

Right to Grow Tower Hamlets presents

Petition to Councillors, 21 Jan 2026

We are Carmen, Rachel and Rahema representing the Right to Grow Tower Hamlets campaign. Our petition asks for your support to develop and pass a Right to Grow motion to make it easier for **residents and community groups** to grow on public land, and put an overlooked resource, under-used land, towards community food growing.

We want to contribute to the local Food Strategy, and to work with the Council and your Sustainable Development Team.

The ***Tower Hamlets for All plan*** says that “Everyone in Tower Hamlets should be able to enjoy good mental health and wellbeing + should live in good-quality homes and healthy, inviting neighbourhoods”. We know that the challenge in a crowded borough is balancing the need for decent housing and green space. Making neglected land available for community food gardens can help without big financial investment.

The benefits are many.

Outdoor activities can improve public health and community food growing can lower cost of living pressures.

A Right to Grow can help make new-builds more sustainable and promote regeneration by making existing housing more resident friendly and climate-resilient.

By promoting composting, recycling and food waste reduction, we encourage pro-environmental behaviour, improving our estates and resident satisfaction.

In divisive times, we need to come together with a common purpose. Community food growing is an easy, low-risk way to engage residents, build trust between the community and the council and establish strong, diverse neighbourhoods.

And a Right to Grow supports YOUR policies

Like the ***Green Grid plan***. The green space network that encourages active lifestyles – leading to lower obesity in children, healthy families and independence in older people.

Community Food Growing could help meet the ***Recommendation in YOUR Scrutiny Review from 2023*** of developing dignified approaches to accessing food for those facing food insecurity.

Yes, to implement a Right to Grow would take a collaborative effort.

And we've had a positive response from stakeholders - council officers, social housing providers, TRAs, faith groups, employers like the NHS, and Queen Mary University.

Councils like Hull and Southwark have STARTED to implement the Right to Grow.

So, TH could be at the forefront of this grassroots movement. In fact, we know you recognise its value. You support 4000 residents to grow food on 37 housing estates. That's 6 tonnes of veg produced annually through a shared experience, by and for our diverse communities. 6 tonnes! of culturally-relevant food, some of which would have been imported, like kodu, lal shak, chilli, okra, uri beans... Let's take this further and give all the borough's residents access to food growing.

(TO END) And we know that you're supportive: 35 councillors and council officers have engaged with our network already.

So today, we ask you to work with us on developing a Council Motion aimed at making the idea of a Right to Grow in Tower Hamlets **a reality**.

Thank you.