

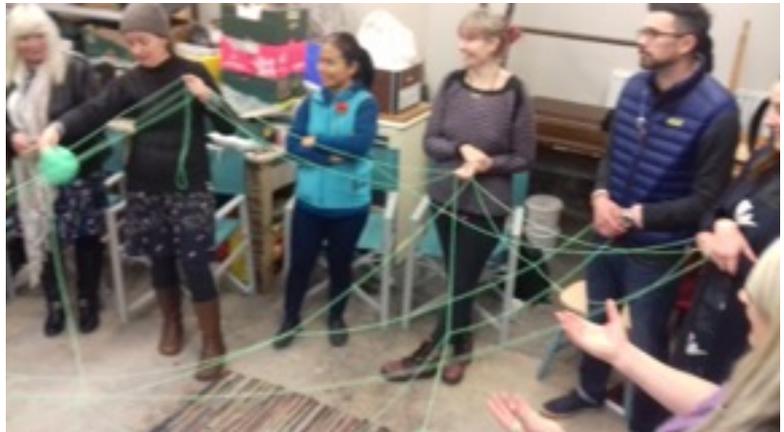
Gresham Gathering

This short report summarises the findings of the first ever Gresham Gathering. We met in November 2018 as a group of activists and organisers working in Gresham. We wanted to map out what's great about our community and how we can make it a fantastic place to live and work.



What's Great About Gresham!

- Town-centre location
- Close to many amenities and resources
- A thriving and diverse population
- Solid housing and a close community
- Loads of community groups and activities
- People with free time



Community Assets

Gresham is a community with so much history and so many assets. We love the way there's always something going on. Amongst Gresham's best things are:

- An active community arts scene with talented and committed artists
- A thriving community gardening network linked to back-alley make-overs
- Long-standing detached youth work and committed community development workers
- Access to community resources like Newport Hub and Meath Street
- Well-embedded community organisations like Streets Ahead, Open Door, IPC and others
- A well-established Community Land Trust and a group of people committed to community-led housing.

Our Dreams and Wishes

Gresham has a lot going for it. And we think it could be better yet. Working creatively with clay we explored our hopes, dreams and wishes for the area. Here are some of the things we came up with.



- A stable population
- A peaceful neighbourhood
- More green spaces and a focus on the environment
- A place where you can be yourself
- A happy and healthy place to make a home
- Fun and friendship
- Focus on the arts and the development of a Heritage Craft Centre
- Space
- More enterprise and employment
- That money generated here, stays here.

Above all we felt that the neighbourhood just needs some TLC and a Helping Hand.

What Will Make A Difference?

We came up with four big ideas that we think will help Gresham to become more of what it can be:

1. **Make an enterprise out of Gardening.** There is so much potential in the community gardening and alley make-over activity. This could attract charitable funding and generate income from produce.
2. **Keep Resources Local.** This approach has been central to the regeneration of many inner-city communities in the US. By creating local currencies or prioritising local procurement, money spent by local people and organisations can help grow the local economy.
3. **Let the Community Lead.** There is a great opportunity to put local people in the driving seat around housing redevelopment and neighbourhood planning generally. We have the community infrastructure to do this, and the commitment.
4. **Harness Local Potential.** There is already so much going on and so many talented and willing people engaged in Gresham. This can form the basis for a powerful community development process.

What Next?

We are conscious that we are a group of organisers and activists who are working in Gresham. We have good connections and links within the wider community. But there are voices that were not present when we met. We know that the next phase is to move to a position where we are more actively engaged with the various parts of the Gresham community. We must move from being the catalysts from outside to being the connectors within.

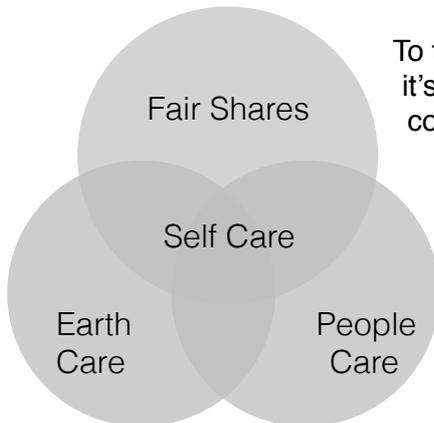
Our first steps in this transformation process will be:

1. Working with existing community gardeners to develop a social enterprise for Gresham gardening.
2. Produce a set of shared ethics that will guide how we work (see below). These will be based around Permaculture combined with the ways of working we identified as important.
3. Develop a survey for local people around housing needs that will form the basis of a Community-Led Housing development.
4. Explore funding for enterprise development in the area.
5. Develop a business plan for a Heritage Craft Centre at Newmarch Workshops.



Our Ethics

We have decided to base our ethos on Permaculture which is a design system for how humanity and the rest of the natural world can work harmoniously together. The four Core Ethics of Permaculture are:



To these Core Ethics we want to add some ways of working. We feel it's really important that the way we work together reflects the kind of community we want to create. We want to lead by example.

Our guiding Ways of Working include:

- Think big, act small, start now! Know that we are part of a global movement and that our place to start is here and now.
 - Build capacity for self-reliance. Nurture a local economy using local resources. Seek out and share local skills, knowledge and resources.
 - Proactively listen to Gresham folk. Engage with all parts of this diverse and thriving community. Reach out and welcome in.
- Have fun. Embrace creativity. Communicate through play, music, arts and crafts.
 - Value and celebrating diversity, difference and inclusion. Know that there is strength in diversity.
 - Steadfastly enact equal shares and equal opportunities. Only pay a living wage. Work with those whose opportunities are limited by expectations, oppression or prejudice. Make sure everyone can play an active and equal role.