



Gardens of Sanctuary

Global Gardens

Cardiff



Gardens of Sanctuary Case Study

Community growing spaces welcoming, supporting and working alongside refugees and asylum seekers

Global Gardens

Established in:	2016
Location:	Cardiff, Wales
Website:	http://globalgardensproject.co.uk
Structure:	No formal constitution (project of another charity)
Staff:	3 sessional workers, 1 outreach coordinator
Volunteers:	30 core volunteers

Project History

Global Gardens developed out of a previous project called Soil and Clay, and the group have been on their current site since August 2016. The site is an allotment around 2km north of Cardiff City Centre, which until recently was run largely by volunteers.

The Soil and Clay project was part of the Trinity Centre, who work with disadvantaged communities to address inequality and tackle poverty. The Trinity Centre were offered an allotment plot, and in discussion with Soil and Clay this developed into the Global Gardens project.

Soil and Clay received initial funding to support integration for refugees and asylum seekers and to encourage community integration. The group came together through both gardening and ceramics, and together made a range of tableware with which to enjoy a feast of local food. Every participant also received a veg box each week as part of their involvement.

Current Services

Global Gardens now run two weekly garden sessions, both of which are drop-in and open to everyone. They get a mixture of people attending including students, people from the local community and refugees and asylum seekers, with approximately 5-10 people attending each session.

As well as the Trinity Centre, Global Gardens now also work in partnership with Oasis, a local charity who help refugees and asylum seekers integrate into their new communities. A sessional worker has been bringing small groups of sanctuary seekers to Global Gardens, and this has proved very popular.

The group also operate a monthly supper club, which takes place at a local community centre. All the food is vegetarian or vegan, it is open to all, and usually around half of the 15-30 people who attend are sanctuary seekers. Generally people like to prepare food from their home countries, and some past dishes have been Lithuanian beetroot and Kurdish rice. Increasingly, produce from the garden is used in these suppers, and film screenings or talks are sometimes held on the same evening.

The project has been successful in applying for small grants, which has enabled them to run additional activities such as craft and ceramic workshops and talks on medicinal herbs and fungi.

Got funding with Grow Wild to offer a series of workshops and talks on native fungi and healing herbs in the garden. Been offering some arts based or organic/biodynamics workshops on Saturdays. Some RAS coming to those but not in large numbers.

In May 2018, Global Gardens were chosen as one of the People's Projects for Wales through the Big Lottery Fund enabling them to take on a small number of staff, develop the site and offer lots more opportunities.

Outcomes

There has been a clear therapeutic benefit to taking part in Global Garden sessions for the refugees and asylum seekers who have attended. Many have improved their English skills, made new friends and as well as learning new skills, have shared many of their own such as cooking particular dishes and horticultural methods. Two participants even gave a demonstration on carpet weaving for the rest of the group.

Here are some quotes from participants:

"All my family are farmers and have big gardens. I come to use my skills and I meet different people and I have a good time"

"In garden, with natural things, with nature, you feeling happy"

Problems and Barriers

For a long time it took a lot of work to get refugees and asylum seekers to attend sessions, and volunteers from the project regularly went to the Trinity Centre to talk

about the work they were doing. The ongoing partnerships with both Trinity and Oasis have been key in bringing sanctuary seekers to the site as they have established relationships with many of them and can support them to make that first step.

The garden does not yet have a toilet and for this reason there have not been very many women attending. The new Outreach Coordinator has been working to encourage women to attend, and they now hope to have a toilet installed by early 2019.

The group have also noticed that whilst they have very good uptake from refugees and asylum seekers on their volunteer sessions, their free programme of workshops has had significantly less interest from sanctuary seekers, despite being popular with others.

Future Plans

In addition to building their new site toilet, there will be a number of new workshops run from the garden.

Compiled by Sophie Antonelli and Ben Margolis

For more information about Gardens of Sanctuary go to <https://gardens.cityofsanctuary.org/>

Gardens of Sanctuary is a partnership between [Social Farms & Gardens](#), [City of Sanctuary](#) and the [Permaculture Association](#). We have a shared vision of a network of green spaces with a culture of welcome, in which asylum seekers and refugees feel safe and appreciated as valued contributors and co-creators of community gardens and environmental projects across the UK.

For those who arrive to seek asylum in the UK, community gardens, city farms and other community growing spaces can offer vital and unique opportunities to find community, improve mental and physical health and to learn and share skills.

Our case studies and report are intended as useful resources for any community growing space who is working with refugees and asylum seekers, or who would like to welcome them in the future. Find all our resources on our website [here](#).