Fruit, vegetables, herbs and even chickens look set to become a key feature of the campus landscape thanks to a new Student’s Union (LUSU) project involving Lancaster geographers. Following the success of the existing Eco Hub – a dedicated space for staff and student growing managed by Darren Axe, a Lancaster geography graduate who now works for LUSU to support environmental volunteering, the plan is to expand the number of spaces on campus devoted to edible landscaping and enable more students to get involved in growing and eating fresh local produce. Geography lecturers Andy Folkard and Rebecca Whittle are also planning to integrate the initiative into Geography research and teaching so that students can enjoy hands-on experience of growing, studying and thinking about food in their daily lives during their time with us.

Giving students the opportunity to explore food projects at first hand is something that Rebecca Whittle is particularly passionate about. Having joined LEC as a new lecturer just this year, Beccy is particularly keen to develop research and teaching on new approaches to getting people involved in growing food in urban areas – for example through community and guerrilla gardening, new forms of low-impact vertical farming, garden share schemes and the development of urban foraging. Clearly, the new edible campus concept is a way of bringing these issues to life in a way that the campus community can benefit from directly. For example, geography students will be able to use the edible campus project as a basis for coursework and dissertation projects on food-related issues – as well as getting their hands dirty through practical volunteering sessions, of course!