

# TOWARDS A GREENER CAMPUS

## What experience do UCL students and staff have of growing their own food/plants?

LAURIE ALLAN, MARIYAM FAWZIK, EDDA KARNEJEVEC, NINA TODRES - UCL ANTHROPOLOGY

### 1. OUR AIMS

- 🌱 We aimed to determine what experience UCL staff and students have of growing their own food/plants through interviews.
- 🌱 We intended to find out the reasons as to why UCL students/staff did or did not grow plants.
- 🌱 The data gathered would then be used to generate ideas for a greener UCL campus, thus relating positive personal experiences of the UCL body to their everyday space.
- 🌱 We wanted to explore the theme of sustainable food growth and its application in urban spaces, such as the UCL campus.

### 2. WHAT WE DID

- 🥕 Data was gathered through the conduction of semi-structured interviews.
- 🥕 We created an interview guide and each adapted it according to our interview.
- 🥕 The semi-structured interview style encompasses a fluid approach - the guide was used as a prompt to direct conversation.
- 🥕 The interview guide included the following themes and topics: Environment, Finances, Medicine, Wellbeing and Sustainability.
- 🥕 The data shown encompasses findings across 4 different interviews conducted on UCL students and staff.
- 🥕 Interviewees (students and staff) were recruited through convenience and social networking.
- 🥕 Information sheets and consent forms were given to interviewees prior to all interviews.

Planting  
Collective  
Engaging  
Interactive  
Unifying  
UCL  
Urban  
Community Space Building  
Edible  
Sustainability  
Therapeutic

[Aims for a greener UCL campus]

Sustainability  
Connection  
Pride Nostalgia Sustenance  
Therapeutic  
Values Rehabilitation Green-spaces  
Memory Ancestry Health  
Family Mother Mindfulness  
Aesthetics Heritage  
Childhood neutral  
Carbon Environment Planet  
Wellbeing Beauty Homeopathy  
Culture

[Reasons for plant growing ]

### 3. OUR FINDINGS

- 🍅 All interviewees had some sort of experience of growing plants. Experiences with plants were often tied to the environment, mindfulness, childhood nostalgia and cultural/spiritual practices. Plants were often used for medicinal and/or aesthetic reasons.
- 🍅 Some interviewees chose not to grow plants due to time restraints and maintenance effort. However, all of them appreciated the therapeutic effect of plants, artificial or not.
- 🍅 Interviewees said that UCL performed well in terms of recycling, however, food sustainability initiatives were drastically under publicised.
- 🍅 Interviewees used words such as 'artificial', 'sterile' and 'cold' to describe our current campus. All interviewees agreed that they would like to see more green spaces at UCL so staff and students have access to therapeutic spaces.

### 4. WHAT UCL CAN DO

- 🍅 Increase and further promote engagement in existing green spaces. Students and staff should be encouraged to engage through collectively maintaining the garden and utilising the edible plants currently growing in the anthropology department.
- 🍅 Create interactive green spaces to reflect green spaces in the home and establish more 'edible' garden spaces on campus.
- 🍅 Establish specified communal green spaces, which would unify the UCL body, building on mutual effort and appreciation to create a comforting environment.
- 🍅 Promote more sustainability-based societies and initiatives to students through available medias, such as email, social media and newsletters.
- 🍅 Further research is needed in how to effectively promote sustainability.

***"I would love to some see fresh herbs... It would create a sense of community and bring people together"***