



Teviot People's Kitchen

FINAL REPORT
October 2025



About R-Urban

Since 2017, public works and a network of partners have collaboratively transformed a vacant car park and garages into a thriving hub of sustainable and ecological living. At R-Urban, our focus is on building civic resilience in response to the climate emergency. We achieve this through weekly programmes of free workshops and events for residents of Teviot and Tower Hamlets. Since the end of the pandemic, we have engaged over 2500 participants in our programme, teaching essential life skills, building community and engaging diverse groups with sustainable living.

Our work focuses on two main areas. The first is creating a fairer food system that puts care for people and the planet at the centre. The second is about reusing and repairing resources, reducing waste and making the most of what we already have. We have recently become an AQA UAS Centre, offering level 2 qualifications in sustainable food growing, and plan to add more training and skills courses in the future.

Teviot People's Kitchen

In 2024, with support from JustFACT, we established the Teviot People's Kitchen (TPK), a community-led co-operative based at R-Urban, that works together to design and deliver growing and cooking education programmes, as well as offer training and business support for members and local people.

The TPK group is composed of a group of community organisers, gardeners, cooks and collaborators. The group is made up of Aleya Taher, Noore Rahman, Alani Shafiq, Katrina Wright, Eka Davies and Cameron Bray,

We have been co-designing and delivering programmes together, as well as undertaking training in food hygiene and first aid.

By facilitating skill-sharing, civic education and community-driven enterprise, TPK directly contributes to local agricultural knowledge, food resilience, economic empowerment and community cohesion.

This report covers the activities undertaken by the TPK since it was established.

5

**Seasonal
Fairs**

313

attendees

12

**new
qualifications**

10

**public
workshops**

9

**teambuilding
workshops**





Programme 2024

In 2024, we focused on setting up the group, organising training, testing different models for events and piloting new enterprise ideas. The public events that took place as part of the programme included:

1 launch event:

- kicking off the programme and introducing the members
- collaborative community meal and relationship-mapping workshop

7 food growing workshops:

- Companion planting
- Bean and courgettes
- Peppers and tomatoes
- Seed harvesting
- Mushroom growing
- Composting workshops x2

4 community meals, including:

- Making paneer and cooking fresh garden saag
- Making pickles and ferments
- Tomato meal
- Unusual edibles meal

1 midsummer fair, including:

- Mushroom log inoculation
- pickle and fermentation tutorials
- Plant sale and seed swap
- Seasonal lunch

Events were well attended, with a total of 236 attendees across the year.

Some of them followed formats already popular at R-Urban (food growing, community meals) whilst others tested new types of activities (midsummer fair).

We also worked together to design the programme and organise training:

- 2 emergency first aid sessions for TPK members and wider JustFACT network
- Food hygiene Level 2 training for TPK members
- Regular team-building workshops, supported by public works, to develop TPK methods and formats



Reflections

The first year of the TPK went well - the group met regularly, and we collaboratively developed a full programme of activities.

We were able to leverage additional funding through Hubbub which allowed us to deliver more events than originally planned.

Many of the activities which took place allowed us to test out new ideas for workshop delivery, models to sustain the project and ways of running events together as a group.

We tested out ways of taking donations at events in order to create supplementary income for the group. While we didn't raise a significant amount of money, this has prompted reflection as to how we might further test this (an ongoing discussion) through fresh produce honesty boxes, optional donations as part of eventbrite ticket sales, a card machine for donations etc. This is to be further developed as a piece of thinking.

We tested out a new format of event, with the midsummer fair proving to be an exciting day of activities. Rather than having a single workshop host, we delivered the event as a whole group, allowing for multiple activities to happen at once. The day was well attended and we really enjoyed hosting it together, resolving to test out more in future.

Receiving first aid and food hygiene training was very helpful, and allowed each group member to have the necessary qualifications to be on site alone, as well as to ensure safe use of the kitchen. These skills were also helpful in securing additional pieces of work.



Programme 2025

In 2025 we received a funding extension from JustFACT, allowing us to plan and deliver three further seasonal fairs, taking place at R-Urban on Saturdays.

These events brought in 116 people. The Autumn ended up being fairly quiet, due in part to clashes with other local events.

Spring Fair:

- A seed and plant swap with Katrina
- Pickle making and fermentation with Aleya
- Mushroom sale and farm tours with Alani
- Food made with artist-in-residence and TPK collaborator Ketchurah Ravindren
- Flower making workshop with Sunnyjar
- Free play workshop with Zareen
- Stitching workshop with Angharad
- Open studio with artist-in-residence Steph

Summer Fair:

- Plant sale and seed swap with Katrina
- Mushroom farm tours and DIY mushroom kit sales with Alani

- Making samosa chaat with Aleya and Cameron
- Sign painting with Angharad
- Preserve making with Ketchurah
- Natural cleaning products and skincare ingredients sale with Sunnyjar
- Play activities for children with Zareen
- Folding 1000 origami cranes in the colours of the Palestinian flag with Mika
- Open artist studio with Gemma
- Clothes swap with Katrina

Autumn Fair:

- Seed harvesting and seed bomb making with Katrina
- Mushroom cloning with Alani
- Warming soup with Cameron
- Classroom Curtain Patchwork with Sunny Jar Eco Hub
- Open Studio and workshop with Christine
- Play activities with Zareen and Nihal



Reflections

Overall, we felt that 2025 has been successful for the TPK. The model trialled at seasonal fairs has been popular, and creates enjoyable moments to come together as a group. We feel that the events work well as several activities happen in tandem, meaning that there is a bit less pressure to keep a large group entertained, and there are opportunities to do more detailed, focused learning around topics.

In 2025, we unsuccessfully sought further funding to deliver additional activities. Fundraising can be tricky! We will keep applying for pots of money to focus on key project areas (eg. building a fresh produce honest box, and receiving further training) to support the TPK in 2026.

Despite a quieter year, members of the TPK have also been invited to speak about the group at events, including a Hubhub gathering for other food projects in the city. Members have been invited to deliver many more freelance activities including running gardening activities and catering for events through the JustFACT network.

TESTIMONIAL - Cameron, TPK member

"The TPK has shown me how important it is to come together and take collective decisions. We've been able to pivot our model to deliver fantastic, well-attended fairs in a really collaborative way. Long may it last!"

Impact

This page refers back to our evaluation plan to measure the impact that the project has made

Outcomes	Indicators / Methods	Reflections / data
Wellbeing and community connections have improved through the continuation of public programming on the R-Urban site.	number of attendees number of repeat attendees	313 attendees total 70 unique individuals 133 individuals attended more than 1 event 73 individuals attended more than 3 events
More connected and better networked communities	Attendees reporting increased community connections with other residents Co-op members reporting they have learned from one another Members who have received new qualifications which lead to further opportunities	The attendee figures above show that there is a core group of repeat attendees, demonstrating the power of the TPK at bringing together a well networked community. See testimonials for learning within the group. All TPK members have received emergency first aid training, with food hygiene training bought for all members to undertake online.
Reduced carbon emissions through new innovative systems	The programme will support a more self-reliant co-operative business model to exist and grow at R-Urban.	Individual members of the TPK have taken on more freelance work since the group was established, supported by the team-building activities and training. However, we feel that this element of our work still requires further development. We had various ideas around developing marketable products, charging for produce and testing out donation models. These have been tested to a limited degree but haven't been further expanded. We had wanted to work on this in 2025 but received limited funding to do so. Our ambition is to take some time to reflect on this and test out ideas in 2026.



TODAY

3PM

- mushroom log inoculation with *Alanki*
- ferment & pickle with *Noore*
- PLANTS FOR SALE with *Kabru*

Learnings and insights

What did you learn about how change happens?

Over the last two years (and in our previous JustFACT work), we've learned that change doesn't happen overnight or through one-off interventions. It happens gradually, through consistency, trust building, and shared experiences.

We've found that when people are given space to connect through food, gardening and creativity, small moments of curiosity grow into long-term shifts in behaviour and mindset. Real change comes from relationships, from people seeing and feeling the benefits of collective action in their everyday lives.

We feel that meaningful change begins with connection. When people feel welcome, valued, and part of something bigger than themselves, they begin to engage not just as participants but as contributors.

We've seen how small, consistent acts such as sharing food, growing together, and creating space for conversation can have a powerful ripple effect. Over time, these experiences build confidence, trust, and a sense of ownership that transforms how people view their environment and their role within it.

We've also seen changes within the group, with the training and support received meaning that team members have been able to take on new work and raise funds for projects.

TESTIMONIAL - Katrina, TPK member

"Through Teviot People's Kitchen, I've seen people form lasting connections that bring together individuals who might never have met otherwise. These bonds continue to grow stronger over time. Our events have become a familiar and welcoming space for families, where parents feel comfortable letting their children play freely and explore the crops and greenery around them.

It's been wonderful to see people open up their palates and growing spaces, trying fruits and vegetables they once disliked. Many have said this has directly improved their health, and they share their progress with genuine excitement. I've also loved hearing from volunteers and trainees about how they've used the skills learned with us to progress in their careers or education.

This impact is exactly the kind of legacy I hoped we would create, and one I'm proud to continue building through Teviot People's Kitchen."

Are there any overall successes or challenges?

Through the TPK we've been able to maintain and grow the momentum behind food growing and cooking activities on the R-Urban site in recent years. A TPK member says that the project feels like a "hub of connection and belonging."

There are many familiar faces who attend our events and fairs. People who once said they "weren't green-fingered," or "hated vegetables," now take pride in growing and cooking with what they've helped nurture.

It has also been rewarding to hear from volunteers and trainees who have gone on to study, find work, or start their own initiatives using the skills and confidence they gained here.

Within the TPK, we've been able to put our shared learning to good use by putting together further funding applications





Learnings and insights

(both individually and collectively), developing programme ideas and taking on commissioned work.

There have also been challenges - it's been hard to sustain momentum with limited resources. We would have liked to be able to deliver more programming between the seasonal fairs in 2025. It's also been challenging to ensure participation remains inclusive as people's lives and circumstances change.

One element of the TPK model we have been unable to better test is the production of small batches of preserves for sale to community members. With our time feeling stretched, we prioritised delivering tried and tested programming over new models which had unproven viability. We would, however, like to return to this idea in future.

What guidance would you give to others doing similar projects?

- Projects thrive when people feel ownership and see their ideas reflected in the outcomes. Find ways of inviting people into decision making processes.
- Be patient, because relationships take time to build and trust grows through being present and reliable. Sometimes this takes years!
- Practical activities such as shared meals, planting sessions, and informal conversations are often more powerful than formal meetings. Through this we're able to have what we call 'quiet conversations'
- And never underestimate the importance of celebration, as moments of joy help sustain long-term engagement.

TESTIMONIAL - Aleya, TPK member

"It's lovely to work with this group, we're sharing and caring for each other, and the community."

"Going to the town hall, we showed this is the TPK from Teviot, I was proud to show the produce from the garden - fresh fresh fresh!"

Are there any learnings on how to build community power, participation and leadership?

The TPK model was established to share decision making and develop leadership among the core group of workshop hosts at R-Urban. We hope it continues to grow and empower all of us as members, but also ensuring responsiveness to local community wants and needs - shifting from "delivering for" to "doing with."

In order to develop this thinking, we have found it really important to gather regularly as a group, check in, and share updates. This allows us to share responsibilities and learn from each other.

We've found that organising bigger events together has been really fulfilling as we're able to support each other. And we've invested in our long-term prospects by undertaking training programmes.

We also encourage wider participation in decision making by asking regular attendees what they would like to see and tailoring activities to suit their needs.

Are there learnings on how to have climate conversations/ how we can take climate action locally?

With the TPK, we've tried to focus conversations on composting, food waste, local food growing and resourceful cooking, in a way that opens the door to broader discussions about sustainability and wellbeing. We've found it powerful to avoid abstract statistics, but rather speak to everyday, personal experience.

By grounding climate conversations in local experience and positive action, we find that people feel empowered rather than overwhelmed.