



Grow Together 2

SCALING UP SUSTAINABLE FOOD SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILIES
AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN MELBOURNE'S SOUTH EAST



PROJECT REPORT

Prepared by enliven Victoria
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1. Project overview

Between July and December 2021, enliven Victoria (enliven) partnered with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and ten Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres across the South East Melbourne region to scale-up the 'Grow Together' pilot. Grow Together is a grassroots project designed to increase food security for families and young people experiencing disadvantage in Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia during the COVID-19 pandemic. More information on the Grow Together pilot from 2020 can be found [here](#).

This scale-up project introduced a new, innovative partnership model which consisted of partnering with Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres across the region. This was done in order to connect with priority populations within local communities, mobilising staff and volunteers to distribute 700 'planter kits' (see Section 2.3) to families and young people experiencing hardship and food insecurity.

Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres were identified by enliven staff with the support of DFFH staff and were onboarded to the project via a Consultation Workshop. Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres were supported to identify planter kit recipients through existing networks, as well as working closely with DFFH to engage and deliver at least 40% of their allocated planter kits to local public housing residents, youth in residential units, and people living in supported residential services, rooming houses and caravan parks. enliven staff supported Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres to sign on as project partners and throughout their participation in the project.

enliven staff tracked orders of numbers and types of planter kits from each Neighbourhood House and Community Centre partner via Google forms and regular communications with Neighbourhood House and Community Centre staff. Instructions on how to set up the grow bag were provided in simple English with each planter kit. To help community members to continue their food journey beyond the garden and into the kitchen, the Grow Together booklet was also included (see Appendix 1, electronic copies available at <https://enliven.org.au/grow-together/>).

The team at enliven prepared the planter kit components and distributed the 700 kits to the 10 partner Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres on 9th November and 23rd November 2021. Kits were then distributed to community members by Neighbourhood House and Community Centre staff and volunteers.

2. Project design

2.1 Project partners

The design of the Grow Together scale up project was underpinned by a strong and collaborative local partnership approach. Below is a detailed description of the key project stakeholders.

2.1.1 *enliven Victoria*

enliven Victoria is a Primary Care Partnership and not-for-profit health promoting charity that works within the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire local government areas. enliven has an extensive history of working in partnership to support and build the capacity of community members experiencing health and social inequity including refugee and migrant communities, people seeking asylum, as well as addressing complex health issues such as food insecurity and climate change.

2.1.2 *Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (DFFH)*

DFFH representatives worked collaboratively with local Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres to identify and engage with priority settings that were located in close proximity to the participating Houses and Centres. These settings included public housing, youth residential units, supported residential services, rooming houses and caravan parks, as well as other priority settings as appropriate and identified by project partners (e.g. residential aged care services).

2.1.3 *Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres*

Below is the list of ten Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres who participated in the project:

- Balla Balla Community Centre
- Berwick Neighbourhood Centre
- Bunyip & District Community House
- Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- Hampton Park Community House
- Noble Park Community Centre
- North Dandenong Neighbourhood House
- Oakgrove Community Centre
- Springvale Neighbourhood House
- Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre

Each participating Neighbourhood House and Community Centre received between \$400 - \$600 each, to assist with project activities, supporting their involvement and offsetting their costs. The exact amount was assessed based upon how many planter kits each Neighbourhood House and Community Centre agreed to distribute.

Key project activities that the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres were involved in included:

- Attended a Consultation Workshop (see Section 2.4.1)
- Together with DFFH, identified priority settings, and individuals and/or families experiencing hardship and food insecurity who identified an interest in growing food at home
- Identification of community engagement approaches to increasing social connection and participation in their activities and programs
- Promotion of the project to their local community
- Staff and volunteers received delivery of planter kits from enliven and distributed directly to community members. Approximately 37 staff and volunteers from Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres were involved in the coordination, planning, and kit distribution.
- Completed evaluation documentation.



2.2 Funding and Donations

The project was funded by the 2021 VicHealth *Reimagining Health Grant*, and generous donations were received from Bunnings, Galaxy of Plants Nursery, KwikCopy Dandenong, Seasol, and The Seed Collection. For a full details on project expenditure, see Project Budget in Section 4.

2.2.1 Donations and contributions

The project was kindly supported by our generous donors and supporters listed below.

Galaxy of Plants Nursery

Galaxy of Plants Nursery is a family-owned wholesale nursery of 20 years based locally in Tooradin, Victoria. Galaxy of Plants Nursery provided high-quality Lebanese cucumber and cherry tomato seedlings at a reduced price for the project and delivered them free of charge to enliven.

Seasol

Seasol is a 100% Australian owned manufacturer of organic liquid seaweed and environmentally friendly fertilisers. Seasol donated 1024 bottles of organic fertiliser (750ml PowerFeed EziSpray) which were delivered free of charge to enliven and included in the planter kits.

Bunnings

Bunnings Cranbourne, Dandenong, East Pakenham and Fountain Gate stores provided at reduced price and/or delivery cost, a total of 700 bags of potting mix (Osmocote Premium 25L) which were delivered directly to Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres and included in the planter kits.

The Seed Collection

The Seed Collection is an Australian owned and operated business based in the foothills of the Dandenong ranges in Victoria. The Seed Collection provided grow bags and seeds at a reduced price for the project.

Kwik Kopy Dandenong

Kwik Kopy are experts in corporate design and printing solutions. Kwik Kopy Dandenong provided professional printing of project resources at a reduced price for the project which were included in the planter kits.

2.3 Composition of planter kits

There were two varieties of planter kits:

1. Seeds (lettuce and spring onion)
2. Seedlings (cherry tomato and Lebanese cucumber)

All Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres were provided with the choice of how many seed and/or seedling kits they would like via an Expression of Interest Form (see Appendix 2). The reason for having two varieties of planter kits was to accommodate the varying timeframes of Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres to distribute the kits. The ‘Seeds’ planter kit did not need immediate distribution, which gave some Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres more time to deliver their kits.

Table 1. Contents of each planter kit

| Item | Unit | Description | Source |
|-------------------------------------|------|--|---|
| Grow bag | x1 | Round fabric 10-gallon grow bag | SpringUp (ordered via eBay) OR The Seed Collection (provided at a reduced priced) |
| Potting mix | x1 | 25L Osmocote Premium potting mix | Local Bunnings stores (Dandenong, Cranbourne, Fountain Gate and East Pakenham stores provided at reduced price and/or reduced delivery cost) |
| Fertiliser | x1 | 750mL Seasol PowerFeed EziSpray fertiliser | Donated by Seasol |
| Instruction sheet | x1 | Easy English instruction sheet to assemble planter kit and for planting and caring for the seeds/seedlings | Created and printed by enliven staff |
| Plain language resource | x1 | Grow Together booklet | Created and printed by enliven staff |
| Vegetable seeds or seedlings | x2 | Packet seeds - bunching onion and lettuce OR Seedlings – cherry tomato and Lebanese Cucumber | Sourced from The Seed Collection at a reduced price OR Provided by Galaxy of Plants Nursery at a reduced price |

2.3.1 *Instruction Sheets*

Included in each of the planter kits were Instruction Sheets (see Appendix 1, electronic copies available at <https://enliven.org.au/grow-together/>). In Easy English, these resources provided a step-by-step guide about how to set up the planter kit and plant the seeds and seedlings.

2.3.2 *Grow Together Booklet*

In order to help community members continue their food journey beyond the garden and into the kitchen, our Grow Together Booklet was developed and included within each pack (see Appendix 1, electronic copies available at <https://enliven.org.au/grow-together/>). The Booklet was initially co-developed by staff from Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre and enliven during the pilot in 2020 and was revised and updated for the scale-up. It includes topics such as food preservation techniques, decreasing food waste, healthy eating guidelines, seasonal food guide and healthy recipes.

2.3.3 *Prioritising health literacy*

Health literacy relates to how people access, understand, and use health information in ways that benefit their health. People with low health literacy are at higher risk of worse health outcomes and poorer health behaviours. enliven acknowledges the importance of creating accessible material and are international leaders in advancing plain language. It was particularly important to apply a health literacy lens to this project, as it was likely many planter kit recipients would be born overseas with low English proficiency as well as having little to no experience in growing their own food. Therefore, all documentation provided in the planter kits (Instruction Sheets and Grow Together Booklet) were underpinned by plain language and healthy literacy principles. It was vital to ensure images best reflected what was provided in text, with simplicity and accuracy.



2.4 Project Timeline

Table 2 below provides an overview of the project timeline and key milestones.

Table 2. Project activities and timeline

| Project activity | Start date | End date |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Recruited project officer and established roles and responsibilities amongst key project staff (including volunteers) | July 2021 | August 2021 |
| 2. Formed project reference group with partner organisations and conducted monthly meetings as required 2.1 Engaged local youth residential units, supported Residential Services, social housing, rooming houses, and caravan parks 2.2 Identified planter kit recipients | July 2021 | September 2021 |
| 3. Confirmed number of planter kits to be delivered to each Neighbourhood House and Community Centre | August 2021 | September 2021 |
| 4. Sourced and purchased seedlings, grow bags, potting mix, organic fertiliser | September 2021 | September 2021 |
| 5. Written resources printed | September 2021 | September 2021 |
| 6. Key project staff and volunteers assembled planter kits | October 2021 | October 2021 |
| 7. Delivered planter kits to Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres | November 2021 | November 2021 |
| 8. Delivered planter kits to recipients through Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres | November 2021 | December 2021 |
| 9. Submitted progress report to VicHealth | November 2021 | November 2021 |
| 10. Followed up on a sample of planter kit recipients for qualitative and quantitative feedback | April 2022 | May 2022 |
| 11. Conducted program evaluation and submitted final evaluation report to VicHealth | April 2022 | June 2022 |

2.4.1 Consultation Workshop

As part of the initial project planning phase, a workshop was held by enliven for local Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres interested in the project. The aim of the workshop was to provide opportunity for the project partnership to inform the project design and evaluation. A summary of the workshop planning outcomes can be found in Appendix 3.

3. Planter Kit Distribution

The enliven office in Dandenong was used as the central point for storing and collating the planter kit contents. Staff from enliven received deliveries of grow bags, Seasol, seedlings and seeds. Instruction sheets and booklets (see Appendix 1) were printed and included for recipients in each kit. For ease of transport, enliven staff coordinated the potting mix to be delivered directly to the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres. Over two days (9th and 23rd November 2021), enliven staff and volunteers distributed the planter kit contents and project partner resources (see Appendix 4) to each Neighbourhood House and Community Centre for distribution to the community.

The original aim for distribution was 700 planter kits across City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire, however six kits were unable to be distributed due to breakage of kit items or project partner staffing time challenges. Table 1 outlines the amount of planter kits distributed via each Neighbourhood House and Community Centre.

Table 3. Total distribution of planter kits

| Organisation | Seedling kits | Seed kits | TOTAL kits |
|---|---------------|------------|------------|
| Balla Balla Community Centre | 30 | - | 30 |
| Hampton Park Community House | - | 160 | 160 |
| Springvale and North Dandenong Neighbourhood Houses | - | 150 | 150 |
| Bunyip & District Community House | - | 70 | 70 |
| Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre | - | 30 | 30 |
| Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre | - | 40 | 40 |
| Oakgrove Community Centre | 30 | 30 | 60 |
| Berwick Neighbourhood Centre | 40 | 40 | 80 |
| Noble Park Community Centre | 40 | 40 | 80 |
| TOTAL planter kits | 140 | 560 | 700 |

4. Project Budget

The below tables outline both the proposed budget and final total expenditure for the project.

Table 4. Proposed project budget

| Expenditure | Budget (\$) | Explanatory Commentary |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Administration | \$4,212.95 | Corporate overheads 10% |
| Gross salaries and wages | \$10,530.00 | Project Coordinator wages. 13 hours/week over 20 weeks @ \$39/hour (planning, implementation and evaluation) |
| | \$4,800.00 | Contribution to eight participating Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres (approximate) administration costs and staffing approx 15 hours @ \$40/hour |
| Program delivery costs | \$21,637.00 | Planter kit materials (\$30.91 per kit x 700) |
| | \$612.50 | Planter kit delivery (\$0.88 per kit x 700) |
| Marketing and promotion | \$4,550.00 | Printing 'Grow Together Booklet' and Planter Kit instructions (\$6.50 per kit x 700) |
| Total Budget | \$46,342.45 | |

Table 5. Actual total project expenditure

| Expenditure | Money spent (\$) | Explanatory Commentary |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Administration | \$4,212.95 | Overheads |
| Gross salaries and wages | \$15,210.00 | Project coordinator wages. 13 hours/week for 30 weeks (390 hours) |
| | \$7,995.00 | Salaries for support staff involved in planning, implementation and evaluation. 205 hours |
| | \$4,800.00 | Neighbourhood House and Community Centre payments |
| Program delivery costs | \$6,042.62 | Planter kit materials - potting mix |
| | \$1,310.40 | Planter kit materials - seeds and seedlings |
| | \$2,837.18 | Planter kit materials - grow bags |
| Marketing and promotion | \$3,856.92 | Printing 'Grow Together Booklet' |
| TOTAL expenditure | \$46,265.07 | |

It is important to note that there are variations in the total project's expenditure compared to the planned project budget. enliven were able to source donations for some of the kit materials which resulted in a reduced program delivery cost. However, staffing and support costs were increased compared to what was initially projected. This was due to the time commitment of both sourcing donations of materials, and stakeholder engagement activities. The project partner model was a key strength of the Grow Together 2 project, and the resourcing required to build, maintain, and manage stakeholder relationships should be considered in future iterations or replication of the project.



5. Evaluation

5.1 Evaluation overview

The following section outlines the evaluation design for this project.

5.1.1 Measures

A mixed-methods approach was used to assess the processes and impacts of the project from the perspectives of both the planter kit recipients (community) and the project partners (Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres).

5.1.2 Evaluation objectives

The evaluation sought to measure impact in the following domains:

- Increase capacity of the local community to grow, harvest and consume produce grown at home
- Increase accessibility of fresh, healthy, and affordable food
- Promote the physical and mental health of community through participation in gardening
- Promote participation and engagement of young people and families in Neighbourhood House and Community Centre programs and activities

5.1.3 Data collection and analysis

Evaluation data from planter kit recipients was collected five months after the planter kit distribution. This follow-up period allowed sufficient time for recipients to experience growing, harvesting, and eating produce, and provided an opportunity to measure longer-term behaviour change. Evaluation data from project partners was collected 4 months following kit distribution.

Data was collected using the following methods:

- Semi-structured interviews via telephone calls with planter kit recipients (n=71)
- Online survey for planter kit recipients (n=12)
- Project partner online survey (n=7)

Planter kit recipients

When community members received their planter kit, they were asked to complete a plain language evaluation consent form to indicate their interest in participating in the evaluation. Neighbourhood House and Community Centre staff then returned signed consent forms to enliven. Any identifiable

information such as recipient names and names of the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres were removed prior to analysis. These were replaced by pseudonyms and information was coded.

Data analysis

Data was analysed separately for the planter kit recipient interviews, planter kit recipient surveys, and the project partner surveys. For the interviews, some recipients chose to not provide a response to all questions, and thus data was analysed based on the total number of people who responded to each question. Therefore, when calculating the quantitative data, the total number of responses to each question varied. For recipient and partner surveys, data was extracted and aggregated from survey responses for both recipient and project partner survey.

5.2 Evaluation tools

The following section outlines the evaluation tools used for both project partners (Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres) and planter kit recipients (community).

5.2.1 Partner evaluation

A survey using a mixed-methods approach was sent via email to the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres who distributed the planter kits. The survey aimed to explore and understand the thoughts and experiences of the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres regarding the project, as well as to assess the partnership between enliven and the project partners. See Appendix 5 for a copy of the project partner survey tool.

5.2.2 Planter kit recipient evaluation

Recipient interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted via phone with consenting planter kit recipients. The interview aimed to increase understanding of recipient's experiences of the project, and whether the intended project outcomes were achieved. This was the preferred method of data collection by the evaluation team as the interviews offered recipients an in-depth opportunity to explore the issues they felt were important, creating a more rich and diverse range of qualitative data. See Appendix 6 for a copy of the interview topic guide.

Recipient survey

A survey using a mixed-methods approach was emailed to recipients who had consented to being contacted via email. The survey aimed to understand the planter kit recipients' experiences of engaging with the project, and whether intended project outcomes were achieved. See Appendix 7 for a copy of the recipient survey.

5.3 Evaluation results

The following section outlines the results and discussion from the planter recipient interviews and survey, as well as the project partner survey.

5.3.1 Planter kit recipients (semi-structured interviews)

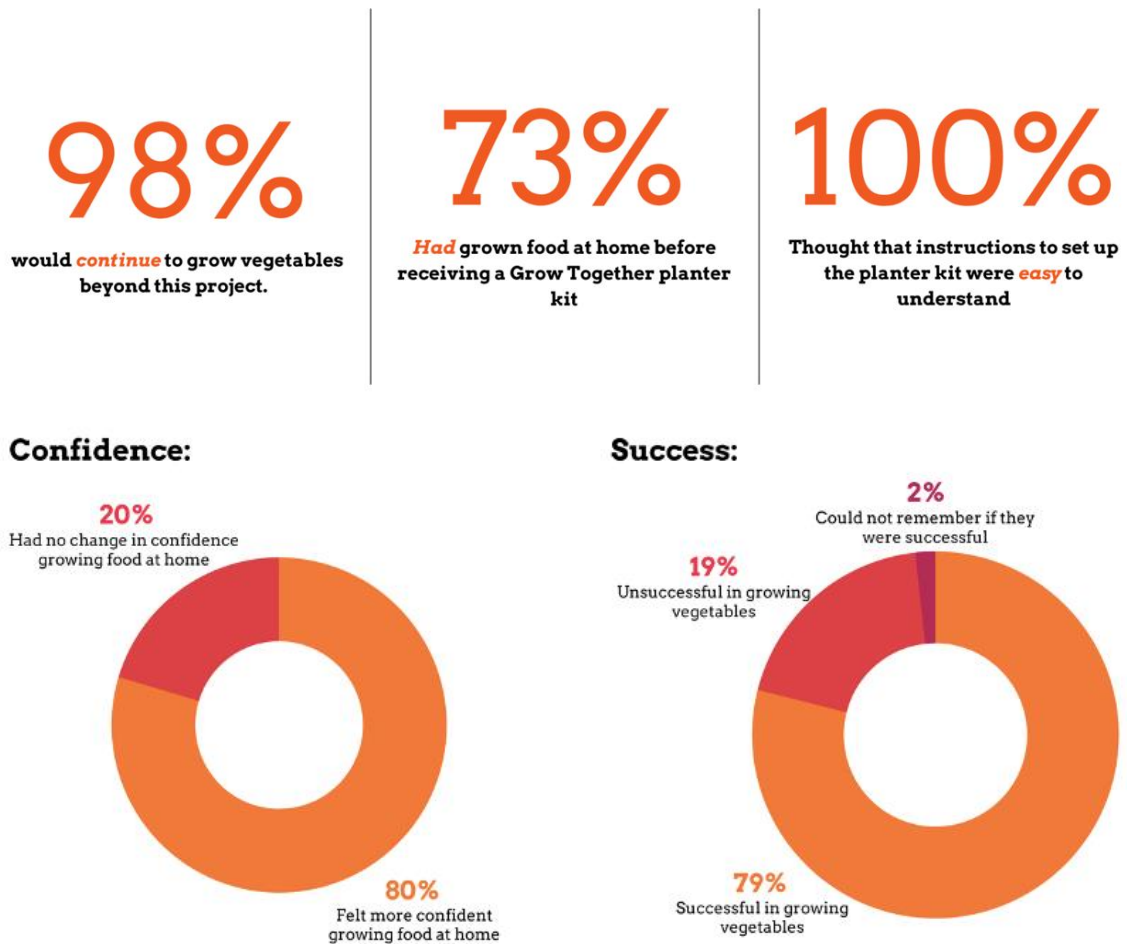
The following provides a summary of the feedback received by planter kit recipients via semi-structured phone interviews. Feedback has been categorised into themes, representative of each evaluation objective.



Objective 1: Increase capacity of the local community to grow, harvest and consume produce grown at home

Some interview questions with planter kit recipients resulted in quantitative data, as reported below:

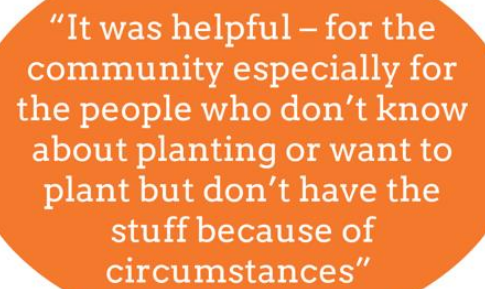
Figure 1. Planter kit recipient interview data



The information in Figure 1 above highlights that the project was successful in developing recipient motivation and confidence via the provision of plain language kit instructions. This indicates that the project increased the capacity of planter kit recipients to grow food, adding to both their knowledge and ability around home edible gardening.

Similarly, during the recipient interviews, 25% of respondents reported on their knowledge and skills when asked about their thoughts of the planter kit. The project was a “very helpful” and “a new

experience” for recipients, as quoted from one the respondents. Others noted that the instructions on growing food at home provided to recipients were straightforward, practical and easy to follow. Respondents also commented that the project gave them the confidence to try growing seedlings. This suggests that this project was great for beginner gardeners who do not have much prior experience nor knowledge on gardening at home and did not know where to start.



“It was helpful – for the community especially for the people who don’t know about planting or want to plant but don’t have the stuff because of circumstances”

Approximately 11% of interview respondents indicated that more information would have made it easier to grow the vegetables. This included clearer instructions about where to place the grow bag, knowledge on how heavy the grow bag will be prior to planting the vegetables, more in-depth information on how to grow the vegetables, and translated resources.

Respondents were also asked about what they enjoyed about being a part of the project and approximately 70% of respondents reported on their ability to garden. This included the educational aspects and learning how to grow food at home, as well as the ease of growing food due to increased knowledge, equipment or instructions. Therefore, the project was successful in both increasing knowledge of gardening, as well as equipping recipients with resources, resulting in increased capacity to grow, harvest, and consume food at home. Conversely, a small minority of respondents reported that they did not enjoy the project as they were unsuccessful in growing food at home due to pests such as snails and some simply did not use the planter kit.

Objective 2: Increase accessibility of fresh, healthy, and affordable food

"Saved me a trip into the shops and money"

Just over half of all respondents reported that the project made finding and eating healthy food easier. Respondents commented that they enjoyed the ease of having access and being able to eat fresh home-grown food. Others commented on the cost and affordability, with respondents stating that they enjoyed and appreciated being given the planter kits without having to experience the financial costs of buying fresh produce from supermarkets. This highlights that the project was successful in increasing the community's accessibility to fresh, healthy, and affordable food by enabling recipients to produce home-grown food and reducing the associated costs.

"Yes, actually this is not very easy because organic food is very expensive, but if it's easy to grow at home, home grown veggies are very healthy and very cheap if grown properly, so it's a good idea to grow at home."

Objective 3: Promote the physical and mental health of community through participation in gardening

The physical and mental health benefits of edible gardening were a common theme throughout the interviews. When discussing diet, many respondents said that they already ate vegetables prior to being involved in the project. Therefore, while the project may not have had an influence on the community's consumption of vegetables, many respondents still reported other mental and physical health benefits.

"I felt good about achieving and growing the food from the seeds, especially with my granddaughter"

When reflecting on the most enjoyable aspects of the project, almost half of the respondents mentioned that the activity of growing their own food promoted feelings of accomplishment and a sense of reward and satisfaction.

Respondents also commented on the project's physical health benefits, mentioning that the project influenced healthy eating and gardening enthusiasm. Therefore, the project was successful in encouraging recipients to spend more time outside and consume their own home-grown vegetables.

"I just thought it was a good idea to promote healthy eating"

These sentiments went beyond health benefits, with many respondents referencing environmental and climate co-benefits. Feelings of satisfaction were linked to the environmental benefits of edible gardening. Other respondents spoke about how growing food at home was sustainable and good for the environment, as well as the idea that home grown vegetables are better than store bought as they are pesticide-free. This indicates that the environmental co-benefits of the project were front-of-mind for some respondents, highlighting that via the project, these respondents were able to address their concerns pertaining to climate issues.

Objective 4: Promote participation and engagement of young people and families in Neighbourhood House and Community Centre programs and activities

Planter kit recipients were asked whether they had been involved in any groups or activities at their Neighbourhood House or Community Centre since receiving their planter kit. Out of 56 responses, only 12 respondents answered 'yes' and that they had engaged with the Neighbourhood House or Community Centre either for gardening, or activities outside of gardening. Therefore, the majority of respondents had not been involved, or answered that they could not commit to being involved. Several reasons were given for this, including barriers due to health, location, and opening hours. Alternatively, some respondents mentioned that they aren't involved as they are already an active member of the community elsewhere. While this is the case, several respondents highlighted that they had the intention of becoming involved in the future, while others outlined that they try to stay connected to the Houses and Centres through social media.

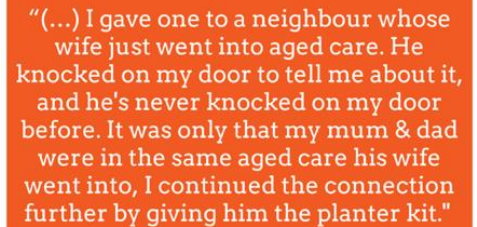
Although this indicates that most respondents had not engaged with Neighbourhood House or Community Centre activities and services since receiving their kit, it is important to note that some respondents may not have known they existed or provided programs prior to the project. Therefore, in the act of receiving their kit, recipients have had a point of interaction with the Neighbourhood House or Community Centre. This initial point of engagement is still important as it introduced recipients to the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres, and they were able to receive a benefit from this.

Unintended outcomes


The following section outlines common themes that arose during the interviews which were not outlined in the objectives of the evaluation, nor were sought out by the interview guide.

Social connection

Although the interview guide was not developed to explore social connection and inclusion, many respondents mentioned this as a benefit of participating in the project. It is important to note that one of the project partners, Hampton Park Community House had independently created a Facebook Group to discuss gardening with their community members as a part of their participation as a project partner. Many respondents from Hampton Park mentioned this as a benefit throughout the interview, which was not a direct component of the original project plan.

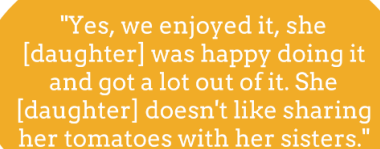


"(...) I gave one to a neighbour whose wife just went into aged care. He knocked on my door to tell me about it, and he's never knocked on my door before. It was only that my mum & dad were in the same aged care his wife went into, I continued the connection further by giving him the planter kit."



"(...) [it] allowed me to talk to my granddaughter about the need of healthy eating and vegetables."

In addition to this, many respondents spoke about social connections with their children, grandchildren and community throughout the process of gardening and growing food at home. Respondents commented on the enjoyment and benefit of sharing stories and food with family, friends, and neighbours, as well as community networking and connecting with workers at the Neighbourhood Houses or Community Centres. Respondents also spoke about how the project influenced children's food choices or taught them the importance of eating vegetables. This indicates that the project brought communities and families together, encouraging social connection (at the end of 2021, after two years of on and off lockdowns in Melbourne).



"Yes, we enjoyed it, she [daughter] was happy doing it and got a lot out of it. She [daughter] doesn't like sharing her tomatoes with her sisters."



Environment

Another unexpected finding which was not explicitly included in the interview guide was that respondents spoke about the environment. This was particularly evident when respondents were asked about what might have made it easier for them to grow the vegetables. 9 out of 53 respondents mentioned the environment, including issues regarding the climate affecting gardening success and the need for watering systems. Some respondents mentioned that while the heat posed a challenge, this was out of the project's control. The environment was also mentioned by respondents when asked about what they enjoyed about the project. Some respondents mentioned that growing food at home had important co-benefits related to sustainability and pesticide-free

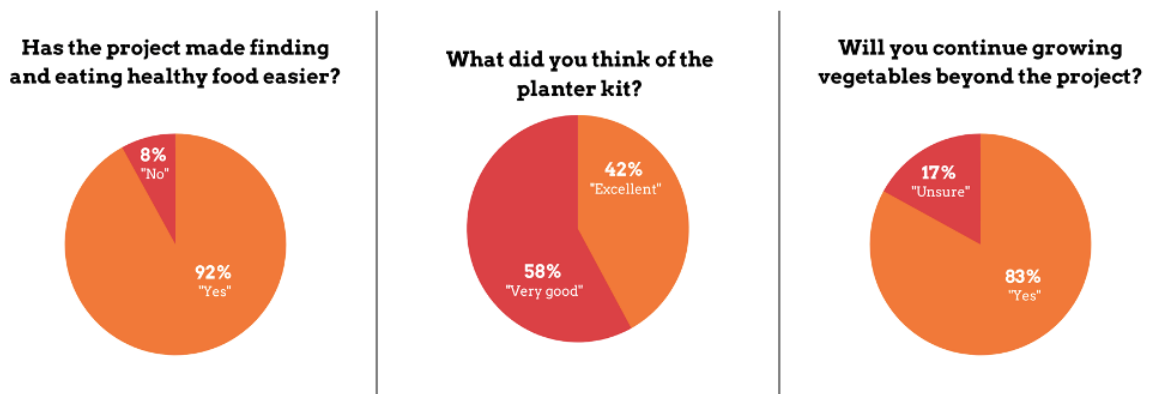
"Everything was there – maybe the weather which isn't under our control"

food. As the environment was brought up by respondents on multiple occasions, it indicates that the project encouraged discussion about the climate and its influence on daily life. This highlights that climate change is a key concern for recipients in this project.

5.3.2 Planter kit recipients (survey)

The following provides a summary of the feedback from 12 planter kit recipients who responded to the survey. It is important to note that the sample size is significantly smaller compared to the planter kit recipient interview sample. Consequently, this could affect the reliability of the following results.

Figure 2. Planter kit recipient survey data



Rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

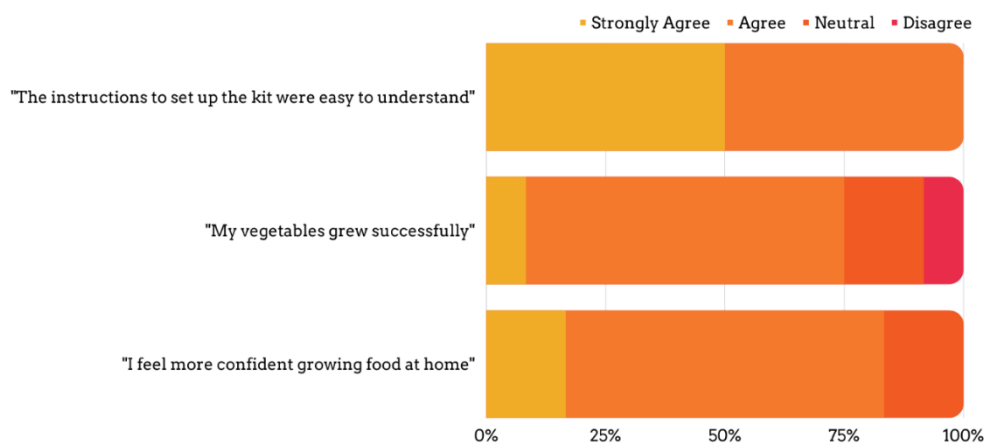
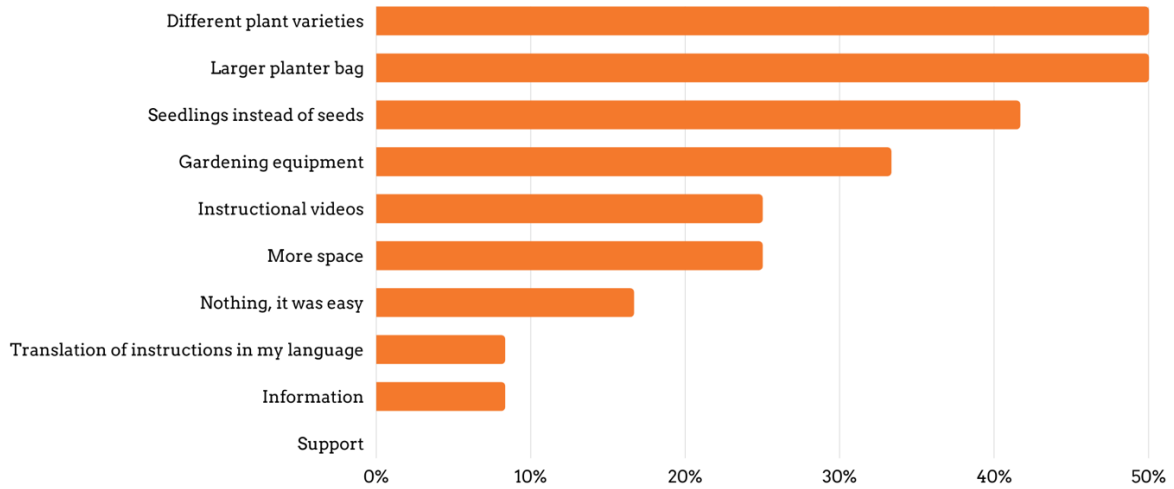


Figure 3.

What might have made it easier to grow your vegetables? Tick all that apply.

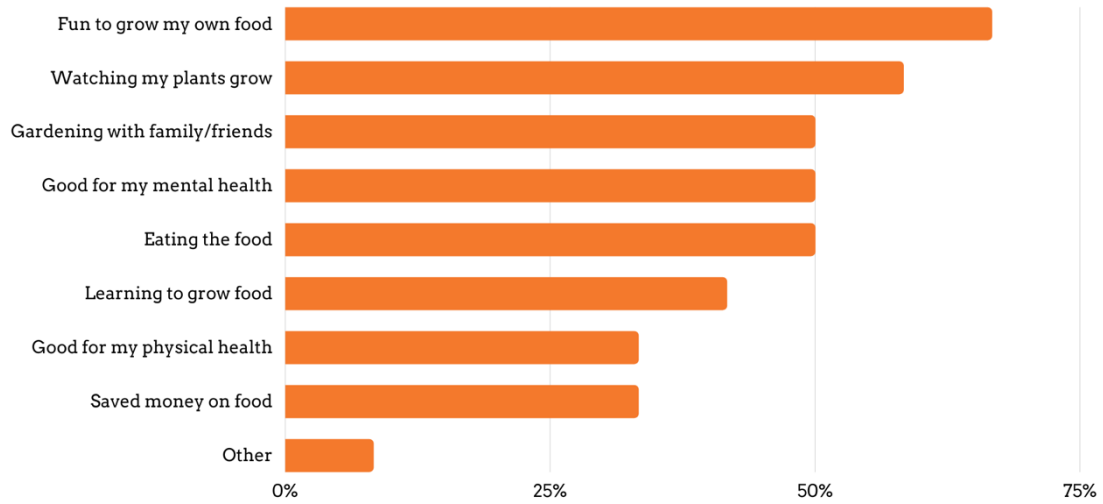


Respondents were asked about what might have made it easier for them to grow vegetables (Figure 3). It was reported that a larger grow bag (50%) and different plant varieties (50%) would have made it easier. Others stated that they needed more space (25%), gardening equipment such as stakes (33%), translated instructions in their language (8%), seedlings instead of seeds (42%) and more information (8%). Conversely, 17% found it easy to grow vegetables and had nothing to add. This differs from interview data where respondents largely had nothing to add, with only a few respondents commenting on potentially requiring more instructions related to the grow bag and gardening in general.



Figure 4.

What did you enjoy about being a part of this project? Tick all that apply.



Respondents were also asked on what they enjoyed about being a part of the project (Figure 4). Respondents reported that they enjoyed the project as they found it fun to grow their own food at home (67%), was good for their physical (33%) and mental (50%) health, were able to watch their plants grow (58%), saved money on food (33%), were able to eat their food grown at home (50%), learnt to grow food (42%), gardened with family/friends (50%), increased confidence to grow food at home (8%). This is similar to the findings from the recipient interviews as respondents also reported on gardening capacity as well as physical and mental health benefits.



5.3.3 Project partner (Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres) survey

The following provides a summary of the feedback received by the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres from the project partner survey. Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres who responded include; Oakgrove Community Centre, Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre, Noble Park Community Centre, Berwick Neighbourhood Centre, Balla Balla Community Centre, Hampton Park Community House, and Bunyip & District Community House.

Figure 5. Project partner survey data

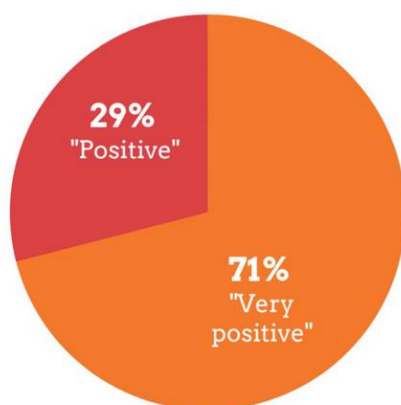
100%

Of Neighbourhood Houses said the project would be worth **repeating** in a new region or with new partners

100%

Said their Neighbourhood House would be **interested** in **collaborating** with enliven on future projects related to food security and gardening

Project partner experience



Describe how the project was received by community members

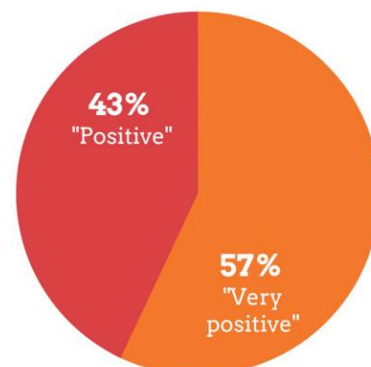
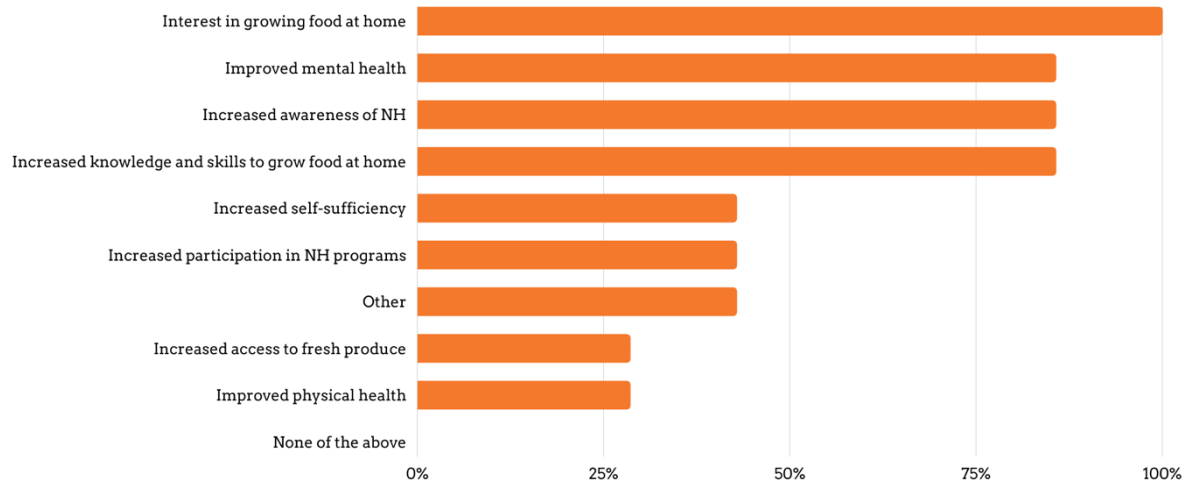


Figure 6.

Which of the following outcomes do you feel the project achieved for your community? Tick all that apply.



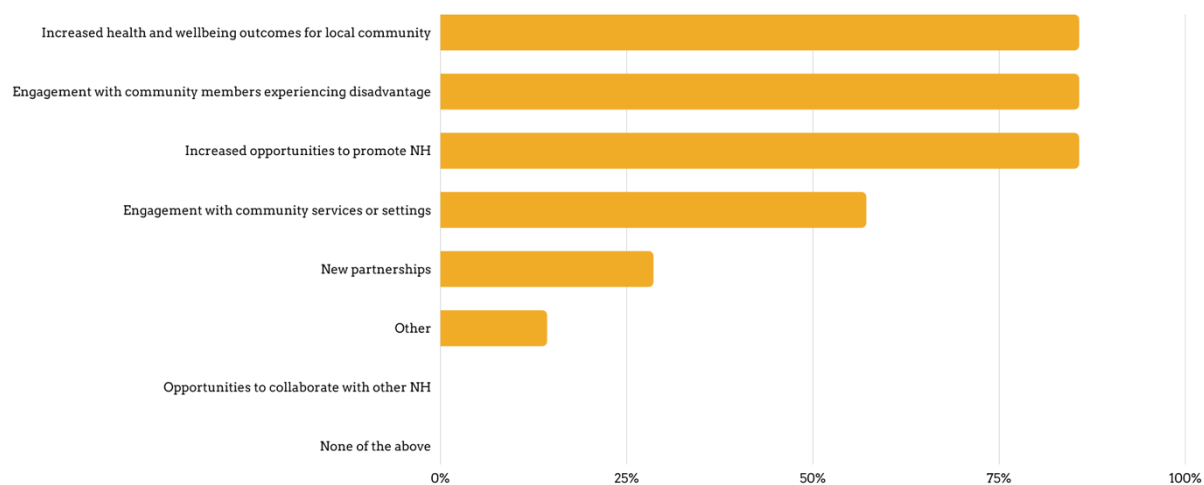
Three Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres responded with 'other' for the question outlined in Figure 6. These included the following comments:

- “Created a sense of community, it was a real positive given people were very down with COVID. A great discussion point”
- “Made connections with people in their local community which are ongoing, which increased mental wellbeing”
- Increased connections with family members. Many of the parents with children advised that they were able to use the kits to teach their children about growing produce from seeds, the responsibility of watering and feeding and that they could use their children’s excitement when the plants started to sprout and grow”



Figure 7.

Please select the top three outcomes for your Neighbourhood House as a result of being part of the project



One Neighbourhood House responded with 'other' for this question, writing "I now have greater connections with the people who previously only came for food relief. They are becoming more interested in other areas they can be involved with within the Community House."

When asked about potential outcomes for their community, three Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres noted that the project increased sustained social connections within the community and within families. Similarly, when discussing the outcomes for the Neighbourhood House itself, one project partner mentioned increased connections and opportunity for engagement with people who previously had only attended for food relief services.

Overall, when providing feedback on what worked well for the project, three Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres noted the delivery of the kits and enliven's help was beneficial. Furthermore, three other Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres commented on the fact that community members were grateful to receive the planter kits, while one Neighbourhood House mentioned community engagement and collaboration. Alternatively, when providing feedback on what could have been improved, two Neighbourhood Houses noted more funding to facilitate regular "meet-up" events with receivers of the planter kits. The other Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres outlined the timing of receiving the kits (2), more support to access people in public housing (1), and a variety of seeds as potential improvement (1).



When asked for feedback directly from the Neighbourhood House and Community Centre staff, project partners highlighted that staff enjoyed giving the kits out as it was an opportunity to engage with community members who were excited to be receiving the planter kits. Similarly, when asked for feedback from community members, project partners outlined that community members enjoyed being a part of the project and appreciated receiving the kits. Some Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres noted that community members wanted more information on where to get the kit's materials to continue their gardening journey, while others mentioned a variety of seeds or more activities (i.e., colouring activities and picture books for children) would be beneficial. One Neighbourhood House spoke positively about the opportunity to connect and build relationships with people living in rooming-houses. Likewise, when asked if their involvement in the Grow Together project led to the creation of any new opportunities or partnerships, Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres spoke about new connections with community members, as well as an Aged Care Home, the disability sector, and rooming-houses.

6. Project partner feedback

"Exceptional! The project really gave the community a boost just as they needed it, great for peoples mental health and to learn a new skill."

"The implementation of the project was efficient and the enjoyable. It allowed community connection and promotion of our programs."

"The project was an exciting opportunity to engage with people in the community who we have not been able to engage with before."

"We grew together as a community."

"A terrific way to engage a broad range of community members which not only enhanced their gardening knowledge but provided enormous benefits to their mental health. This project enabled people to connect with others which grew like their produce and continues on."

"What a fantastic way to build on community and family connections."

"[NH] in partnership with Enliven was able to encourage members to participate in the grow together project. This paved a way for the Centre to experience member's improvement in their mental wellbeing."

7. Strengths and Limitations

Some of the key strengths of the project design, implementation and evaluation include:

- Strong project partnerships with Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres across the region, from the beginning stages of project design, through implementation and evaluation.
- Partnership model included strong support of Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres working closely with DFFH to identify community members experiencing disadvantage

in their local areas.

- The process of identifying and connecting with community members experiencing disadvantage, as well as the identity of these community members, was confidential throughout the project (known only to DFFH and key Neighbourhood House and Community Centre staff), thereby avoiding stigma among planter kit recipients.
- enliven's strong reputation in the region and strengths in stakeholder engagement enabled project staff to successfully procure donations of planter kit materials from multiple donors, thereby significantly reducing the cost of planter kit materials. It is of note that this approach also required more staff time than originally budgeted (see Section 4: Project Budget for discussion).

These are some of the key limitations of the project design, implementation and evaluation:

- Recipients were limited to the finite resources provided by the project (e.g. choice of seedling/seeds)
- As timing of kit distribution to recipients was over the summer/Christmas period, this may have affected project success
- The project's reach was limited by the people identified by DFFH, as well as those who the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres could access.
- Only recipients who consented to being contacted were involved in the evaluation, limiting the breadth of responses received (noting the survey only received 12 responses, limiting reliability and extrapolation)

8. Recommendations

Listed below are learnings from this project recommended for potential replication of the project:

- Provide bigger grow bag. Some recipients found the plants grew too large for the grow bag that was provided, so either did not use the bag or had to transplant the plant to a bigger pot/garden bed.
- If possible, consult with community when determining choices of seedling/seed varieties. If project resources and logistical planning allow, give recipients the option to grow other types of vegetables/herbs.
- Increase publicity and get more volunteers on board to assist distribution of kits. Staff capacity was a challenge for some Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres during project implementation.
- Build into project design a way for recipients to access ongoing gardening support/expertise (especially how to restart their home garden should the provided materials initially not yield well).
- Consider distributing planter kits earlier in the year (e.g. spring) as opposed to summer. This enables plants have a better chance of survival due to a less intense climate and decreased risk of people travelling away from home (i.e. over the Christmas period).
- In project planning and timeline, take into account that project partner organisations may close over weekends, public holidays, Christmas and school holiday periods, impacting timing of kit delivery and distribution.
- Ensure principles of plain language and health literacy are used in the development of all information resources. This should include the use of simple and accurate imagery.

9. Conclusion

The Grow Together project aimed to increase community connection, participation in edible gardening, food sovereignty, and to promote the health and climate co-benefits associated with growing food. Utilising the innovative and strong partnerships model with local Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres, the project was able to distribute 700 planter kits to people experiencing disadvantage in Greater Dandenong, Casey, and Cardinia. When contacted, recipients of the kit had an overwhelmingly positive response to the project, indicating benefits to gardening capacity, food access, mental and physical health, community engagement, social connection, and environmental benefits. Likewise, project partners had a positive response indicating that the project was valuable for themselves and their community. Ultimately, the Grow Together project was successful in achieving its aims and promoting edible gardening in Melbourne's South East.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1. Recipient Resources

1.1 Grow Together 2 Booklet



Thank you for being part of the Grow Together program. Enliven Victoria and partners are proud to offer this program to community members in the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey, and Cardinia Shire.

We hope that you find this booklet useful to help you continue your food journey beyond the garden and into the kitchen. Please remember that this information is general and you should see your health professional if you have any concerns or questions about your health.

Happy growing!

enliven



Freezing Vegetables

Step 1: Prepare the vegetables. Chop large vegetables into smaller pieces. Wash vegetables very well.

Step 2: Blanch vegetables. Boil a large pot of water and add the vegetables. Bring the water back to a boil. Different vegetables require a different length of boiling time.

| Vegetable | Boiling time | Vegetable | Boiling time |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Artichoke hearts | 6 min | Cauliflower | 3 min |
| Asparagus | 2-4 min | Leafy greens | 1-2 min |
| Beans | 3 min | Okra | 2-3 min |
| Broccoli | 2 min | Peas in a pod | 2-3 min |
| Brussel sprouts | 3-5 min | Peas (shelled) | 1.5 min |
| | | Pumpkin | 3 min |

Step 3: Rinse, cool, and dry. After blanching the vegetables, drain and cool the vegetables by pouring them to a bowl of ice water. Cool the vegetables for as long as you blanched them.

Step 4: Pack vegetables. When vegetables are dry, pack your vegetables in zip lock freezer bags. Squeeze as much air out of the bag as possible before closing the bag.



Grow Together



Salt

Adding too much salt to food can make our blood pressure go up.

To help you reduce the amount of salt that you use in cooking, you could add herbs and spices such as:

- Oregano
- Turmeric
- Paprika
- Chilli
- Spring Onion
- Rosemary
- Cinnamon
- Black pepper
- Any other of your favourite herbs and spices



Grow Together



Fruit

Fruit gives us lots of different vitamins.

Adults need two servings of fruits a day. Be careful of having too much fruit because they have sugar in them which can make your sugar levels go up. Try to have different fruits every day, and choose fruits that are in season.



Grow Together



Re-growing vegetables

There are many common vegetables that you grow can re-grow from scraps. When cutting vegetables, you can use the leftover pieces to sprout fresh leaves. They will be ready to eat in just a few weeks!

Why should you re-grow vegetables?

- Reduces food waste
- Saves money on buying fresh produce
- Easy for beginners
- Fun for the kids

What vegetables can I re-grow?

Spring onion and leeks - keep the white part of the onion or leek with the roots. Place in a glass with water.

Lettuce - cut off the bottom of the lettuce. Place in small bowl of water.

Basil - cut the plant a few centimetres below the leaves. Place in a cup of water.

Mint - cut the plant a few centimetres below the leaves. Place in a cup of water.

Oregano - cut the plant a few centimetres below the leaves. Place in a cup of water.

Celery - cut off about 5cm off the bottom of the plant. Place in a small bowl of water.

Carrot - place the cut-off end in a shallow bowl of water. You can't regrow an actual carrot, but you can regrow the carrot leaves and add to salads or use to make pesto.

Bok Choy - cut off the bottom of the stalk. Place in a small bowl of water.



Grow Together



Re-growing vegetables (continued)

There are plenty more vegetables you can regrow.

The list below can be started in water but should be planted in soil for full growth.

Beetroot - Cut the top and plant in the garden. Pick the leaves for salads.

Red or white onion - Cut off the top and plant in the ground with the base.

of the onion in the soil. Pick the green shoots to use like a spring onion.

Garlic - Plant the whole clove into the garden. Pick the green shoots to use like garlic chives.

Turnip - Plant the whole turnip pointy side down. Pick the leaves for salad.

Radish - Plant the whole radish pointy side down. Pick the leaves for salad.

Rosemary - Cut a sprig and add plant in the garden.

Mint - Start as above in water and then transfer into the garden when roots appear.

Basil - Start as above in water and then transfer into the garden when roots appear.

Oregano - Start as above in water and then transfer into the garden when roots appear.

For more information on how to re-grow food scraps and vegetables, visit:

www.foodfromhome.org/how-to-guides/

Seasonal Produce Guide – Melbourne/VIC

FRUIT

| | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Apples | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Apricots | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Bananas | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Berries | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Cherries | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Figs | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Grapefruit | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Grapes | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Kiwifruit | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Lemons | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Limes | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Mandarins (Imperial) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Melons | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Oranges (Navel) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Oranges (Valencia) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Peaches | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Pears | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Plums | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Strawberries | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |

Seasonal Produce Guide – Melbourne/VIC

VEGETABLES

| | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Artichokes (Globe) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Artichokes (Jerusalem) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Asparagus | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Basil | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Beans | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Beans (Broad) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Beetroot | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Broccoli | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Brussel Sprouts | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Cabbage | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Capsicum | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Carrots | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Cauliflower | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Celery | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Chillies | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Corn | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Cucumbers | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Eggplant | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Leeks | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Lettuce | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Onions | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Parsley | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Parsnips | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Peas | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Peas (Snow) | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Potatoes | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Rhubarb | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Silverbeet | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Spinach | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Spring Onion | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Squash | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Sweet Potatoes | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Tomatoes | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Turnips | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| Zucchini | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |



Grow Together



Helpful herbs

Did you know that herbs can help you with many different types of illnesses and improve your health?



Rosemary can help soothe a sore throat



Basil can help you feel happier



Turmeric can relieve muscle and joint pain



Mint can help relieve stomach pain



Dill can help keep your stomach healthy



Parsley can reduce bloating



Cayenne pepper can help a blocked nose



Grow Together



Fluid

Fluid can help to keep your body healthy by:

- Helping with constipation
- Helping to flush out the kidneys
- Lower your chance of getting urinary tract infection or UTI

As we get older, our feeling of thirst reduces. This makes it important to remind ourselves to drink through the day. We need lots of fluid even in winter when the weather is cold.

Fluid does not just mean water, it can include:

- Water
- Milk
- Fruit juice
- Vegetable juice
- Coffee
- Tea
- Soup

Here's some tips to increase your fluid intake:

- Try to have a glass of fluid with each meal and snack.
- Leave a jug of water where it can be easily seen.
- Have a large glass of water with medications.
- Try to flavour water naturally by adding slices of lemon, orange or berries.



Grow Together

RECIPE Vegetable frittata

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp garlic, minced
- 1 red capsicum, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, grated
- 190g (1 bunch of 8 stems) broccolini (can replace with broccoli)
- 150g (1 cup peas)
- 6 eggs
- 2 tbsp milk
- 35g (1/2 cup) grated cheese
- 1 tsp dried oregano

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220c
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together the egg, milk, cheese, herbs and seasoning.
3. Heat oil in a fry pan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for approximately 5 mins. Add the capsicum and carrot and cook for a further minute. Add the broccolini and cook for a further minute. Stir in the peas.
4. Pour vegetables into the egg mixture and mix together.
5. Pour into a well-greased 9 inch square baking dish and bake in the oven for around 20 mins. Keep an eye on it, you want the middle to have a slight jiggle to it, or to be just set.
6. Allow to rest for 5 minutes and the inside will continue to cook.



Grow Together

RECIPE Tropical Smoothie

Ingredients

- 1/2 ripe banana, frozen, roughly chopped
- 1 mango cheek, frozen, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup strawberries
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- Pulp of 1 large passionfruit

Method

1. Place frozen fruit, pineapple and milk into a blender jug; blend until smooth.
 2. Pour into 2 serving glasses.
 3. Spoon pulp of half a passionfruit on top of each smoothie; serve immediately.
- Hint: Mango flesh and ripe peeled bananas can be frozen in ziplock bags for use in smoothies and fruit sorbet. Freeze for several hours or overnight before blending.*



Grow Together

RECIPE Easy cheesy dip

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup smooth low fat ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup low fat natural yoghurt
- 1 grated or crushed garlic clove
- Pepper
- 1/4 cup coriander
- 1/4 cup parsley

Method

1. Place herbs, spring onion and garlic into blender.
2. Blend for 30 seconds.
3. Add yoghurt and cheese and blend for another 30 seconds.
4. Serve with cut up vegetables like carrots, cucumber, celery, radish or capsicum.



Grow Together

Acknowledgements

Enliven Victoria would like to thank the following *Grow Together* partners:

- Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
- Springvale Neighbourhood House
- North Dandenong Neighbourhood House
- Bunyip & District Community House
- Hampton Park Community House
- Balla Balla Community Centre
- Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- Oakgrove Community Centre
- Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre
- Berwick Neighbourhood Centre
- Noble Park Community Centre

Funding support:

The *Grow Together* project was funded by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation's Reimagining Health Grants.

Enliven Victoria would also like to thank the following supporters for their generous donations:

- Seasol Australia
- Bunnings

enliven



1.2 Grow Together 2 Kit Instructions (Seedlings)



Your 'Grow Together' kit contains:



1



How to set up your planter kit:

1. Find a sunny spot outside to set up your planter kit. Your plants need 6-8 hours of sunlight each day.



2. Open the bag of potting mix and pour it into the planter bag.



3. Take your seedlings out of their containers.



2



How to set up your planter kit:

4. Put the seedlings into the soil. Make sure there is space between each plant, and that they are not too close to the edge of the bag.



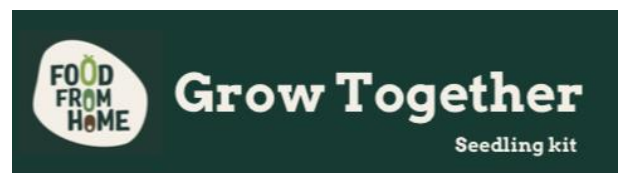
5. Mix 27ml of fertiliser (Seasol) with 3 litres of water into a watering can or jug.



6. Water your seedlings with the fertiliser and water mixture.



3



How to look after your planter kit:

7. Water your seedlings every day for three weeks. After 3 weeks, you can water them every second day.



8. Water your seedlings with the fertiliser mixture every 2 weeks.



9. Your seedlings will be ready to harvest in 8 - 12 weeks.



4



Other information:

- Be careful when touching potting mix. Wear a mask and gloves if you have them, and wash your hands with soap and water after setting up your planter kit.



- Store your fertiliser away from children, and in a cool, dark place. Wash your hands after use.



- When your seedlings grow bigger, they might need support to stay upright. You can use tall sticks, bamboo, stakes or trellis to support them.



5



Want to learn more about growing food at home?

- Download beginner-friendly resources:



- Join *Food from Home's* online community:



- Find your local community garden:

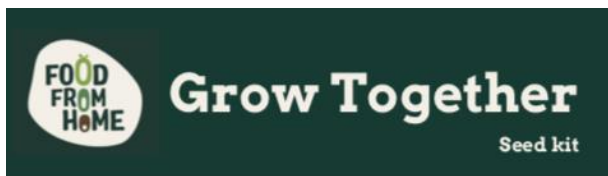


- Follow *Food from Home* on Facebook:



6

1.3 Grow Together 2 Kit Instructions (Seeds)



Your 'Grow Together' kit contains:



1 x bag of premium potting mix



1 x planter bag



1 x organic liquid fertiliser



Lettuce seeds



Spring onion seeds

1



How to set up your planter kit:

1. Find a sunny spot outside to set up your planter kit. Your plants need 6-8 hours of sunlight each day.



2. Open the bag of potting mix and pour it into the planter bag.



3. Place each seed into the soil, spaced out evenly. Cover the seeds with soil. Store your leftover seeds in an airtight container.



2



How to set up your planter kit:

4. Water the seeds. Your seeds will start to germinate (sprout) in around 7-10 days.



5. Once your seeds have germinated, you can fertilise your plants. Mix 27ml of fertiliser (Seasol) with 3 litres of water into a watering can or jug.



6. Water your plants with the fertiliser and water mixture.



3



How to look after your planter kit:

7. Water your plants every day for three weeks. After 3 weeks, you can water them every second day.



8. Water your plants with the fertiliser mixture every 2 weeks.



9. Your plants will be ready to harvest in 8 - 10 weeks.



4



Other information:

- Be careful when touching potting mix. Wear a mask and gloves if you have them, and wash your hands with soap and water after setting up your planter kit.



- Store your fertiliser away from children, and in a cool, dark place. Wash your hands after use.



- When your plants are ready to harvest, do not pull out the entire plant. You can cut or pinch off the stems or leaves you want to use near the base of the plant, and the plant will regrow new leaves and stems.



5



Want to learn more about growing food at home?

- Download beginner-friendly resources:



- Join Food from Home's online community:



- Find your local community garden:



- Follow Food from Home on Facebook:



6

Appendix 2. Neighbourhood House and Community Centre form

Grow Together

Below are a series of questions relating to your organisations involvement in the Grow Together project. Please complete this form prior to 5pm on Monday 6th of September.

enlivenvic@gmail.com (not shared) [Switch account](#)

*** Required**

Name of neighbourhood house *

Your answer _____

Address *

Your answer _____

Phone number *

Your answer _____

Email address *

Your answer _____

Contact person *

Your answer _____

Approximately how many planter kits would you like to receive? *

Your answer _____

Will you be engaging any priority settings to distribute planter kits to? Please select from below: *

- Public housing
- Supported residential services
- Youth residential services
- Caravan parks
- Rooming houses
- None
- Other: _____

Please provide information about the name or location of any priority settings you are engaging e.g. name of the service/site, suburb, organisation (if relevant)

Your answer _____

Approximately how many of your total planter kits will be distributed to these priority settings? *

Your answer _____

How do you plan on distributing the planter kits?

Deliver them to individuals/families

Have individuals and families collect the kits from your neighbourhood house

A combination of both

Other: _____

Would your neighbourhood house benefit from support to distribute planter kits? NB: enliven cannot guarantee assistance, however will try to accommodate requests where possible.

Volunteers to assist on collection days

Volunteers to assist with delivering kits to individuals/families

Transport to assist with delivering kits to individuals/families

Other: _____

Is your Neighbourhood House able to receive your kits from Enliven on one (or both) of the following dates? Please keep in mind you will need to distribute the kits within 2 days of receiving them.

Tuesday November 9th

Tuesday November 23rd

Neither of this dates are possible

Please indicate which option you would prefer.

We would like to receive all of our planter kits on one day

We would like to receive our planter kits across two days (two weeks apart)

Is there a local community group or program that you would like to involve in the project?

Sewing group (e.g. to support sewing planter bags)

Gardening group (e.g. to support growing seedlings)

Other: _____

Is there anything else you would like enliven to know or follow up?

Your answer _____

Appendix 3. Workshop findings summary

Grow Together

Scaling-up sustainable food solutions for families and young people in Melbourne's South East.
July 2021 - December 2024

Funded through VicHealth's 'Nurturing Health Growth'

Agenda

1. What We Know So Far
2. Hopes & Fears
3. Project Goals
4. Defining Success
5. Strengths, Assets & Opportunities
6. Collaboration Agreements
7. Risks
8. Wrap Up

1 The project

Grow Together
Scaling-up sustainable food solutions for individuals, families and young people in Melbourne's South East.

Background Information

The Grow Together pilot project was implemented in 2020 by [grow-together.org.au](#) (GTT). The objective of the project has been to further funding from VicHealth to enable the project to be a sustained initiative.

The project will focus on supporting food security outcomes for 700 community members in the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey, and Cardinia Shire local government areas.

Helpful Links

[Grow Together Pilot 2020](#)
[Grow Together Pilot Evaluation Report](#)
[Grow Together Community Resources](#)

Key Partners

Local Government
Ballarua Community Centre
DFVH
Egmont
Egmont Neighbourhood Learning Centre
Hampton Park Community House
Shepparton Neighbourhood Centre

Community
Springvale Neighbourhood House
North Dandenong Neighbourhood House
Banyu & Djalik Community House
Cabrera Community Centre
Shepparton Neighbourhood Centre

Project Goals

Outcomes: 700 people who are individuals, families & young people experiencing healthy and/or food security.

80% of families who 2020 will be educated on growing produce and families living in our region's food-poor neighbourhoods will have improved food security outcomes, or related public health, supported residential services, or related public.

Outcomes

Overall goal of the pilot to have a positive impact:

- Increased food security
- Improved mental health
- Improved physical health
- Improved social connections
- Improved financial resilience
- Improved food skills
- Improved food access
- Improved food knowledge
- Improved food confidence
- Improved food safety
- Improved food quality
- Improved food variety
- Improved food availability
- Improved food affordability
- Improved food sustainability
- Improved food security

Timeline

July: Project initiation
August-September: Planning and setup
October: Rollout of activities
November: Review and evaluation
December-January: Report completion

Actions

Other ideas

2 Hopes & Fears

Hopes: [Stickers]

Fears: [Stickers]

3 Project Goals

Who: Individuals, families and young people in OSD, City of Casey, Cardinia Shire

What: Increasing food security through growing food at home

When/Where: City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey, Cardinia Shire

Why: Food security is a growing issue in Melbourne's South East

4 Defining Success

Future Headlines: [Stickers]

Create Measurable Success Metrics: [Stickers]

5 Strengths, Assets & Opportunities

Strengths: [Stickers]

Assets: [Stickers]

Opportunities: [Stickers]

6 Collaboration Agreements

Next Steps (August - September): [Stickers]

7 Risks

[Stickers]

WRAP UP

What do you need from partners? [Stickers]

What do you need from DFFHT? [Stickers]

Appendix 4. Project partner resources

Appendix 4.1 Project partner planter kit contents checklist



Ensure the 'Grow Together' kit goes out with the following elements:

1



1 x bag of premium potting mix

2



1 x planter bag

3



1 x organic liquid fertiliser

4



Lettuce and spring onion seed packets

OR (depending on seed or seedling kit)



Cucumber and tomato seedlings

5



Grow Together booklet

6



Instruction sheet (either seed or seedling)



Remember to get all recipients to complete the evaluation consent form!

Appendix 4.2 Evaluation consent form to provide planter kit recipients

Evaluation Consent Form

You have received a *Grow Together planter kit* to grow food at home.

We would like to understand how this project has made a difference to people in our community. We would like to talk to people who have a 'Grow Together kit' in around 3 months. A staff member or student from enliven Victoria can call or email you. We would ask you questions about gardening and if you have enjoyed your planter kit.

Please use this form to tell us if you would like to be contacted or not.

Please tick one.

I agree to be contacted in 3-4 months

or

I do not agree to be contacted in 3-4 months

If you agree to be contacted, how would you like us to contact you?

Phone _____

or

Email _____

You can also change your mind at any time about being involved.

If you have any questions about this form, you can contact info@enliven.org.au

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Please return this form to:

- Your local Neighbourhood House
- Scan and email to info@enliven.org.au, or
- Mail to Enliven Victoria, Suite 4/31 Robinson Street, Dandenong 3175

The logo for 'enliven' features the word in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The 'en' is in dark blue, 'li' is in orange, and 'ven' is in dark blue.

Appendix 4.3 Project partner evaluation requirements



Neighbourhood Houses will need to collect the following information during distribution of the planter kits. This information will need to be returned to enliven by November 30th.

- Number of planter kits distributed (total)
- Number of planter kits distributed to priority settings (total)
- Which priority settings were engaged?
- Postcodes of all planter kit recipients.
- Actual (or estimated) number of planter kit recipients (%) that were from refugee or migrant background.
- Actual (or estimated) number of planter kit recipients (%) that were young people (25 years and under) or families with children.
- Number of neighbourhood house staff and volunteers involved in the project.
- Returned consent forms for planter kit recipients who consent to be contacted in February for evaluation activities (telephone interview).
- 2 –3 photos of project activities (staff, volunteers, delivery activities, recipients) along with photo consent forms.

Appendix 4.4 Photography consent form

Photography Consent Form

Publication/project: Grow Together

Full name: _____

Parent/guardian full name (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for participating in this project for enliven.

This form seeks your consent to allow enliven to use photographs and/or video taken of you and/or your child at this event for future promotion of enliven, its functions and activities.

This may include use for internal and external publications, educational purposes, promotions, marketing and social media material, and on the internet.

enliven agrees not to provide photographs and/or video to any other external third parties for their use unless with your consent, or if authorised by law. enliven will retain the photographs and/or video. Photographs and/or video are managed in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles contained in the Information Privacy Act 2000.

Please note you are entitled at any time to withdraw your consent by contacting enliven's Director of Programs and Communications on 9791 1768 or via email info@enliven.org.au. If you do withdraw your consent, enliven agrees not to further use the photographs and/or video and it will be removed from the image library. In the event of the closure of enliven, the image library will be destroyed.

I agree to enliven using this photograph and/or video for the purposes outlined above.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The logo for 'enliven' features the word in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The 'en' is in a dark blue color, the 'l' is in a light blue color, and the 'iven' is in an orange color.

Appendix 5. Project partner survey

1. Name of your organisation
2. Overall, please describe your experience as a project partner in the Grow Together project
3. Overall, please describe how the project was received by the community members who received planter kits
4. Which of the following outcomes do you feel the project achieved for your community? (Tick all that apply)
5. Please select the top three outcomes for your neighbourhood house as a result of being part of this project
6. What worked well?
7. What could have been improved?
8. Was there any feedback on the project received from neighbourhood house staff and/or volunteers involved that you would like to note?
9. Was there any feedback on the project received from settings or community members receiving the planter kits that would like to note?
10. Please provide a quote that summarises your organisation's experience of the Grow Together project (1-2 sentences)
11. Did your involvement in the Grow Together project lead to the creation of any new opportunities, projects, partnerships, or funding to continue your work in the food security and gardening space?
12. Do you have any photos not previously provided, that enliven can use for the Grow Together evaluation report?
13. We would like to produce a short video about the Grow Together project. Do you have any community members who received planter kits who may have stories to include in the video?
14. In your opinion, would the Grow Together project be worth repeating in a new region/new partners?
15. Would your neighbourhood house be interested in collaborating with enliven on future projects relating to food security and edible gardening?
16. Would you be happy for enliven Victoria to utilise the information you have provided as a case study within the final evaluation report? This would involve naming your organisation
17. Any other comments, questions or feedback for enliven or VicHealth?

Appendix 6. Recipient interview question guide

1. Have you grown food at home before receiving the planter kit?
2. Did the planter kit you receive have seeds or seedlings?
3. What did you think of the planter kit?
4. Were the instructions to set up your planter kit easy to understand?
5. Were you able to grow your vegetables?
6. What might have made it easier to grow the vegetables?
7. Do you feel more confident growing food at home? Why is that?
8. Will you keep growing vegetables?
9. What was the name of the Neighbourhood House that gave you the planter kit? [Ascertain whether they are aware of the NH as some kits were delivered. Flows onto next question]
10. Have you been involved in any groups or activities at this Neighbourhood House since you got your planter kit?
11. What did you enjoy about being a part of this project?
12. Has this project made finding and eating healthy food easier for you?
13. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this project?

Appendix 7. Recipient survey

1. What was the name of the Neighbourhood House that gave you the planter kit?
2. Did the planter kit you received have seeds or seedlings (small plants)?
3. Had you grown food at home before receiving the planter kit?
4. What did you think of the planter kit?
5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| The instructions to set up the planter kit were easy to understand | | | | | |
| My vegetables grew successfully | | | | | |
| I feel more confident growing food at home | | | | | |

6. What might have made it easier to grow vegetables? (Tick all that apply)
7. Will you keep growing vegetables?
8. Have you become involved in any new/additional Neighbourhood House groups or activities since you got your planter kit?
9. What did you enjoy about being a part of this project? Tick all that apply.
10. Has this project made finding and eating healthy food easier for you?
11. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this project?