Working with Communities to Improve Well-Being

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‘it is not for people like us’

‘It’s not something people in our community would think of doing’

‘Cost is important. If you’re struggling to pay the bills, you’re hardly going to pay to go to a garden’

‘This is an institution which has been founded on the principle of diversity and you should link the diversity of the site with the diversity of the people you’re trying to engage with’
There's no point in preaching about environmental sustainability to only 5% of the population, it has to be to 100% and that means everybody...so we've got to find new ways of reaching people who don’t naturally come here (David Rae, 2012)
‘Change inhibitors’ and ‘forces for change’ towards botanic gardens having a greater social role and responsibility

**Change inhibitors**

- Historical context
- Lack of capacity & skills
- Workforce with limited diversity
- Collection focused / inward looking
- Management Hierarchy
- Distant from priorities of governing bodies
- Difference limited
- Limited funding
- Lack of evidence of impact on users
- Distant from wider policy context
- Policies of climate change

**SOCIAL ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY**

**Forces for change**

- Society’s disengagement from parks
- Public funding and accountability
- Social inclusion, wellbeing, community cohesion
- Involvement in wider networks
- Climate change as a broader concern
- Social justice, equality, rights as a global concern
- Professional passion
- BGC

**Towards a New Social Purpose**

Redefining the role of botanic gardens
Growing a gardens’ social role means botanic gardens developing their commitment to working with their local and global communities on common issues of social and environmental importance, for the enduring benefit of those communities, the gardens themselves, and towards a sustainable future for our planet.
Growing along with the Botanic Garden

Urban Food initiatives

The Institute of Trans-Disciplinary Health Sciences & Technology

Citi Entrepreneurs: encouraging farm-based nurseries

Village Botanists
“Plants make the air fresher”
Wuhan Botanical Garden, China

"Community Greening Program"
Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, Australia

"Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Herbal Plant Products for Healthcare by Communities" Maseno University Botanic Garden, Kenya

"The Blessing Baskets Project in Madagascar",
Missouri Botanical Garden, US