



## Growing Together: The Story of Lynn Brown's Community Garden

### The Beginning:

Lynn Brown's journey with the community garden project began when chatting with Vanessa, a community development project manager from InterACT. Lynn had been involved with community activities for some time, so when Vanessa shared insights about the ABCD approach and the opportunity to access ABCD Sparks funding, Lynn had an idea.

Using knowledge and passion from her connections with Incredible Edible Leeds, Lynn proposed the establishment of a community garden on unused ground at the edge of her estate. This chimed with the hopes and ambitions of other local people, so InterACT supported the project with a Sparks grant of £5000. The funds were allocated for the purchase of gardening tools, seeds, and materials for constructing raised beds. This financial support was instrumental in getting the project off the ground.



Looks super! Thank you so much for all your hard, inspired work"

Nicola, Local Church Minister



### The Journey:

The community garden had quickly become a hub for local residents. Lynn's initiative, combined with the other assets within Beckhill, had fostered a sense of ownership among community members. Volunteers of all ages had participated in establishing the garden, particularly through community action days organized by InterACT's community builders, sharing their labour, skills, knowledge, and experiences.

The ground the residents had had to work with had been poorly maintained over the years. The team had had to do a lot of cutting back, digging out brambles, cutting back trees, reporting fly-tipping (mattresses generally did not make a good garden bedding!) and paying for professional help when needed.

Ensuring the garden was well-maintained required a significant amount of time and effort. Residents, corporate volunteers, the ABCD builders and most of all, Lynn, had worked tirelessly to keep the garden in good condition, often going above and beyond to ensure it was looked after. Even the heavy rain on more than one community action day that left participants cold, hungry and sliding about on mud, did not deter them, and their persistence was winning out.

## The Impact:

In just a few short months, the garden had already provided fresh produce and served as a space for social interaction and learning. Community members previously unknown to one another had become good friends; other neighbours, inspired by what they had seen, had taken the lead in making improvements in their own part of the estate; teenagers had learned about different types of food, and still others had enjoyed the space to sit and spend time with one another. Furthermore, Lynn had developed skills in making grant applications and had built some great links with Leeds businesses.

The garden was far from finished; there were plans to plant fruit trees, add a bench (built by members of the local Men's Shed), develop an area for young people, and add a veg library. It had already helped people feel less lonely, improved their mental health, brought the community closer together, and even got local teenagers interested! This success could be attributed to the dedication and hard work of the volunteers, who had lovingly watered, pruned, planted, harvested, and shared.

The community garden project highlighted the importance of supporting local initiatives and utilizing existing assets within the community to create positive change, serving as an inspiring example of what could be achieved through community effort.

"Walked past earlier today.  
It's fantastic. Such an  
improvement. Well done all"  
*A Passer-By*



"This is the most beautiful  
thing! Testimony to your  
hard work, vision, and  
dedication to the space  
you have created." *Liz.*

