

# Urban Food Justice and Feed Leeds: a joint launch

Chiara Tornaghi

[chiara.tornaghi@gmail.com](mailto:chiara.tornaghi@gmail.com)

Cities and Social Justice research cluster, School of Geography, University of Leeds

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# Programme - morning

**10.00 opening**

**10.30 - Chiara Tornaghi** - Welcome and Presentation of Urban Food Justice social platform

**10.50 - Andre Viljoen** – Urban agriculture for a sustainable future: contemporary examples from Europe and the USA

**11.20 - Joanne Clough** – Presentation of Feed Leeds

**11.40 - You** – Envisioning urban agriculture in the Leeds city region

**12.30 – 1.30 Lunch**

**1.30** – transfer to Potternewton Park

# Programme - afternoon

[Potternewton park, Chapeltown]

2.00 – **Cllr Dobson**: community food growing

2.05 – **New Shoots gardening group** (Bracken Edge primary school) **and LCC**: Orchard planting

3.30 – **Janet Zaddisa** (St. Mary's Gardening Group) will lead a guided tour of community gardens in Chapeltown: Bracken Edge, Inkwel arts, St. Mary's Reginald park and Buslingthorpe Walk

# Urban Food Justice: what is it?

- Bring together as many of you as possible
- Discuss key problems/issues
- Address justice
- Co-write guidelines and action points for
  - urban agriculturalists
  - Policy makers/council officers

It is a **social platform** aimed at **supporting urban agriculture** in the **Leeds City region**

A series of events/visits/workshops

This is a pilot action-research programme

- Allotments
- urban farms
- guerrilla grdn.ing
- rooftop beehives
- community gdns
- Public orchards
- Window sill growing
- Etc.

# Urban food justice: a background.

## 1) The popularity of food growing

Urban agriculture is flourishing:

- becoming increasingly popular in cities of the “global north”
- There are increasing claims that food growing will bring significant benefits to the environment and to local communities
- Some of these initiatives contribute to envision an alternative urbanism

# Background (continued):

## 2) Increasing claims and injustice

- Growing claims for land access, food sovereignty, seeds protection, and more generally the right to food.
- No access to cultivable land for smallholdings in peri-urban land
- No access to local and sustainable food
- Many communities still live in food deserts and do not have a garden or the possibility to grow their own food.
- Lack of knowledge about the available resources: funding, allotments, community gardens, public land
- Lack of skills/tools for gardening, financial support, lack of networks, lack of skills to apply for funding, permissions, land
- How do we make sure we achieve socio-environmental justice while promoting urban agriculture in Leeds?

# Background (continued)

## 3) An exploration of British projects

- I have visited 30 projects around the UK (and more are planned) with the aim of learning from them
- A wide range of issues has emerged:
  - Many visionary projects are threatened by eviction or restrictive regulation
  - Economic instability, voluntarism, lack of market
  - poor urban soils: need of design solutions and funding
  - Struggles to make local community feel they are entitled to do things in public spaces
  - Lack of land and rising prices for food growing within private estates

# Urban food growing in Leeds

Leeds has already a vibrant community of gardeners and several important projects:

- providing access to cultivable land for disadvantaged groups (i.e. Asylum seekers)
- providing fresh food at your doorsteps, activating relationships of mutual support in the neighbourhood
- promoting social inclusion and cohesion through convivial events and gardening programmes
- Providing environmental education and self-education
- Looking for more environmentally sustainable forms of feeding themselves and, in so doing, tackling climate change
- Experimenting with economic alternatives to the neo-liberal city, for example through landshare, cohousing, and the promotion of free food

These projects are contributing to re-imagining a different city, but are also constantly struggling to survive. How can we sustain these initiatives and make them more effective in achieving their goals?

# The platform's programme

25<sup>th</sup>  
October

**Land** access and environmental justice: facing the main challenge of urban agriculture.

- urban and periurban, public and private, land management models and lease forms
- mapping available land in the Leeds city region

13<sup>th</sup>  
December

Urban metabolism and **soil** rehabilitation. Alternatives for small scale waste management and soil improvement in urban growing sites.

24<sup>th</sup>  
January

Can **community** gardens and landshare initiatives promote community cohesion and help overcome urban food deserts?

# The programme (cont.ed)

28 <sup>th</sup> February	Food for free: design solutions, educational potential and managing challenges of urban edible <b>public spaces</b> .
28 <sup>th</sup> March	The <b>economic viability</b> and long term sustainability of urban agricultural projects. Gardening beyond voluntarism
25 <sup>th</sup> April	Sustainable <b>food planning</b> : Is it time for a sustainable food <b>strategy</b> for Leeds?
23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Leeds city region food growers <b>fair</b> – Platform concluding event Where do we go from here.

# How to get involved

- Contact me with any ideas or requests for the following workshops
- Come to the workshops, or volunteer to co-organise them
- Use the website:  
[WWW.URBANFOODJUSTICE.ORG](http://WWW.URBANFOODJUSTICE.ORG)
- Contribute by making public your experience
- Tell a friend

**Thank you!**