

FUNDERS THUMBS UP!

It was a great start to the year, when we received the thumbs up from our fund manager at Esmee Fairbairn after exceeding all our targets. The only conundrum now is how to capitalise on all our new opportunities!

Here are some of our fabulous figures:

- 106 active Incredible Edible groups across the UK.
- 7400 likes on Facebook alone.
- Two hugely popular conferences in Abergavenny, Wales and Todmorden, West Yorks, attracting 300+ delegates.
- Our baseline survey found; 90 per cent of groups were involved in community growing and learning activities, with a third linked to businesses. We were also pleased to hear that nearly all groups were registered with the Network and that we have help for you with the biggest cited challenges - volunteer retention, funds and time-management.

Other outcomes:

- In line with our second goal, we have also kept folk better informed about local food issues via the website & social media, and offline at events, such as our Learning Forum at the IE Aqua Garden.
- We have also offered direct help, & peer-to-peer help, with our funds for the Hecht Trust also enabling us to run bespoke workshops in Eastbourne, Billericay, Dunstable & Lambeth.
- Our aspiration to influence the decisions makers is also taking shape, with positive relationships springing up across the country. So onwards and upwards!

The full report and survey findings are available to official group leads on request.



NETWORK UPDATE



Photo courtesy of Incredible Edible Salford

SERVING UP IN BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham's largest provider of school dinners Cityserve is set to join the Incredible Edible Network.

The company is currently looking to evolve from a council service to a social enterprise. They already work with the Soil Association developing their menus, and cook locally sourced fresh food in their own on-site kitchens for more than 70,000 children.

Pam Warhurst said: "When we started Incredible Edible eight years ago, we knew there were local food heroes out there who shared our values and vision. Businesses who believed in reconnecting people to a kinder future through the power of local food.

"Cityserve is one of those champions. A school food business that believes in local who wants to inspire more Birmingham children to grow well and eat well through their pioneering Seed to Plate project.

"It's great to have you in the Incredible Edible family."

Let's go!

We are planning an exciting roadshow for 2015 to support regional events & allow us to collaborate with local groups. We want our presence to be as vibrant and hands on as possible. We will also be supporting some events with leaflets, info and promotions.

Events on our radar so far include:

- Justfest - Manchester University - 23rd April
- Cheshire County Show 23rd - 24th June;
- Lambeth County Show 18th -19th July;
- Dig the City Manchester -31st July - 7th August;
- Conwy Food Festival 24th and 25th October
- Locality Liverpool 10th - 11th Nov

Green routes are growing!

Bristol has unveiled a fab Green Route - and we have heard some exciting plans may be afoot in the capital. Do you have a green route? Let us know!



2015: YEAR OF LEARNING

As well as the special focus on learning during our roadshow events, and our Birmingham schools' launch, will be rolling out a flurry of educational activities throughout 2015.

We are also planning a second forum for all our Incredibles' delivering educational services so we can develop good practice and a common agenda.

Learning Content:

We are working on a dedicated new learning section, which will include commissioned kits such as:

- Creating an Edible school garden;
- Embracing the growing curriculum
- Engaging secondary schools
- Cutting through the redtape
- Providing training for big uns!

We are also looking to gather case studies from our leading learning groups such as Salford, Bristol, Barnard Castle as well of course the Aqua Garden and Incredible Farm.

If you work with schools and can contribute, we would love to hear from you!



Your shout!

If you have an event you would like us to support, need help or want to contribute please contact us at
Tanya.Wall@incredibleediblenetwork.org.uk



The Website Relaunch

In this first quarter, we have been working with Locality on the website relaunch. Responding to user needs over the last year, we are creating a fabulous resource for anyone who wants to become Incredible, or work with us.

We are also promoting IEs key messages and as well as the new Learning section, there will also be dedicated areas for Business and Community.

The site is due to go live in May, after a being tested by cross-section of our users.

Growing Together



The Network is at the heart of an exciting new partnership, funded by the Big Lottery, which is aiming to help community growing groups become financially self-sustainable.

Other partners on the project include The Federation of City Farms; The Plunkett Foundation; The Permaculture Association; and Groundwork UK.

To get work underway Growing Together would like our members to complete a survey. In return they will send you details of free local expert and enter you into a prize draw to win a one of three **£50 vouchers** to spend at your local garden centre. Simply complete the survey at <http://incredibleediblenetwork.org.uk/GrowingTogetherSurvey> by 21st April 2015 to be considered for the prize draw.

Membership

The IE family continues to flourish with new members joining all the time. We still want the chance to get to know you all, so we are planning on getting in touch in the forthcoming months. However, with membership now over 100, this may take some time so bear with us! But please do feel free to contact us at anytime ☺

Pictured one of our latest additions IE Trawden.



INCREDIBLE EDIBLE WALES

In Wales, our IE rep and Monmouthshire County Council officer, Alison Howard coordinated a hugely successful event for Pam to address her colleagues from neighbouring authorities, including health groups, housing associations, social services, enterprise officers, as well as The Federation of City Farms, & Transition towns and Community Supported Agriculture.

Alison also arranged for newest member Goytre, to meet with Abergavenny, and for our Incredible Caerphilly school to support a potential new group in



Monmouthshire County Council, are also working with Gwent Bee Keepers, to create fab pollinator & growing spaces. They've also revised their growing license to a mere £1.