

**The Rt. Hon Michael Gove,
Secretary of State for Levelling Up,
Housing and Communities,
Department for Levelling Up,
Housing and Communities,
2 Marsham Street, London,
SW1P 4DF**



11th October 2023

Dear Mr Gove,

We hope that this letter finds you in good health.

We are writing to you today about a solution that can help tackle four of the most pressing issues in our society - food insecurity, the cost of living crisis, the climate and nature emergency, and mental and physical health. We believe the government can play a pivotal role by supporting councils to provide allotments, enabling citizens to exercise their statutory rights as outlined in the Allotment Act of 1908. This must happen alongside increasing long-term funding, powers and flexibility for councils and metro mayors so that they can deliver climate and nature goals and better involve local people in policy design and delivery.

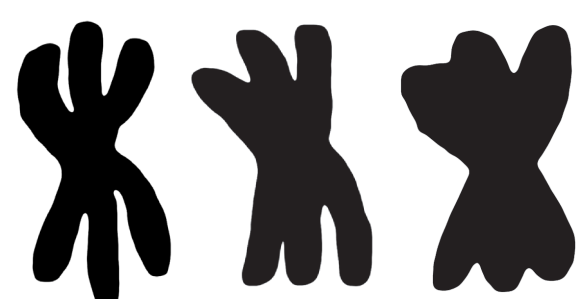
Our research shows there are currently 174,183¹ applications on allotment waiting lists across Great Britain, a figure which has more than doubled in a decade. Each allotment has the potential to feed four individuals. This is a huge opportunity to address food insecurity and reduce reliance on environmentally harmful industrial agriculture. If all requested allotments were granted, they would have the potential, collectively, to feed cities the size of Nottingham and Leicester, helping families to alleviate the cost of living.

Furthermore, supporting allotment initiatives would help to enhance citizens' overall wellbeing, which is stated as a fundamental aspect of your vision for levelling up our society. Numerous studies have shown that allotmenting improves mental and physical health. They provide space for people to connect with nature, which reduces stress, and they help foster a sense of community. Allotments also help to increase biodiversity in cities.

In light of the existing legislation, the Allotment Act of 1908, which enshrines the right to allotments, we respectfully request that you consider supporting councils to fulfil their obligations under this statute. In the context of government cuts to local authorities, it is vital sufficient funding is also provided for them to do this.

We are willing to provide any additional information to advance this proposal. We believe that allotment provision can make significant progress towards creating a more sustainable and equitable future for all - with appropriate support and leadership from the government. Like the artwork we displayed at your offices today - this paper contains organic Grazing Rye seeds (*Secale cereale*) suitable for planting in October and acting as green manure to improve the fertility of the soil.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.



**JC Niala, Julia Utreras, Sam Skinner
supported by Greenpeace**

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¹ Full allotment waiting list data set available on request from the Greenpeace press office.