

BEHIND HOMEGROWN

Brian McCabe; Leitrim farming background

STARTING SMALL

One patch; one adult; one season

INSURANCE

Host checks cover before growing begins

A simple Irish idea

Brian McCabe is building Homegrown.ie. He comes from a farming background in Leitrim and has seen people looking for growing space while suitable corners of land go unused.

Homegrown sits between a community growing project and a simple marketplace: help the right people find each other, agree the ground rules and keep the owner in control.

It is an independent, self-funded project. The first listings are free. It is not a council or charity scheme.

What we want to try first

- One clearly marked patch, often around 20-50 m2.
- One named adult grower to begin with.
- A trial of up to six months; no automatic renewal.
- Free, paid or a share of produce - agreed directly.
- The exact address stays private until both sides want to meet.

What could work

- A sunny garden corner, field edge, parish or community site.
- A safe way in during agreed hours and a plan for water.
- A patch that will not disturb privacy, work or future plans.
- Clear boundaries and an honest talk about known hazards.

Not for the first pilot

- Accommodation, living on the land or overnight access.
- Protected ground or busy working and security-sensitive areas.
- Land due for development or offered without owner permission.
- Events, selling on site, livestock or powered machinery.
- Children's projects during this first adult-only trial.

Before the first seed goes in

- Make sure the person offering the land has permission to do so.
- Tell the home, farm or land insurer exactly what is planned, including any payment or produce, and ask for the answer in writing.
- Walk the patch together: route in, water, boundaries, hazards and out-of-bounds areas.
- Agree visiting times, upkeep, tools, sheds, compost, chemicals, guests, pets and tidying up.
- Put the arrangement in a short written seasonal agreement.

It is still your land

- You do not have to accept anyone we suggest.
- You choose the person, patch, route in and visiting times.
- You set the rules for water, tools, sheds, guests and pets.
- You agree any payment or produce share directly.
- You can stop access for a serious safety problem.

A short written agreement

The grower gets permission to use one agreed patch for one agreed season. Legally, this is intended to be a seasonal licence - not a tenancy. The owner keeps access and control.

Write down the dates, notice, house rules and what happens to crops and tools at the end. Either side can end it with the agreed notice; access can stop immediately for a serious hazard.

Homegrown can provide a starter draft, but it is not a solicitor or a party to the agreement.

What Homegrown will - and will not - do

We keep exact locations private, ask practical questions and introduce people only when both say yes.

We cannot promise a match, vet or Garda-vet people, guarantee safety, provide insurance yet, take rent or deposits, or make the agreement for either side.

An enquiry from an organisation does not make it a formal partner.

Have a patch in mind?

Tell us roughly where it is and what questions you have. It commits you to nothing.

homegrown.ie/open-your-space.html