

## UN adopts new Global Goals, charting sustainable development for people and planet by 2030



Source: UN in collaboration with Project Everyone

### Energy Garden supporting The United Nations Sustainability Goals

In September 2015 the UN formally adopted these Sustainability Goals (SDG's). The SDG's call for a united effort to achieve a shared set of targets and indicators.

Energy Garden has been working tirelessly to lead by example and is contributing to 14 out of 17 of these SDG's. It doesn't matter how big or small the company that you work for is, what matters is, that we can all contribute to our environment and our local community and in doing so we can make a difference.

Being outside and working a garden contributes to good health and well-being through exercise, through tackling loneliness and strengthening our communities. The station gardens make the place look good and fill the station space with greenery. Seeing the colour green and engagement in green-spaces has been scientifically identified as having a positive relationship to better mental health and well-being, contributing to less mental distress, reduced anxiety levels and limits the likelihood of depression.

Promoting and growing food in our Energy Gardens, including squash, hops, herbs, tomatoes, apples, plums, strawberries and pears, allows for this food to be shared by the local Energy Garden community who have grown it or taken to local food kitchens to be used. These actions at small scale tackle the no poverty and zero hunger UN Sustainability Goals.

Energy Garden is helping with education through it's apprenticeship and mentoring programmes, by engaging young people in solar power workshops and in it's station gardens through people learning about plants and pollinators. By knowing more about how to grow and where our fruit and vegetables come from we can also learn about good diet. Further, by supporting communities to come together and own green energy systems, Energy Garden and Repowering become facilitators in supporting communities to take action and empower themselves for better living standards.

Planting a garden naturally helps rainfall water to be absorbed by plants and trees that essentially filter it and hold it in the soil and their systems before releasing it back into the wider ecosystem. Plants and trees are themselves supporting a multitude of life forms and are ecosystems in their own right. They also absorb heat and create shade, keeping our city cooler and help minimise the urban heat island effect which occurs when buildings and pavements absorb heat during the daytime and then further release that heat at night time keeping the city artificially warmer.

This unwanted heat is a problem for the very young and the elder who are unable to control their body temperature as easily or have heart and respiratory conditions. This is important because a cooler city reduces the likelihood of Accident and Emergency admissions and fatalities through over heating.

Making clean energy projects affordable for communities that potentially otherwise wouldn't have access to that option is what Repowering does best and is supporting Energy Garden to collect rainwater and use solar power on railway station sites for phone charging points or to power the watering hose.

Decent work and economic growth is being facilitated through positive business ethics that help communities to own renewable energy in schemes. Of course green energy and infrastructure is a focus for investment and innovation as we try and use nature based solutions and innovative green technology to mitigate climate change and create healthier cities.

Improving awareness about green energy, green infrastructure and nature based solutions aims to start conversation about everyone's responsibility for our environment and how we can be more sustainable for the future in cities.

Reducing inequality by creating access to more green spaces on the daily commute makes for better city environments. More pleasant and flourishing green environments reduce crime, increase well-being and help the environment with air quality, reduced urban heat island effect and flooding prevention for everyone. The food produced by Energy Garden is shared and the education given in school workshops is focused on more deprived areas, sharing knowledge and creating opportunities in less advantaged places.

Sustainable cities happen when a city is designed with consideration for environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts and has a resilient habitat for it's existing population, without compromising the ability of future generations to experience the same. Resilience to temperature variety and increasing pollution is helped by planting and growing trees, flowers and plants. Resilient cities need cohesive communities.

Responsible consumption and production in the city is really important. Energy Garden and Repowering are prompting people to maybe think differently and are supporting people who are already thinking differently to actually participate more. Well-kept spaces prompt people to not drop litter and by default look after their environment more.

Climate action is supported through more plants, trees and foliage in the gardens at our railway stations. This supports more ecosystems and biodiversity and makes our cities more resilient to fluctuations in heat and healthier more pleasant places to be.

Life on land is about protecting and supporting ecosystems, halting biodiversity loss and reversing land degradation. In urban settings like London there are many opportunities to capture and reinvigorate even the smallest pieces of land in the public domain. There is evidence to suggest that exposure to city pollutants, noise,

sedentary lifestyle and raised stress levels increase the risk for dementia and cognitive decline. TfL is a large landowner in the city and has lots of non-spaces, including those at train stations, which Energy Garden is planting and caring for with the community.

#### References:

##### Sustainable Development Goals

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