think more about their community. F was considering what he could do to share more of his land. J wanted to initiate more activities amongst her neighbours, such as tool sharing or just getting to know them better. By contrast, C observed that garden sharing 'allows you to talk to neighbours more but you don't really need a garden share to do that' (C5).

Data from questionnaires

Garden sharers' motivations

Figures 7 and 8 below show what motivates gardeners and garden owners as understood by scheme organisers.

Figure 7: What attracts gardeners to garden sharing?

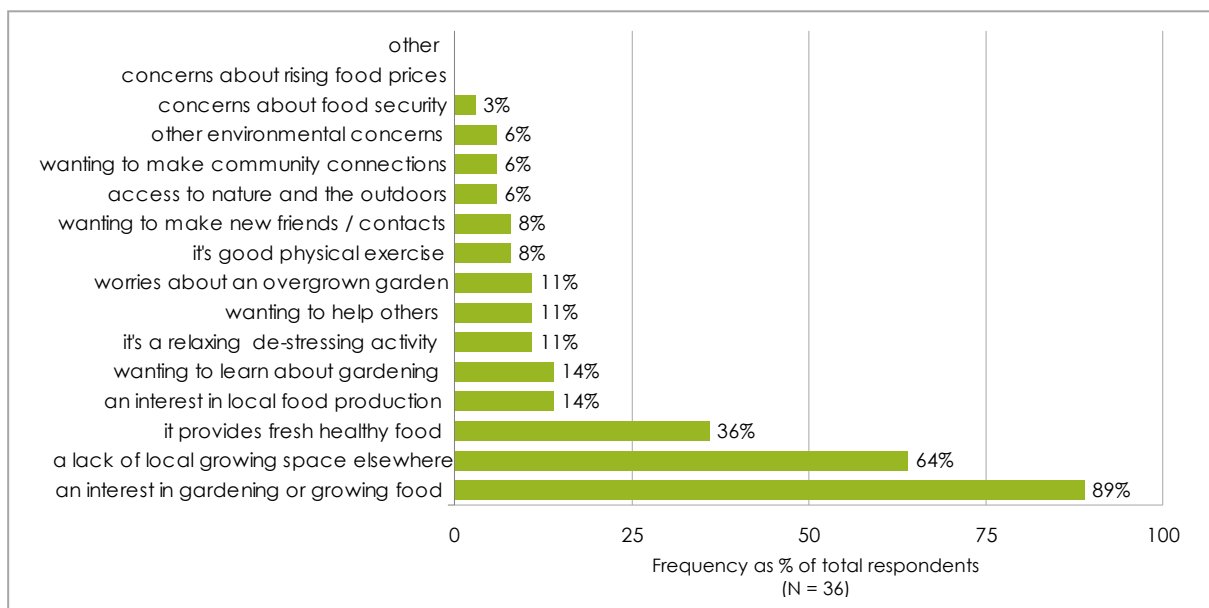
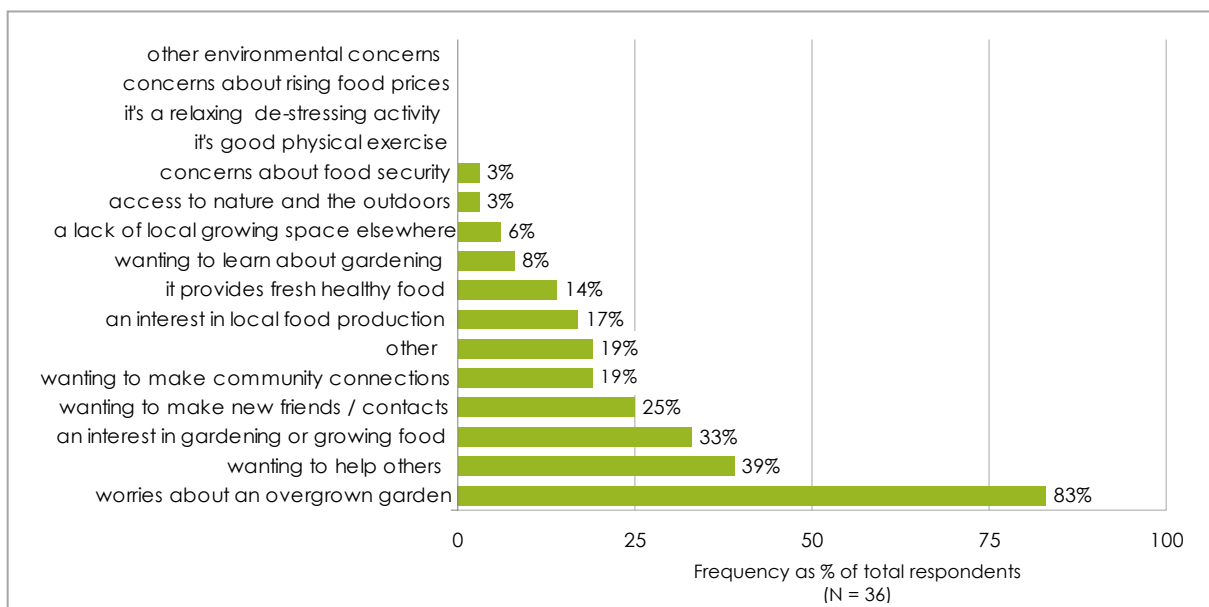


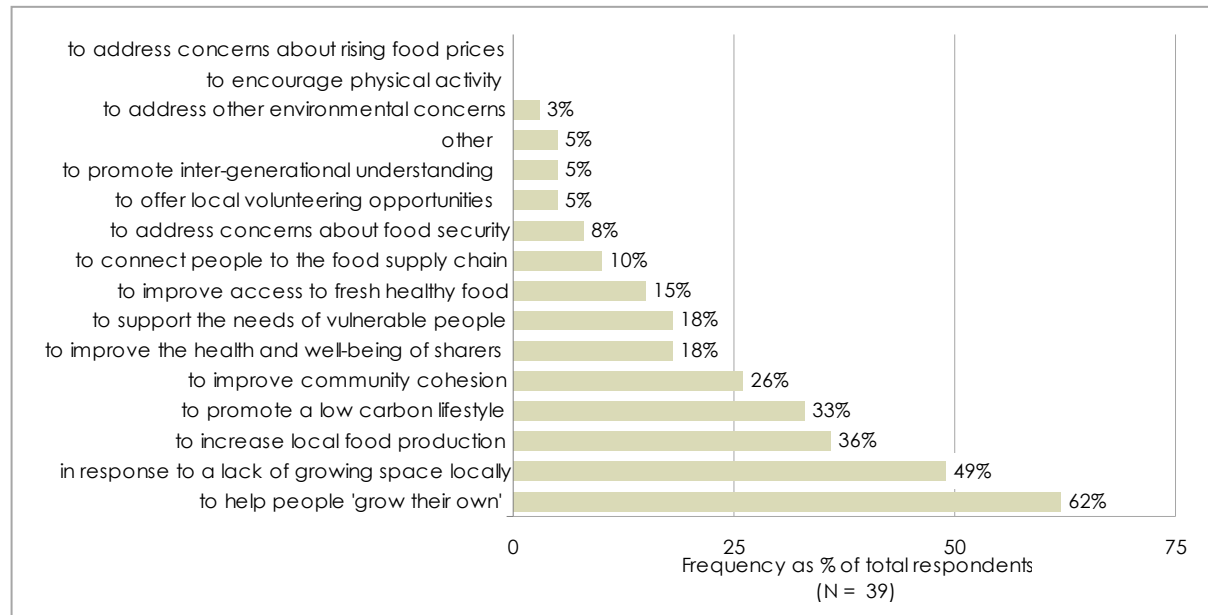
Figure 8: What attracts garden owners to garden sharing?



Host organisations' motivations

Scheme organisers declared themselves, in running their schemes, to be strongly motivated by the desire to help members 'grow their own' and increasing the availability of growing spaces (see Figure 9 below). Localisation and carbon emissions reductions were also well represented in the scheme objectives. The responses to this question might be viewed as reflecting the dominance of Transition Town groups within the sample.

Figure 9: Reasons behind running a local garden share scheme



In brief

Key findings relevant to the second research question are summarised as follows.

- The gardeners interviewed were all keen on gardening and growing their own food – a desire, perhaps, for personal food security. With one exception they were drawn to garden sharing by having insufficient space of their own; several had felt that renting an allotment was impractical for them.
- Garden owners showed more variation in the reasons they had been attracted to garden sharing. This variation appears to be linked to the involvement they ultimately had in their garden share arrangement.
- The five garden owners interviewed can be placed in one of three groups, depending on their principal driver: one, N, who wanted to help someone else out; two formerly keen gardeners, F and P's dad, who wanted their plots to continue to be productive but could no longer do this themselves, and two active gardeners, H and J, whose gardens were too much for them alone.
- Other benefits of garden sharing valued by active gardeners included the health and well-being benefits of physical exercise, access to fresh air and nature; a sense of achievement and, for some, an increased social network.
- Social contact and the peace of mind brought by seeing their garden well-tended were identified as the main benefits for non-active owners.
- Some evidence was found that garden sharing increases social capital but this view was not found consistently across the cohort of interviewees.
- Scheme organisers had a similar understanding about what motivated their members but tended to place more emphasis on anxiety over neglected gardens than was apparent from those interviewed.

RQ3: What assists garden sharers in garden sharing?

Data from interviews

Figure 10 below shows the key themes identified following analysis of what helped make garden sharing satisfying, easy or trouble-free for the garden sharing interviewees.

Figure 10: Key themes: what assists garden sharers in garden sharing?

Plot specifics	'I didn't want to go through anybody's house' C2 'we got a spare key cut ... so he can come and go as he pleases' P2
Relationship with partner	'I try to foster the relationship' F2 'oh ... don't bother knocking' B12 'we've talked a lot over the three years, haven't we?' G5
Personal attributes	'things are just slow when you're waiting for others to help out' C3 'they may not act according to how you'd want it to be done but that's not quite the same thing' J7 'you're not buying a service' G8
The role of the organisation	'she always kept you aware of what was happening' N6 'we both used it as an opportunity to ask [her] about how other shares had worked' C4 'I have got a phone number and everything if I need to contact him with any problems' A7
Contractual arrangements	'I've never felt the need' D2 'I haven't looked at the contract since we signed it' J9 'that's all part of my commitment towards him' M4

Plot specifics

Living close by was important in the decision to take on a plot for four gardeners: 'when we found out that it was only at the end of [the road] that was even better' (A2). Access featured in the minds of four gardeners and one garden owner. Side gates and keys were part of this:

'I didn't want to go through anybody's house' (C2)
'we got a spare key cut ... so he can come and go as he pleases' (P2).

Relationship with partner

Whatever the specifics of their arrangement, all interviewees felt it important that they developed a relationship with their partner. H suggested that 'perhaps if ... we didn't gel the thing wouldn't have worked' (H6) and F noted that 'I try to foster the relationship' (F2).

E was prepared to look for another sharer if the initial meeting with a prospective garden owner had not 'worked out' (E3). For J, G and H, already knowing their partner made garden sharing easier: 'that's fantastic ... I've known him for years' (J3).

Having things in common helped D: 'we've got similar political outlooks and it makes it easier' (D5). More than this, garden share relationships were built on respect, trust and consideration:

'we're thrilled that they're giving us permission to use their garden because it's theirs' (A15)
'if you like it you can start now, take a key' (C2)
'oh ... don't bother knocking' (B12)
'[he] often sweeps the patio down for me and I never ask him to but he often does' (J7).

Communication

Talking helped maintain thriving garden share relationships, whether it was planning, passing on information, asking permission, sharing knowledge or just chatting: 'at some point he'll give me a shout and say do you want a cup of tea ... [we'll] sit in the conservatory for half an hour, quarter of an hour' (D5). Some communicated a lot: 'we've talked a lot over the three years, haven't we?' (G5). Even when

contact was more infrequent or brief, sharers found it desirable: 'about once a month she'll knock on the front door and say I haven't seen you for a bit, are you alright' (N2). Each time she arrived at her shared plot S made sure to 'wave through the window so they know we're there' (S2). Gardener A considered socialising with her invalid garden owner was all part of the deal: 'something in return for the garden ... some of me and my time' (A12). M held a similar view.

Sharers with an active gardener as a partner, G, H and J, had spent time together to work out a growing plan that could then be implemented when either partner was working on the plot: 'we've had a lot of sort of standing in the yard looking and deciding what's to be done.' (G5) and 'we talk about what we're going to eat because he doesn't always eat the same things as me so we'll buy smaller amounts of it' (J2).

Personal attributes

For J it was simple, 'if they're interested in gardening ... they're the right kind of people' (J7). More specifically, there was broad agreement on the following as being essential characteristics on both sides of a garden share partnership:

Relaxed and easy-going:

'things are just slow when you're waiting for others to help out' (C3)

'open enough to be reasonably happy with people wandering round the garden' (H8)

Willing to compromise:

'they may not act according to how you'd want it to be done but that's not quite the same thing' (J7)

'You've got to accept that ... you're not buying a service' (G8)

The role of the host organisation

As F put it, 'my relationship has been much more to do with [my garden share partner]' (F3). Most garden sharers recognised that the part played by their host organisation changed over time.

Before a garden share is in place

D was clear that 'without that third party it would be very difficult to make connections with people' (D5). A and B lived really close to their garden owner but had never met before being introduced by their local organiser.

N appreciated being kept up to date with progress on the search: 'she always kept you aware of what was happening' (N6). Gardeners and garden owners, including C, N and P, valued their organiser's knowledge of garden sharing: 'we both used it [the first meeting] as an opportunity to ask [her] about how other shares had worked' (C4).

Once up and running

Garden sharers valued timely communication here too: 'if we send an email, there's always someone there to respond' (E3). Few, apart from N, had much experience of any regular on-going contact with their organiser. Indeed, most expressed little need of such continued support: 'no necessity ... unless anything goes wrong' (J10). Six garden sharers saw the organisation as a backstop in case things went wrong: 'if I had an issue they'd be the first people I'd go to' (C4).

Active gardeners, including S, A, B, and J, took advantage of other services or assistance offered by their host organisations, including advice, social events, seed swaps, plant sales and manure. G and H's local organiser helped them with a delivery of manure and 'whenever we've needed a big vehicle' (G9). Even non-active garden owners, N and F, expressed interest in some of the other activities offered by their host organisation.

Contractual arrangements

Five of the garden share partnerships had no written contract. For D there had 'always been that trust I've never felt the need' (D2). N was not alone in putting her agreement away and forgetting about it.

Garden sharers recognised that 'the contract isn't really legally binding' (C4) but for at least two participants draft contracts suggested points for discussion with prospective partners and could be

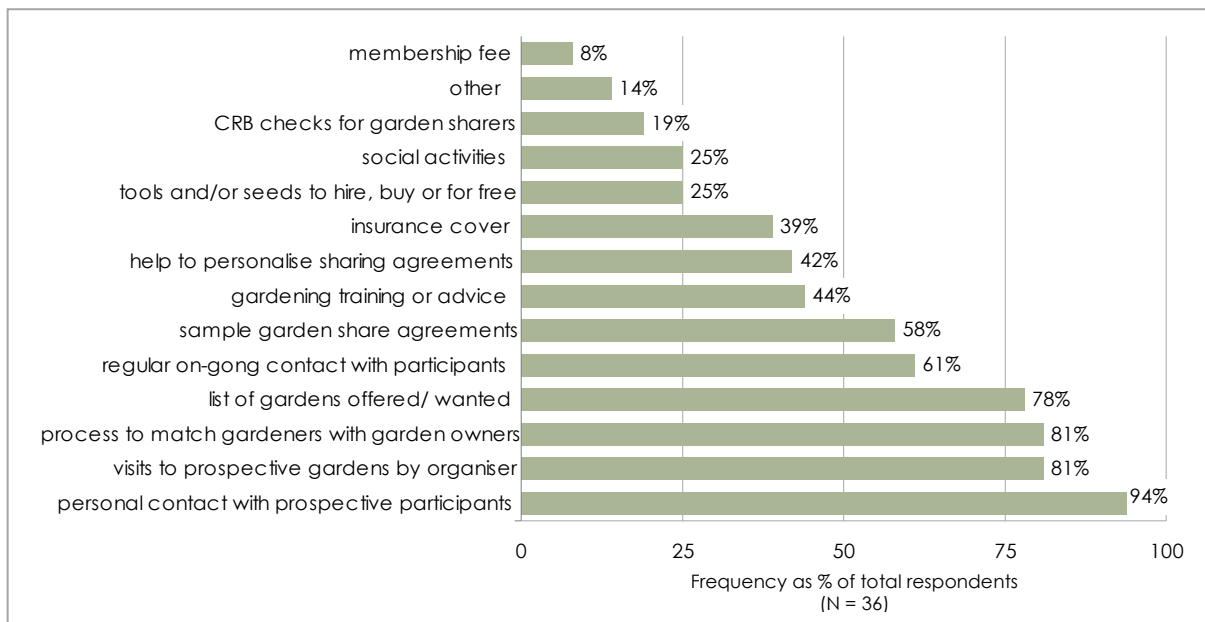
referred to in the future: ‘if you think it’s not working it gives you some suggestions about how to say goodbye’ (N6). D suggested that the garden share agreement provides evidence that the host organisation has delivered its duty of care.

Data from questionnaires

What is included in a garden share scheme?

Direct organiser knowledge both of prospective sharers and gardens featured in over 80% of the garden share schemes (see Figure 11 below). A similar percentage of schemes actively matched their members implying, as a consequence, that nearly a fifth did not.

Figure 11: Features of local garden share schemes



58% of schemes had sample sharing agreements available for use and a similar number of schemes (61%) maintained ‘regular contact’ with scheme participants (see below also).

On-going contact

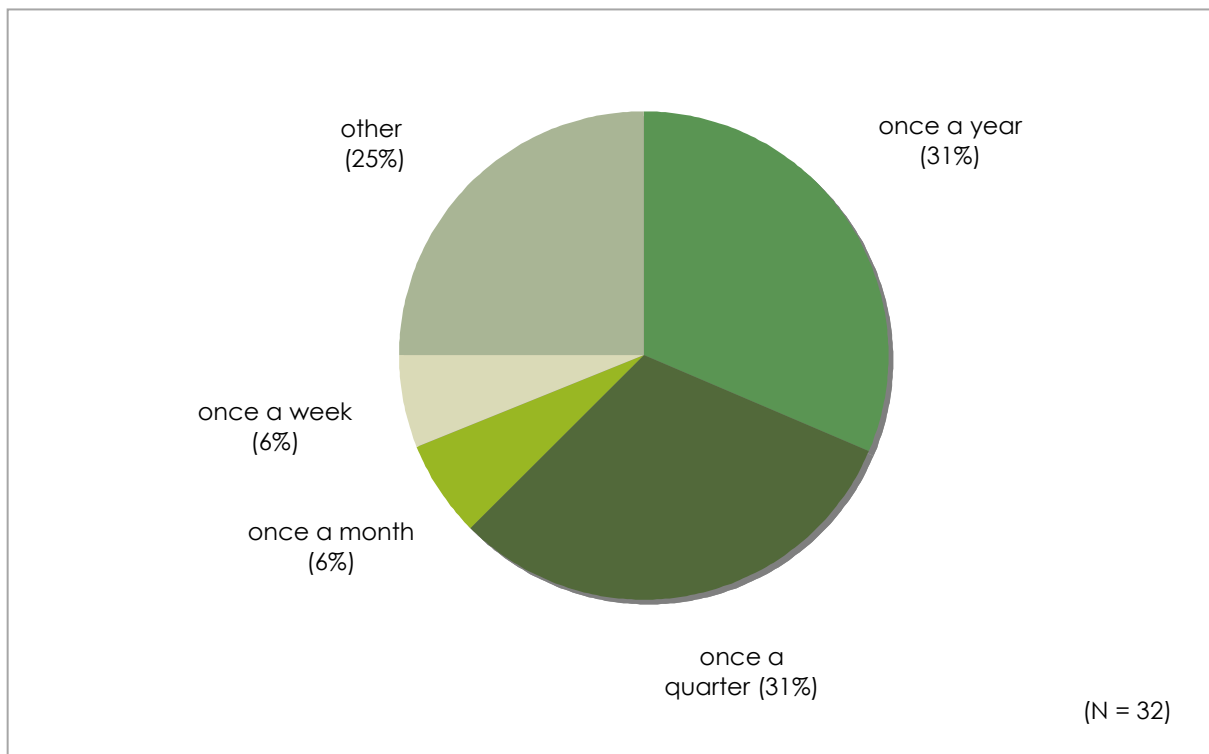
Figure 12 overleaf shows the frequency of on-going contact between organisers and garden sharers. Less than half the schemes (43%) maintained fairly regular contact of at least once a quarter. Nearly a third of schemes were in touch with sharers only annually. For the remainder, those who checked the ‘other’ category, contact varied depending on need and time available. Only one respondent (3%) said they had ‘almost no contact’ with their members.

In brief

A summary of key findings relevant to the third research question follows.

- There was little discernible difference between the views of gardeners and those of garden owners with respect to this research question.
- A good relationship with their garden share partner was considered essential by all garden sharers. Such a relationship was characterised by:
 - trust, respect and consideration of the needs of others
 - an easy-going, flexible attitude
 - on-going communication between partners.

Figure 12: Frequency of contact with scheme members



- Scheme organisers were seen by interviewees to play a valuable part in helping prospective garden sharers understand what was involved in garden sharing. This could be facilitated by using a draft agreement to stimulate and guide discussion.
- On a daily basis, written agreements were considered unimportant by garden sharers but for some they served as a form of security in the event of things going wrong.
- The host organisation was more important to members in the early days of their garden sharing experience, before a match was made. At this time, a hands-on, personal approach by the scheme organiser was appreciated.
- Once a match had been made, the role for the host organisation was seen to change: some on-going contact was appreciated but not viewed as critical. Most sharers, however, valued the knowledge that, if needed, their scheme organiser would be available as a resource or arbiter, in the case of a disagreement.
- The amount of time a majority of organisers spent making contact with scheme members, visiting gardens and actively matching sharers is warranted by the preferences expressed by garden sharers. The feelings of garden sharers about on-going contact suggests that, here too, most host organisations had got it about right.

RQ4: What problems do garden sharers encounter?

Data from interviews

Figure 13 below shows the key themes relating to concerns about garden sharing as drawn from the interviews.

Figure 13: Key themes: what problems do garden sharers encounter?

Absence of concerns	'perhaps I ought to have had but I didn't' J7
Annoyances and niggles	'I want to be able to show my mum and dad what I've been up to' C3 'I wish he'd told me beforehand' J9 'I had to wait an awful long time for mine' N1
Red tape	'a long list of restrictions -- that just wouldn't have worked for us' E1 'it would put too many people off' S3
Choice of partner	'she liked the idea I think but wasn't so keen on the actual reality' J8 'everybody thinks gardening is dead easy but when it comes to doing it ...' P3 'it's not about having an unpaid gardener' J7
Uncertain duration	'not sure when she will want her garden back' S2 'I just tend to try and focus on what I'm getting out of it now' D4
Strangers	'I'd have been more cautious ... it would have taken a time' H6 'enquiries ... about the sort of people who'd be offered the garden' P2

Absence of concerns

No interviewee was able to bring to mind any concerns they had had prior to entering into their garden share arrangement. J wondered whether, in retrospect, this was wise: 'perhaps I ought to have had but I didn't' (J7).

Interviewees were asked about any subsequent problems they had encountered since starting to garden share. All were quite happy with things as they were but were able to recall sources of minor irritation or to imagine circumstances which might present difficulties.

Annoyances and niggles

Two gardeners mentioned being bothered by not being able to invite others to their garden share plot: 'I want to be able to show my mum and dad what I've been up to' (C3).

A few gardeners and garden owners expressed some anxiety about not having the final say in what happened in the garden. B had had to accept the wishes of his garden owner concerning 'shrubs and trees that ... [he] wouldn't let us take out' (B18). N had decided against one prospective garden sharer as 'she's lovely ... but ... she would take over completely' (N4).

J desired timely communication from her garden share partners. When her first partner stopped coming 'I didn't know whether things were going to seed because she didn't want them or what' (J9) and she was surprised by a recent purchase of compost made by her current partner: 'I wish he'd told me beforehand' (J9).

N had found the wait of over eighteen months to find a suitable partner a drawback: 'if we had started six months earlier ... we wouldn't have had all this reseeded problem' (N1). She was the only interviewee who specifically mentioned having had to wait before being introduced to a potential garden sharer. Although not explicitly stated it was understood that others had not had to wait anything like this length of time, possibly a matter of weeks only.

Red tape

E expressed relief that his garden owner had not placed too many restrictions on him as 'that just wouldn't have worked for us' (E1). Similarly, A had been put off applying for an allotment by the

society's rules and regulations: 'I don't think I could have coped with it' (A4). S thought that if her host organisation introduced CRB checks or compulsory insurance for members it would 'put too many people off' (S3).

Choice of partner

Two gardeners and two garden owners were keen to stress the amount of work and commitment required from a gardener to keep on top of a garden share: 'everybody thinks gardening is dead easy but when it comes to doing it ...' (P3). For J, her first garden sharer 'liked the idea I think but wasn't so keen on the actual reality' (J8). M feared that some prospective gardeners had been seduced by a current trend for gardening: 'if they're just doing it out of ... of this is the in-thing to do ... it's not really for you' (M8).

The same number of gardeners and garden owners recognised that 'it's not about having an unpaid gardener' (J7) and that 'a selfish point of view' (F2) was undesirable in a potential garden share partner.

Uncertain duration

All gardeners interviewed had considered the potential short-term nature of garden share arrangements: 'there's no guarantees' (D4). In some cases the host organisation had helped by discussing possible exit plans: 'if the worst came to the worst ... she'd find us somewhere to go' (C2). In the end, gardeners had acknowledged and accepted the uncertainty of the arrangement: 'I just tend to try and focus on what I'm getting out of it now' (D4). Others, such as E and C, had made choices about what they would do on the plot to minimise any later inconvenience: 'we've not invested too much' (E2). G recognised that now, with the heavy digging needed to create H's vegetable plot having been done, her assistance was no longer needed to the same degree. Uncertainty about the duration of garden share arrangements was not mentioned as a concern by any of the garden owners.

Strangers

If he had not already known G, H would 'have been more cautious ... it would have taken a time' (H6). P suggested an underlying wariness of strangers might put some people off: 'people ... are afraid to get involved, letting a total stranger onto their property' (P5). He, himself, had been uncertain to begin with and had made 'enquiries ... about the sort of people who'd be offered the garden' (P2).

Data from questionnaires

What are the concerns of gardeners and garden owners?

18 out of 36 scheme organisers (50%) understood gardeners to be particularly concerned about the time needed to garden share. Issues about plot location or facilities and their own lack of skills/experience were noted as the next most common concerns for gardeners. The duration of share arrangements was ranked the fourth-highest concern by scheme organisers (see Figure 14 overleaf).

Scheme organisers identified 'invasion of privacy' as uppermost in the minds of garden owners (62% or 18 out of 29 respondents). 'Disagreements with gardener' came in at number 2 (45%). However, the parallel option for gardeners, 'disagreements with garden owner', was rated by scheme organisers as being of much less concern to gardeners being placed 8th out of 12 possible concerns (19% or 7 out of 36 respondents). A lack of control over what happens in the garden was the fourth most popular option of the potential garden owner concerns listed (31%) (see Figure 15 overleaf).

Figure 14: What concerns do gardeners have about garden sharing?

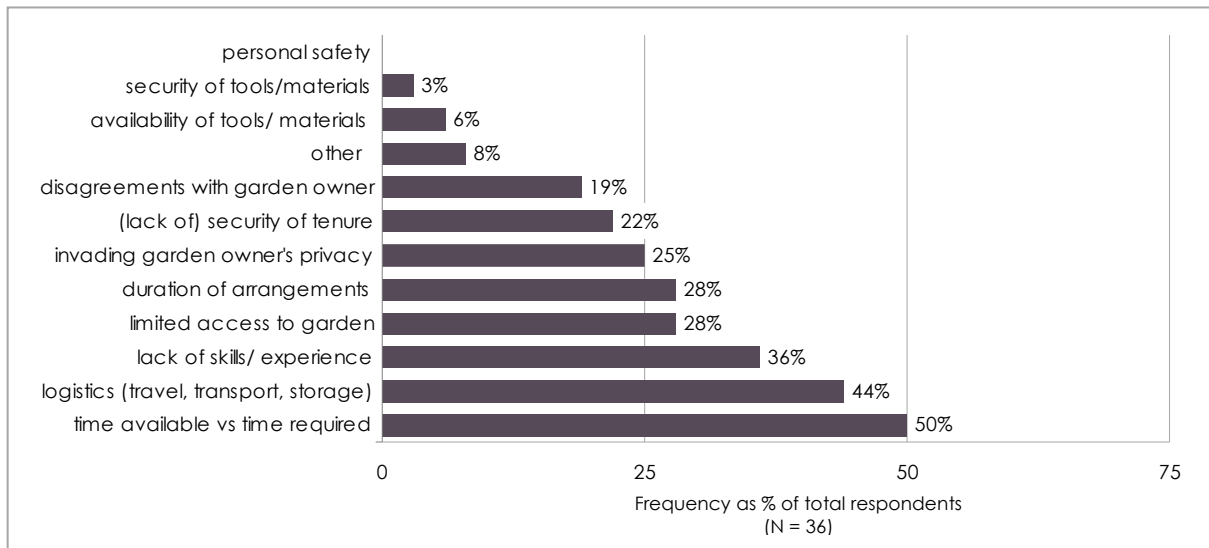
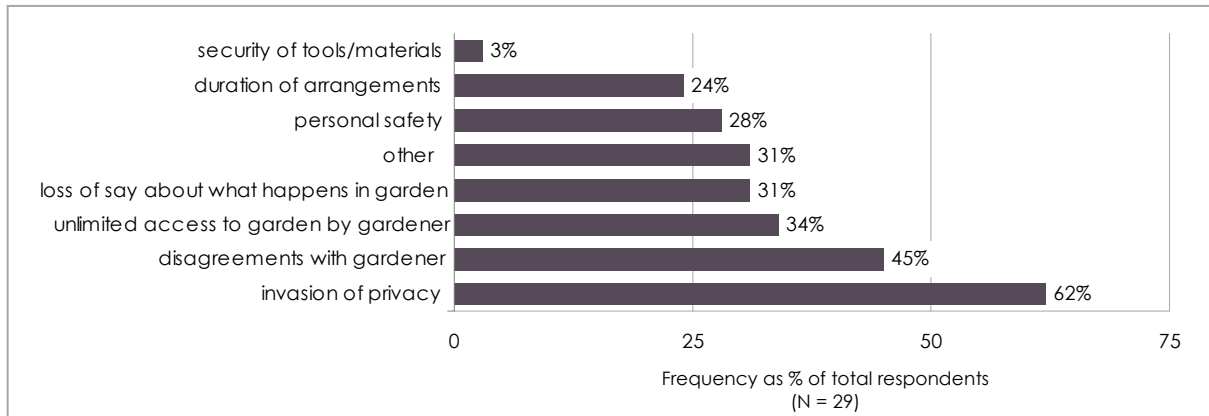


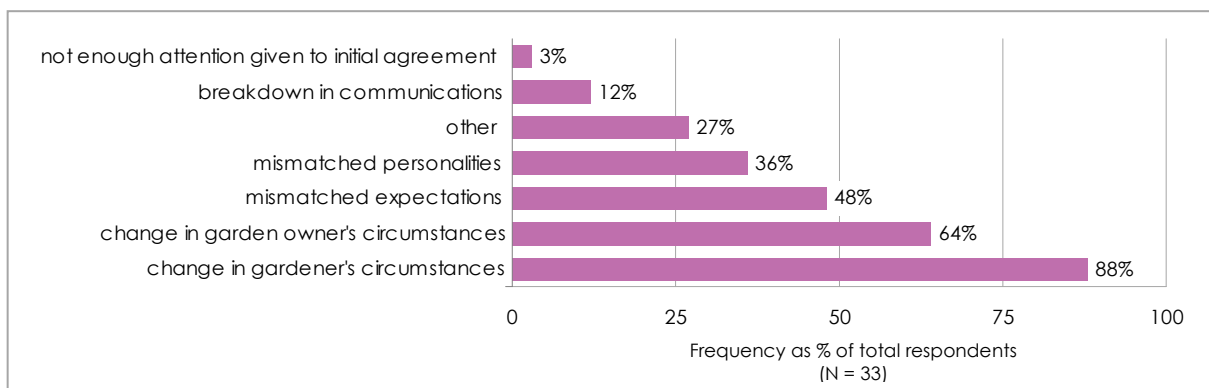
Figure 15: What concerns do garden owners have about garden sharing?



Why do garden share partnerships end?

A change to the garden owner's circumstances was identified by over two thirds of organisers as a reason partnerships finished. More common still was a change to the gardener's circumstances, given by all but one of the 30 respondents (see Figure 16 below). A majority of the nine 'other' reasons given concerned a lack of commitment or time on the part of the gardener.

Figure 16: Why do garden share partnerships end?



In brief

Key findings relevant to the fourth research question are summarised below.

- On this subject, the picture painted by the garden sharers is somewhat unclear. They found difficulty in recalling problems and revealed largely individual annoyances and concerns. However, the following two issues were consistently reported.
- Undesirable characteristics in sharers were identified as a lack of commitment in gardeners and selfish intentions in garden owners. Organisers, too, recognised the level of commitment needed on the part of gardeners.
- The insecurity of any garden share arrangement was something all gardeners had come to terms with but was not referred to by garden owners. A change to the gardener's circumstances was seen by organisers to be the most common reason for partnerships to end but was not identified as a cause for concern by garden owners.
- The questionnaire responses emphasised a slightly different range of concerns on the part of gardeners or garden owners. This difference could relate to the different data sources: organisers were likely to be drawing on memories of conversations with people who did not end up becoming scheme members whereas interviewees had, whatever their first reactions, ultimately decided in favour of garden sharing.

RQ5: What strategies should host organisations adopt to attract and support garden share participants?

Data from interviews

Interviewees were asked how they had first heard about garden sharing, what they thought would be the best ways to attract new members and what their host organisations could do to improve the scheme overall. Figure 17 below shows the key themes arising from these discussions.

Figure 17: Key themes: organisational factors

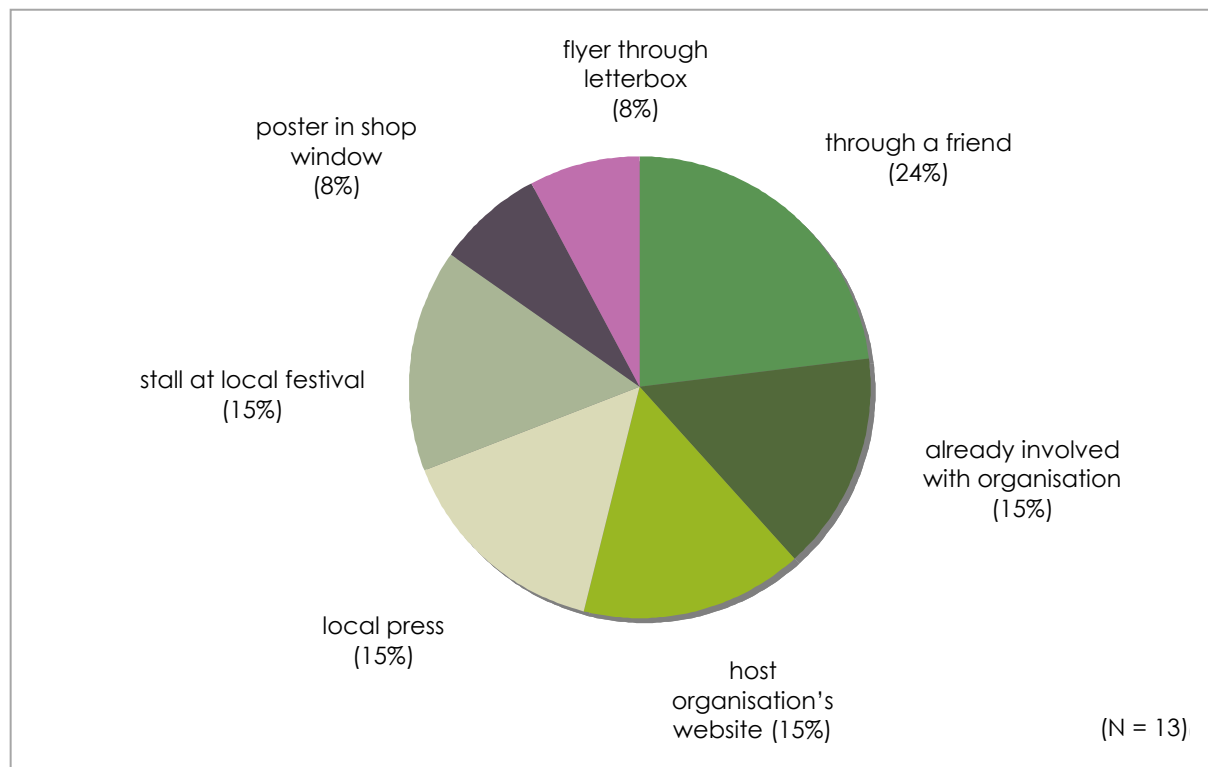
Marketing ideas	'I knew vaguely of [them] beforehand, but not a great deal' D2 'getting out and about and known as a community organisation' S3 'emphasise the benefits, what you get out of it' G10 'get your members to do your marketing for you' C5 'people who already spend time together in other arenas' G11 'talking to people really helps' S3
Suggestions for improvements	'get to talk to others, exchange knowledge' E3 'some sort of a garden share of tools' J13

Marketing ideas

Raising awareness

Eight out of the thirteen interviewees (62%) knew nothing about garden sharing before discovering their local scheme. When asked how they had heard about their local scheme the responses varied, as seen in Figure 18 below, with no clear front runner. Only five had been previously aware of the host organisation: 'I knew vaguely of [them] beforehand, but not a great deal' (D2).

Figure 18: How did interviewees first hear about their local garden share scheme?



Garden sharers including F, J and S saw raising awareness of the organisation and the garden share scheme as an important preliminary activity to attracting new members: 'the only way is more propaganda – more information about what it's about' (F4).

C was very clear that her host organisation should 'position themselves in the middle of this sort of thing' and 'piggyback on [the] current societal and cultural shift' by making 'more and better links with other local groups' and taking action to 'help promote the work of others' (C5).

Making the case

G stressed that any advertising should 'emphasise the benefits, what you get out of it' (G10) and M recommended varying those benefits depending on the intended audience.

A couple of interviewees felt that making use of 'stories from people who are already part of garden sharing' (C5) was a powerful marketing tool. E had found it 'useful to hear from others firsthand' (E3). C thought that by getting Twitter and Facebook accounts an organisation could 'get your members to do your marketing for you' (C5).

Developing an audience

Allotment waiting lists were suggested by G as potential sources of new scheme members. However, C and S recalled a disappointing response when this had been tried by their host organisation.

Three sharers suggested targeting marketing efforts geographically, based on detailed local knowledge: 'see how many of them are just grass, brambles or just abandoned' (N7) and 'lots of older people ... [with] large gardens' (D7).

D and G both suggested working alongside other groups. D saw an opportunity in 'working with a care agency ... as part of their services' (D7). For G, it was more about finding new members who 'already know each other' (G11), perhaps through churches or social clubs.

S and J talked about host organisations themselves developing a community of interest by providing 'lots of different activities ... so people can take part in something and then migrate across to something else' (S3).

People matter

A personal touch was seen as an important aspect of marketing garden sharing by three interviewees, as J put it: 'with asking anybody to do anything, personal contact is the best way' (J11). S was in agreement that 'talking to people really helps' (S3).

Suggestions for improvement

D and M acknowledged the diverse needs of scheme participants and suggested garden mentors, master gardeners, differentiated web-based advice and information, and the promotion of a range of different 'standard' garden share arrangements. D also proposed a separate scheme for vulnerable garden owners, with a focus on safeguarding measures, such as CRB checks and extra support.

Beyond garden sharing itself, E thought monthly talks or presentations a good way to 'get to talk to others [and] exchange knowledge' (E3). J saw value in other community-based services such as 'some sort of a garden share of tools' (J13) and N had appreciated her scheme organiser helping her to find someone to prune her trees.

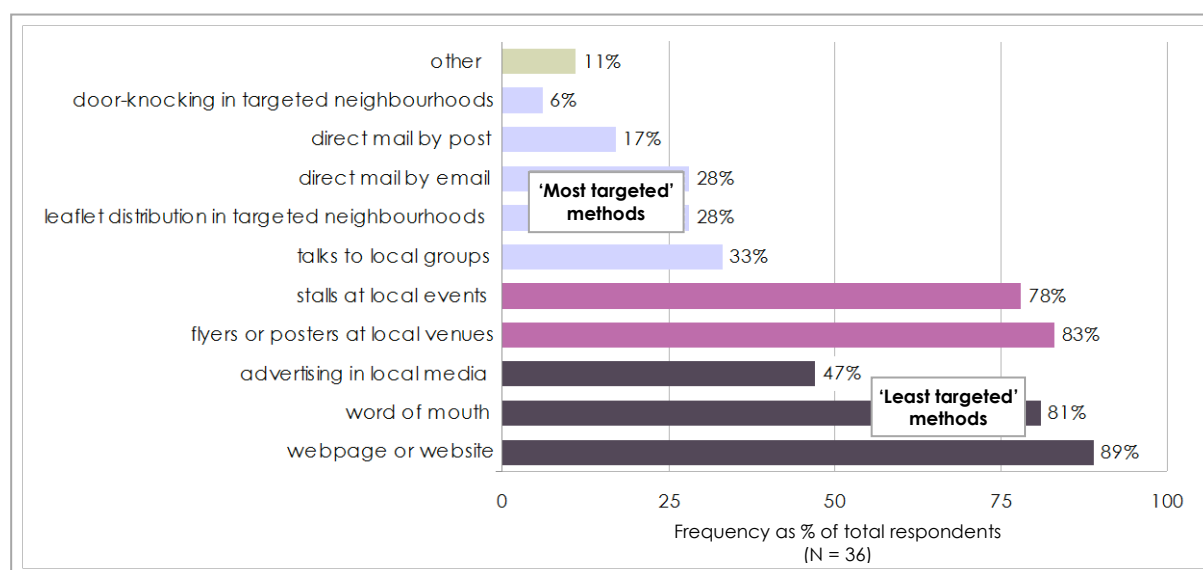
Data from questionnaires

Marketing methods

Mass marketing methods were widely used by organisers to promote their schemes. For nearly 90% of questionnaire respondents webpages were the single most commonly-employed marketing method, closely followed by leaflets or posters (83%), word of mouth (81%) and stalls at events (78%). At the

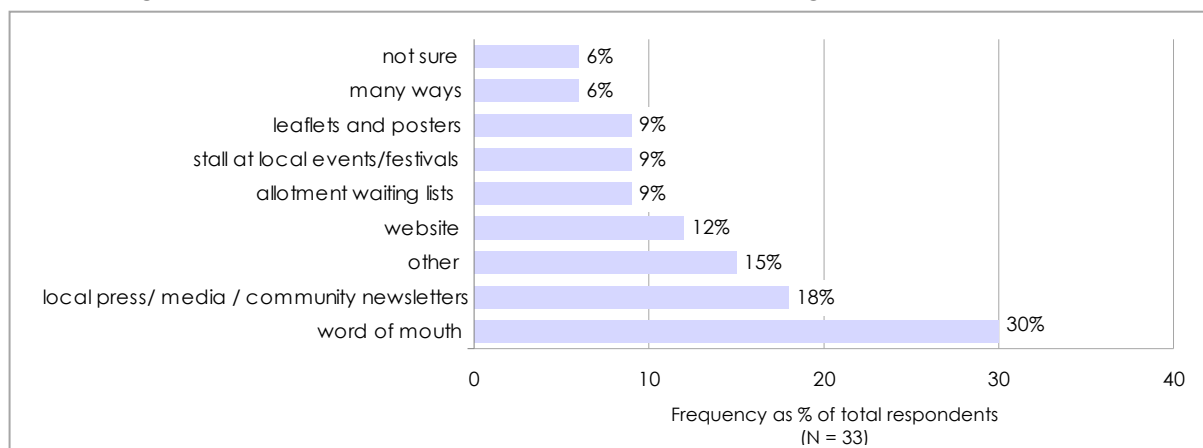
other end of the scale marketing targeting particular neighbourhoods or groups was far less widespread (see Figure 19 below).

Figure 19: Marketing methods used by scheme organisers



A third of scheme organisers found 'word of mouth' to be the most effective way to attract new members (see Figure 20 below). Several scheme organisers marketed to garden owners and gardeners separately: organiser 27 had successfully targeted 'organisations and groups where older people meet or get services' for would-be garden owners and organiser 17 had reached prospective gardeners by 'advertising through [the] local Volunteer Centre'. Three organisers had found advertising via local allotment waiting lists to be highly effective.

Figure 20: What is the most effective way to market a garden share scheme?



Running a garden share scheme

32 organisers of active schemes responded to question D.5 in the questionnaire, 'What three pieces of advice would you give to someone thinking of setting up a local garden share scheme?' All seven organisers of closed schemes responded to the equivalent question in their questionnaire. Responses referring to both active and closed schemes are included below.

Adding to the marketing recommendations in the previous section, four organisers rated PR activity and building links with other community groups and organisations 'to get your face and scheme known' (organiser 1). Two organisers suggested advertising 'through many different methods' (organiser 16) and three recommended using allotment waiting lists.

Five respondents acknowledged that it was unlikely that a garden share scheme be successful immediately: 'like a garden, it takes time to grow' (organiser 29).

Prior to launch, organisers advised some research to demonstrate local need: 'check local allotment waiting lists, see if you have the demand first' (organiser 26), to identify the optimum area for the scheme: 'only cover a limited area, one that you know well' (organiser 36), and to 'consider the amount of travelling' (organiser 19). Four organisers thought learning from the experience of other schemes was an effective strategy. The Transition Towns and Transition Totnes websites, <http://www.transitionnetwork.org> and <http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org>, were recommended as good sources of information.

Five organisers stressed the importance of avoiding over-complicated administrative processes. Organiser 9 advised the development of a 'framework for making assessments, matching participants and brokering agreements'. Two others recommended forms and questionnaires to record information in a consistent manner. Similar to views expressed by interviewees (see RQ3 earlier) draft agreements or 'a list of key issues' (organiser 16) were considered helpful by five organisers as a way to discuss garden sharing.

'Getting the right match between participants' was seen as a critical task by organiser 9 and ten others. Similar to the views of interviewees, organisers advised spending time getting to know and staying in touch with prospective sharers and visiting gardens. The need to manage expectations was also noted by eight respondents.

In brief

Key findings relevant to the final research question are summarised in the following suggestions from interviewees and scheme organisers.

- Use members and their stories to publicise schemes; word of mouth is most effective but could be boosted by using social marketing technologies.
- Recruit new scheme members from amongst existing groups to get over 'stranger wariness'.
- Develop separate marketing strategies for garden owners and gardeners.
- Establish and maintain links with other local organisations and activities to raise awareness and target likely participants.
- Invest time in personal contact with members to strengthen the sense of belonging.
- Nurture an on-going sense of community by creating opportunities for members to meet each other.
- Consider additional services to further enable sharers to get the most from their garden sharing experience.
- Develop and implement a process to gather and record information that is straightforward and uncomplicated.

Summary of research findings

- **RQ1: What is the extent and nature of local garden share schemes within England, Scotland and Wales?** Local garden share schemes, although much less numerous than, say, allotment associations, were found to be active in all regions of the country. Most schemes were organised by volunteers, often members of a local Transition Town group and, again in most cases, supported fewer than ten active garden share partnerships. More women than men were seen to be garden share members and participants tended to be of more mature years, generally over 40.
- **RQ2: Why garden share?** An interest in gardening and food growing and a lack of suitable growing space elsewhere were the main reasons for gardeners to take part in a garden share scheme. Garden owners drew from a wider range of motivations, which included gardening and growing but to which were also added not wanting productive land to go to waste and helping others. A broad range of benefits were recognised by garden sharers including access to home-grown food, a sense of achievement, personal fitness and social contact.
- **RQ3: What assists garden sharers in garden sharing?** A relationship between garden share partners based on trust, flexibility and open communication was viewed as essential to the success of any garden share partnership. Host organisations were seen to have an important role to play in identifying and introducing potential partners and in helping to explain the concept and details of garden sharing to new scheme members.
- **RQ4: What problems do garden sharers encounter?** The temporary and uncertain nature of any garden arrangement, often expressed as the possibility of a change in the personal circumstances of sharers, seemed to be the greatest hurdle participants had to contend with. But lots of other issues generated actual or potential anxiety amongst sharers, including lack of commitment, lack of time, inexperience, loss of control, invasion of privacy and disagreements.
- **RQ5: What strategies should host organisations adopt to attract and support garden share participants?** Word of mouth was reported as being the single most effective marketing method used by scheme organisers but reliance on one method alone was not recommended. Scheme organisers were urged to make the most of personal stories in marketing campaigns as well as to make use of enthusiastic members and new media to promote their scheme. Administrative processes were seen to be necessary for the effective running of a scheme but the recommendation was to keep them simple and to a minimum. Overall, it was thought beneficial to schemes and participants to develop a sense of community amongst members and to create links to other like-minded community organisations.

Recommendations

In order to develop the desired output of a set of recommendations for scheme organisers, the findings from this study were used as follows:

- data about motivations and benefits helped identify marketing strategies and inform service development recommendations
- data about enablers highlighted activities and approaches that could be encouraged or nurtured within schemes
- data about what hinders garden sharing highlighted problems that schemes could work to avoid or prevent
- advice and suggestions from garden sharers and organisers was considered alongside evidence from elsewhere in this research and incorporated into the final set of recommendations for organisers.

The resulting guidance for garden share scheme organisers is presented under four subheadings, reflecting the life cycle of a garden share scheme:

- setting up a garden share scheme
- attracting new members
- keeping members happy
- beyond garden sharing.

Setting up a garden share scheme

Start your garden share scheme with a pilot project, keeping the area covered quite small and well defined. This is an opportunity to develop and test systems and processes as well as collect ‘good news stories’ prior any major launch. Research likely areas and sources of participants first to give yourself the best chance of success.

When considering the paperwork and records you might need to keep, remember that an existing scheme is probably already using something that would be useful to you. Save time and effort by using material that is already accessible. For example, take a look at the documents that are available from Age UK Wandsworth, Footprint Trust, Landshare and Transition Totnes at the following web addresses:

- <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/our-services/garden-partners/> (see here the appendices to the Growing Friendships report)
- <http://www.footprint-trust.co.uk/adoptgarden.html>
- <http://www.landshare.net/agreements/>
- <http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/groups/food-group/gardenshare/how-to-start/>

Even if you feel that written agreements are an unnecessary feature of your garden share scheme, you might find it valuable to create a short list of key points for discussion with prospective garden sharers that is based on an existing agreement.

Attracting new members

As more schemes have been shown to have more owners than gardeners, in absence of any other information, you should focus more effort on strategies to attract gardeners rather than garden owners. For example, volunteer centres, allotment waiting lists, community growing projects, organisations

providing services for the elderly or local estate agents or housing associations might be useful sources of potential members or even a partner organisation to help with the scheme as a whole.

Look out for settings where prospective gardeners and garden owners might already know each other such as church groups or family centres. If successful, this approach could help prospective members get over 'stranger wariness' more quickly.

Employ a range of marketing methods to inform and attract new members but do not forget that your best salespeople could be your existing members. Make use of their stories and enthusiasm and make it easy for them to market the scheme on your behalf, whether through social media, local media or word of mouth. A short print run of postcards or small flyers could be a useful marketing device to distribute via your members.

A love of gardening and home-grown food should be a consistent message running through your marketing material, whether to prospective gardeners or garden owners. Beyond that, marketing should be tailored to different target audiences. Remember that used on their own, emails, or any form of 'cold calling', might not be the most effective way to increase your membership. Consider using an email to invite people to attend a local festival, for example, where you will be available in person.

Capitalise on every new garden share match made by focusing marketing effort on the immediate locality to make the most of any interest in garden sharing generated in the neighbourhood.

Keeping members happy

Beyond advertising the scheme, most organiser time should be spent on the match-making process and keeping new members 'on board' during this period. A system to record the organiser's personal knowledge of gardens, gardeners, garden owners and any communication with prospective members could help here. In order to make 'good' matches, information such as garden size, distance to travel, time available and time required all need to be taken into account. Garden sharer personalities, although harder to assess, also need to be considered when making a match.

Managing expectations on both sides of the garden share arrangement is a critical part of the organiser role, including helping members work out what sort of arrangement would work best for them and how to come to terms with the insecurity of garden sharing. Giving members time to reflect on and raise questions about this unconventional arrangement might be helpful in facilitating enduring partnerships.

Create the sense of being part of a network for your members, for example, through:

- regular social or learning opportunities with other members, or seed and plant swaps
- services to make garden sharing easier for members, such as initial clear-ups for neglected plots, tool shares and, bulk purchase and delivery of manure or compost
- on-going regular contact with each member, between once a quarter and once a year, which will also allow you to gather feedback and check on how things are going.

The idea behind developing a network is partly to make garden sharing a more satisfying experience for members but also because, if current members continue to engage with and value the role of their host organisation, they will be more likely to market the scheme on your behalf.

Beyond garden sharing

Garden sharing does not need to exist in a vacuum. It can be seen as being part of several contemporary societal movements, including the big society, volunteering, organic food, localisation, do it yourself, and the slow food movement. Make the most of these connections and link with others, help spread the overarching message, get your scheme known and be part of something bigger than just your scheme.

Conclusion

The results of this small-scale research study suggest that, although local garden share schemes currently make only a small contribution to local food production in Britain, on an individual level garden sharing can satisfy a demand in urban areas for access to land suitable for growing food and can make a difference in terms of other health and well-being benefits to participants. Based on the findings of the study host organisations have a key role to play in raising awareness of the potential benefits of garden sharing to both gardeners and garden owners as well as facilitating the introduction of potential partners to each other. The research findings provided the evidential basis for a set of recommendations for scheme organisers, aimed at assisting them to launch and market a local garden share scheme and to attract and retain scheme members.

The researcher believes that the original research objective and related research questions have been well-served by this study through the discovery of data of a reasonable quality. The findings from this small-scale study are, however, limited by the samples used. Interviewees were selected from predominantly positively-inclined and active participants of local garden share schemes hosted by a certain type of organisation; completed questionnaires were received from a self-selecting sample of organisers of active schemes and a small number of closed schemes.

However, this study provides new data about garden share schemes across the country, which will help to put some of the previous literature, which is largely studies of individual garden share schemes, into context. The current research confirms many of the previous findings about motivations and benefits of garden sharing and expands the dataset from which such evidence has been drawn. It provides an indication of a need to differentiate between gardeners and different types of garden owner, which could be developed in further research. Furthermore, this study offers more detail to the orthodox view of the roles of host organisations and written agreements, and how these change over the lifespan of a garden share partnership.

The researcher suggests that some of the differences between the outputs of this study and previous research arise from different types of host organisations attracting different types of participants. Further exploration of this hypothesis is beyond the scope of this study.

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Other useful websites

<http://www.landshare.net/agreements/>

<http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/groups/food-group/gardenshare/how-to-start/>

<http://www.transitionnetwork.org>

Appendix: Local garden share schemes

Table 3: Active local garden share schemes

Host organisation	Scheme name	Location	Website or internet reference	Contact details
Transition Malvern Hills	Let's Grow Together	Great Malvern, Worcestershire	http://transitionmalvern.org.uk/transition/gardenshare	Sue Wolfendale on 01684 562804
Age Concern Eastbourne	Garden Share Project	Eastbourne, East Sussex	http://www.hailshaminbloom.org/Garden.Share.Age.Concern.pdf	Emma Vieira on 01323 638474
Age UK Wandsworth	Garden Partners	London	http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/Our-services/Garden-Partners/	Sue Sweeney on 020 8877 8946 or at sue.sweeney@ageukwandsworth.org.uk
Amersham in Transition	Little Chalfont Garden Share Scheme	Amersham, Bucks	http://www.amershamintransition.org.uk/?p=791	info@amershamintransition.org.uk
Baregardens	High Wycombe Garden Share Scheme	High Wycombe, Bucks	http://www.baregardens.org.uk	gemmaelizabethrogers@yahoo.co.uk
Bovey Climate Action	Garden Share	Bovey Tracey, Devon	<i>website no longer available</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Brighton & Hove Food Partnership	Grow Your Neighbour's Own	Brighton and Hove, East Sussex	http://www.growyourneighboursown.org.uk	01273 431700 or growyourneighboursown@gmail.com
Castle Community Network	Growing Opportunities	Scarborough, North Yorkshire	http://www.growingopportunities.org.uk/	Christine on 07724 311750 or at info@growingopportunities.org.uk
Community First New Forest	Let's Get Growing	Ringwood, Hampshire	http://www.letsgetgrowing.org.uk/garden-share	Debbie Grace on 01425 482773 or at debbie.grace@cnf.org.uk
Community Greenspace	Growing Together	Redruth, Cornwall	http://growingtogethercornwall.wordpress.com/	07772 940662 or info@growingtogethercornwall.org.uk
Deal with It	Deal Garden Share	Deal, Kent	http://transitiondeal.blogspot.co.uk/p/deal-garden-share.html	01304 372673 or gardenshare@dealwithit.org
East Lodge Sustainability Centre	Leamington and Warwick Garden Share	Leamington and Warwick, Warwickshire	http://warwickshire.mastergardeners.org.uk/2011/06/15/new-garden-share-scheme-in-leamington-and-warwick/	07717 283953
Eastleigh Transition Network	Garden Share Project	Eastleigh, Hampshire	http://etnet.org.uk/etnet/eastleigh-transition-network-2011-review/	info@etnet.org.uk
Edinburgh Garden Partners	Edinburgh Garden Partners	Edinburgh	http://www.edinburghgardenpartners.org.uk	0131 220 5067
Food4Macc	Garden Sharing Scheme	Macclesfield, Cheshire	http://www.maccinfo.com/Food4Macc/Share.html	Bill Pettipiece on 07710 878348 or at gardenshare@food4macc.org
Footprint Trust	Adopt a Garden	Isle of Wight	http://www.footprint-trust.co.uk/adoptgarden.html	01983 822282 or info@footprint-trust.co.uk
GROW Glasgow	Garden Sharing	Glasgow	http://www.growglasgow.org.uk	<i>n/a</i>
Garden Share Conwy	Garden Share Conwy	Conwy, Denbighshire	http://www.gardenshareconwy.org.uk	078403 46680
Hart Voluntary Action	Grow with Hart	Fleet, Hampshire	http://www.hartvolaction.org.uk/projects/GrowWithHart.html	Guy Clayton on 01252 815652 or at guy@hartvolaction.org.uk
Incredible Edible Wakefield	Garden Share Scheme	Wakefield, West Yorkshire	http://www.incredible-edible-wakefield.co.uk	andy@incredible-edible-wakefield.co.uk
Independent Futures	Plymouth Care and Repair Garden Partnership Scheme	Plymouth, Devon	http://www.i-futures.co.uk/careandrepair/plymouth/Plymouth+Garden+Partnerships	01752 221933

Host organisation	Scheme name	Location	Website or internet reference	Contact details
Kelvin Valley Honey	Garden Share	near Glasgow	http://www.kelvinvalleyhoney.org.uk/ClimataChallenge3.asp	Paul Holmes on 01236 820537 or at info@kelvinvalleyhoney.org.uk
Letham Climate Challenge	Garden Share	Perth, Perth and Kinross	http://www.lethamclimatechallenge.org.uk/Garden_Share_Scheme.php	Steven on 07883 281943 or at info@lethamclimatechallenge.org.uk
Peat Project Penzance	Garden Share Scheme	Penzance, Cornwall	http://www.peatproject.org/index.php	Val on 07595 567676 or at val@pcdf.org.uk
Prestatyn Town Council	Prestatyn & Meliden Garden Share	Prestatyn, Denbighshire	http://www.visitprestatyn.com/community-submenu/garden-share.html	Sue Edwards on 01745 857185
Roundhay Environmental Action Project	Garden Share Scheme	Leeds, West Yorkshire	http://www.reap-leeds.org.uk/about/	info@reap-leeds.org.uk
SAGE	Gardenshare	Glasgow	http://sowandgroweverywhere.org <i>(unclear whether this scheme is still active)</i>	info@sowandgroweverywhere.org
Sustainability and Energy Network in Staveley	Garden Share Scheme	Staveley, Cumbria	http://www.sustainablestaveley.org.uk/sens/food/	Kay on 01539 821735
Sustainable Crediton	Crediton Garden Share Scheme	Crediton, Devon	<i>no longer active</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Towards Transition Stirling	Gardenshare Stirling	Stirling, Stirlingshire	http://www.gardensharestirling.co.uk	07577 816262 or gardensharestirling@gmail.com
Transition Ashstead	Garden Share Scheme	Ashstead, Surrey	http://transitionashstead.org.uk/food-group/	foodgroup@transitionashstead.org.uk
Transition Bedford	Garden Share Bedford	Bedford, Bedfordshire	<i>website no longer available</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Transition Brockley	Gardenshare	Lewisham, London	http://transitionbrockley.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Garden%20share	Fran on fr2rogers@gmail.com
Transition Cambridge	Garden Share Scheme	Cambridge, Cambridgeshire	http://www.transitioncambridge.org/thewiki/twiki/pmwiki.php?n=TFood.GardenShare	Ann on 07814 258381
Transition Chichester	Chichester Garden Share	Chichester, West Sussex	http://www.chichestergardenshare.org/	contact@chichestergardenshare.org
Transition City Lancaster	Garden Share	Lancaster, Lancashire	http://www.transitioncitylancaster.org/groups/foodandgrowing/gardenshare.htm	Dennis and Anna on 07988 417405 or at gardenshare.lancaster@gmail.com
Transition Crookes/Walkley	micro-allotment network	Sheffield, South Yorkshire	http://www.studiopolpo.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=95:drawingshed&catid=35:work&Itemid=56	0114 267 6861 or office@studiopolpo.com
Transition Evesham Vale	Garden Share	Evesham, Worcestershire	http://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/9690372.Bid_to_get_garden_sharing_to_take_root/	Sheila Himsworth on 01386 47146 or at himsworth@bbmax.co.uk
Transition Helston	Garden Share Scheme	Helston, Cornwall	http://www.transitionhelston.org.uk/food_group.htm	Alastair at food@transitionhelston.org.uk
Transition Keynsham	Garden Share Scheme	Keynsham, Somerset	http://keynsham.wordpress.com/groups/food-group/garden-share-scheme/	Mary on 0117 986 2257 or at keynshamt@yahoo.co.uk
Transition Lymington	Lymington Garden Share Project	Lymington, Hampshire	http://www.newforesttransition.org/index.php?categories/30-Lymington	Emily on 01590 675612 or at lymingtongardenshare@gmail.com
Transition Mayfield	Garden-share Scheme	Mayfield, East Sussex	http://www.transitionmayfield.org.uk/9.html	Lesley Medlock on 01435 873884 or at garden-share@transitionmayfield.org.uk
Transition Newton Abbot	Newton Abbot Garden Share Scheme	Newton Abbot, Devon	<i>scheme no longer active</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Transition Sherwood	Garden Share	Nottingham, Nottinghamshire	http://transitionsherwood.weebly.com/garden-share.html	07516 244 657 or sherwoodgardenshare@gmail.com

Host organisation	Scheme name	Location	Website or internet reference	Contact details
Transition Stratford	Garden Share	Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire	http://www.transitionstratford.com/wordpress/?page_id=46	01789 298503
Transition Tavistock	Tavistock Garden Share	Tavistock, Devon	http://www.transitiontavistock.org.uk/p/tavistock-garden-share.html	01822 835819 or transitiontavistock@gmail.com
Transition Totnes	Gardenshare	Totnes, Devon	http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/groups/food-group/gardenshare/	Lou on 01803 867358 or at transitiontowntotnes@gmail.com
Transition Town Dorchester	Gardenshare	Dorchester, Dorset	http://www.transitiontowndorchester.org/category/garden-share/	Liz on 07561 432907 or at gardenshare@transitiontowndorchester.org
Transition Town Maidenhed	Maidenhed Garden Share Project	Maidenhed, Kent	http://www.maidenhedgardenshare.co.uk	Kath on kath@transitionmaidenhed.org
Transition Town Romsey	Garden Share Scheme	Romsey, Hampshire	http://www.transitiontownromsey.co.uk/?p=1649	Margaret on 01794 513808 or at food@transitiontownromsey.org.uk
Transition Town Worthing	Garden Share	Worthing, West Sussex	http://transitiontownworthing.ning.com/group/worthinggardenshare	Claire Hunt on 07508 178590 or at transitionworthing@gmail.com
Transition Tunbridge Wells	Garden Share Scheme	Tunbridge Wells, Kent	http://www.transitiontunbridgewells.org/garden-share-scheme	transitiontwells@googlemail.com
Transition Tynedale	Garden Share	Hexham, Northumberland	http://www.transitiontynedale.org/food-group/projects/gardenshare.html	via website form
Transition Wokingham	The Norreys Garden Share Scheme	Wokingham, Surrey	http://www.waag.co.uk/news/documents/Garden%20Share%20Poster%20[Read-Only].pdf	Linda Newport on 07774 402236 or at transitionwokingham@yahoo.co.uk
Turn Lyme Green	Garden Share Lyme Regis	Lyme Regis, Dorset	http://turnlymegreen.co.uk/2010/04/13/garden-share-lyme-regis/	Tony Bartlett on 01297 443319 or at lymegardenshare@googlemail.com
University of Bath and Bath Spa's Student Unions	Growing Together	Bath, Somerset	http://www.bath.ac.uk/news/2011/06/14/growing-together-2/	Anna Boneham on 01225 383198 or at a.boneham@bath.ac.uk
Volunteer Centre East Lothian	East Lothian Garden Share	East Lothian	http://www.volunteereastlothian.org.uk/garden	Lorraine Johnston on 0131 665 3300 or at lorraine@vdel.co.uk
Wedmore Green Group	WGG Garden Share	Wedmore, Somerset	http://www.wedmoregreengroup.co.uk/wgg-garden-share/	s.mewes@virgin.net
Wimbledon Food Group	Garden Share	London	http://www.wimbledonfoodgroup.co.uk/garden-share.html	wimbledonfoodgroup@gmail.com

Notes:

a) All details are provided in good faith, as checked on 16 January 2013.