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**Allotments & Community Gardens Survey Findings**

One hundred and eighty-eight people responded to the survey conducted by Abergavenny Town Council and Llantilio Pertholey Community Council. 47% of respondents were aged over 60 years and only 3% below 30 years old. The majority, 68% of respondents, were female.

Only 8% of respondents did not grow any fruit and vegetables in 2020, leaving 92% of respondents growing fruit and vegetables in an allotment (17%), garden (71%), shared space (6%) or windowsills/pots/balcony (11%). From those that responded, a higher percentage of over 60s grow on an allotment (24%) than under 60s (11%)

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes, on an allotment | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Yes, in my garden, | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Yes, in a shared space | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Yes on a balcony/windowsill/pots only | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | No | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | | |

Three-quarters of respondents consider themselves to be an experienced gardener, with the percentage rising to 87% in the over 60 category and decreasing to 64% in the under 60s.

Respondents that did not grow any fruit and vegetables in 2020 were asked what prevents them from growing food. It should be noted that this question should only have been answered by those respondents who had not grown any fruit and vegetables ie 15 respondents however 63 people responded so this may reflect an unmet demand for additional growing space in addition to people’s existing growing space or a misreading of the survey. The main reason given for not growing food is lack of a garden or allotment (75%), too busy (19%), don’t know how (13%), lack of money (2%), not physically able (3%) or not interested (2%). The proportion of respondents answering ‘too busy’ and ‘don’t know how’ increases in the under 60 age group – 26% and 14% respectively.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Lack of garden or allotment | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Too busy | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Don’t know how | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Lack of money for seeds, tools etc | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Not physically able | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | Not interested, don’t want to. | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | | |

When asked whether establishing allotments or community garden spaces is a good idea, 69% replied ‘yes I would want to have a plot or get involved’ and 30% replied ‘yes for other people but not for me’. Only 1% replied ‘no the money could be better spent’.

54% of respondents would require a small allotment plot or raised bed. The survey did not offer any explanation of the size of a small plot nor did it differentiate between a small plot or raised bed so this figure can be broken down further. 32% of respondents would want a large allotment and 48% would want a garden to share with other people and share produce. Respondents in the over 60 age group were less likely to want a large plot (24%) compared to slightly more in the under 60s age group (39%).

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| --- | --- | --- |
| I would want a large allotment plot on an allotment site | |  | | --- | |  | |
| I would want a small allotment plot or raised beds | |  | | --- | |  | |
| I would want to garden with other people and share produce. | |  | | --- | |  | |

The reasons given for wanting to get involved in growing food was healthy exercise & healthy food (75%), environmental and social concern (54%), company and social activity (50%) and save money and have cheap food for my family (27%). Environmental concern was higher in the under 60s (59%) than in over 60s (48%). Interestingly, company and social activity was lower in the over 60s (47%) than in the under 60s (53%).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Save money and have cheap food for my household | |  | | --- | |  | |
| Healthy exercise and healthy food. | |  | | --- | |  | |
| Company and social activity | |  | | --- | |  | |
| Environmental and social concern | |  | | --- | |  | |
| Other (please specify): | |  | | --- | |  | |
|  | |

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments on reasons for wanting to grow and also more general comments were invited. These included:

* opportunities for bulk buying and seed exchange,
* setting up a scheme where people can share their garden space,
* donating surplus produce, using small areas of scrubland for growing,
* importance of a range of plot sizes to suit different needs,
* involving young people and
* promoting permaculture and forest gardening.

**Next Steps**

Abergavenny Town Council and Llantilio Pertholey Community Council will be taking the following steps to increase the amount of growing space in Abergavenny and Llantilio Pertholey areas.

* ***To pilot a scheme where people with large gardens can share their gardens with people that would like more growing space***
* ***To share these findings with public landowners and seek to identify possible growing sites***
* ***Seek advice and assistance from various national organisations who have helped other areas develop new growing space***