



Sustainable Food City Lancaster: Action plan

Our vision: a thriving local food system that is healthy, resilient and fair.

Our mission:

- Develop a collaborative cross-sector food partnership that meets quarterly to strategically oversee the development and delivery of an action plan to bring 'good' food back to the table of all in Lancaster District.
- Convene working groups around five key issues to develop and deliver the agreed Action Plan: food poverty and access; sustainable food economy and transforming local food procurement; reducing the ecological footprint of food; increasing access to healthy and sustainable food; community food skills.
- Harness local passion and expertise for sustainable, resilient and fair food in order to help it spread and grow so that more people, places and organizations within our District can access and experience the benefits that come from being part of a strong and resilient food sector.
- Assist in identifying funding and help that attracts investment for projects that can support us in working towards our vision of a thriving local food system that is healthy, resilient and fair.

Our aims:

- Local food economy and procurement (see pages 2 & 3)
- Food and environment (see pages 4 & 5)
- Food & Health (see pages 6 & 7)
- Food Access (see page 8)
- Food Skills (see page 9 & 10)

Local food economy and procurement

What we hope to achieve:

PROMOTION

- Raise awareness of where to buy/ source local and organic products and why they should be bought (local food directory, education materials, food columns, seasonal markets, food festivals, press work etc.)
- Develop awareness of local and sustainable food and the importance of sourcing it.
- Campaign to change consumer behaviour (from consumer to citizen), to increase demand for sustainable and local food.
- Cultivate 'good customers' e.g. those who won't mind a month without salad when a crop gets a pest infestation.

PRODUCTION

- Increase access to land.
- Explore: What volume of food can be produced locally? And prioritise what we should grow and produce.
- Create a ring of small producers around the urban core that are commercially viable.
- Local producers not completely reliant on volunteers.
- More is produced locally, replacing imports/ wholesale. (Coordination encourages complementary growing.)
- Explore the dilemma posed between local and certified organic. Support more local growers in becoming organic?
- Collect and compost rotten veg etc. that is then used in local food production.
- Food producers paid a living wage.
- Local food production increased dramatically.

DISTRIBUTION

- All locally produced food gets to market.
- Access to local food for those who want to buy it: improved stock and distribution.
- A practical, joined up approach to getting produce to market is developed.
- Create a local food distribution hub.
- Local food underpinning hospitality and statutory provision.
- Low carbon delivery system- e bike?
- Fresh food that hasn't travelled loads of miles is easily accessible and not just to those who are affluent (how can we make it more affordable so a diverse range of people can access local and organic food?)
- A number of organisations selling organic food- both in shops and on markets.
- Obligation for organisations (universities, schools, hospitals, prisons etc) to source a minimum amount of local and sustainable produce. Could be imposed in building regulations/ planning as in local jobs.
- Shared selling amongst producers and combined producer delivery rounds.
- Preston model adopted in Lancaster District.
- Local food market.
- Marketing and distribution support/ development.
- Waste veg composted and distributed locally (logistics issue).
- Shared cold storage facilities
- Seasonal gluts processed (adding value) and distributed locally.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- System in place to support businesses development.
- Pathway in place for getting new local food businesses up and running and commercially viable!

TRAINING

- Training in hospitals, schools, colleges etc on how to cook local food.
- Train businesses, producers etc in marketing and business planning etc.

Our priorities and aims

Short term aims (by 2020)

- A working group focused around local food economy and procurement meets quarterly to take forwards actions around this theme and reports back to a quarterly food partnership group.
- Create a booklet – Ethical Purchasing guidebook- on how to make educated choices around food.
- LESS to trial one regular charter market stall that sells local produce. Run on a rotational basis by local producers.
- Jess Davies (Lancs Uni) to facilitate a discussion between Lancaster University and key Preston Model people and people interested in the model locally.
- Create a directory of institutions that buy local food/ want to buy local food.
- Research mapping project: what is grown where and what surplus doesn't get to market (when and why). Lancaster University to support this.
- Research: local institutions to explore current contracts and regulations re buying and procurement criteria to understand what prevents them from procuring local food at present. Lancaster University to support this.
- Build links between local growers, local consumers, institutions etc...
- Training programme for producers etc

Long term aims

- Develop a ring of small producers around the District that are mission driven and commercially viable and supply local organisations.
- Local food procurement by local institutions
- FarmStart model implemented in Lancaster District, supporting a new generation of regenerative farmers.
- Paid post supports the removal of barriers retail<>distribution<>production

Food and environment

What we hope to achieve:

SUPPORT SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

- Veg widely available and bought.
- Seasonal local food becomes the norm.
- Develop 'the right customer' - those that accept seasonal fluctuations (months with no salad).
- Increased movement for veg and vegan food (reduced meat consumption).
- No food waste- surplus distributed.
- Support local producers in transitioning to low impact farming e.g. organic.
- Ethical Lifestyle training (International Permaculture Education Network).

FOOD PRODUCTION METHODS

- Inputs for production locally sourced, and outputs locally distributed.
- Growing methods are regenerative (build soil, increase genetic and biological diversity etc).
- Growing methods adapt to climate change.

RESOURCE CAPTURE AND DISTRIBUTION

- Rain water capture and distribution locally.
- Grey water capture and distribution locally.
- Composting: composting loos, veg waste composted and distributed locally.

LAND USE

- More space around the city and district allocated to food production (increasing local production and reducing food miles), including allotments.
- FarmStart project: support new entries in sustainable farming.
- Urban agriculture: allotments, backyard growing, pollinator corridors.

SUPPLY

- Develop local food supply chains to reduce food miles.
- Match demand: supply to sell out, farmers collaborate to meet demand, enable access to surplus for food poverty network.
- Support community growing initiatives: claver hill, scotch quarry, eco hub, fork to fork, incredible edible, wildscapes permaculture...

ZERO WASTE

- Market saturation.
- Supply to sell out.
- No single use plastic by local business and consumers.
- Supply and demand better linked (producers, retailers, surplus, people in food poverty).
- Compost food scraps from business and establish community composting.
- Anaerobic digestion plant waste (build on Lancaster Uni expertise).
- Community fridges, food clubs, community meals distribute surplus food.
- Great council recycling policy.

- Local enterprises established that utilise 'waste' streams e.g. mushroom growing on coffee grounds, logs made from coffee grounds, preserve and saurkraut making from seasonal gluts/ veg 'waste'.

Our priorities and aims

Short term aims (by 2020)

- A working group focused on the ecological footprint of our local food system meets every 6 weeks to take forward actions and reports back to quarterly food partnership meetings.
- Centre for Global Eco Innovation project- audit local food businesses (plastic, food waste, water use). What do businesses do now? Why? Support in reducing impacts.
- Local enterprises established that utilise current waste streams (mushroom growing on coffee grounds, preserve making from surplus).
- Pickling clubs (Morecambe food club)
- Zero waste emporium established on Yorkshire Street, Morecambe
- Join zero carbon cities working group and speak at September launch event.
- Organise a series of training sessions around sustainable living and food.

Long term aims

- FarmStart model established, supporting regenerative growing locally.
- Coordinated composting: household food waste collection, compost loos, community composting.
- To become an established zero carbon city by 2030 or before with active council/ community involvement/ relationship.

Food & Health

What we hope to achieve:

Make it easier to eat, cook, grow and socialise together: connecting the issues of social isolation, health issues (obesity), sustainable food cultures, skills sharing, healthy eating etc.

- Urban planning encourages communal eating (larger tables!) and allocates more green space for community growing.
- Food court created: long tables for communal eating, healthy and sustainable food available. Can we create one in Lancaster and Morecambe that is easily accessible? How about in the empty BHS building on the high street? *A food court links to the food economy theme.*
- Work places re-adopt the lunch break, and provide spaces for communal eating and cooking.
- Improve community cohesion: Make group eating easy.

Develop a healthier food culture

- Create alternative ways for accessing & promoting healthy food (good burgers for bikers!)
- Change people's desires: tastiest food = healthy food.
- Create time for food: re-instate the lunch hour!
- Food is seen as more than energy, people take pride in local food, processed foods die and alternatives are cheaper/ more affordable.
- Facilitate behaviour change: increase access to sustainable and healthy food; make it more affordable; raise awareness of sustainable and healthy food; challenge attitudes towards healthy and sustainable food.

Education/ awareness raising around healthy food

- Reduced numbers of people going to GPs and hospitals over diet-related ill health.
- Raised awareness of where to buy/ access healthy food.
- Increased knowledge and skills to cook healthy food through working with schools, community kitchens, adult cooking classes etc.
- People taking control of their own health.
- Food social culture developed: good food outlet replaces MacDonald's as a place for teenagers to hang out.

Healthy food accessible and affordable

- No food deserts
- Greater access to affordable fresh, healthy food.
- No need for food banks.
- Healthier high streets
- Public health outcomes achieved: reduced cardio vascular disease, reduced diabetes, reduced dental cavities, more people eating fruit and veg.
- Tasty, healthy food available everywhere: hospitals, prison, schools, cafes, restaurants, on the high street etc.
- The RLI runs smaller kitchens supplied by local food producers.

Our priorities and aims

Short term aims (by 2020)

- Establish a strategic working group to take forward work around the theme of healthy eating.
- Run an annual health festival that brings local partners together to create spaces for conversations around healthy food and eating.
- Raise awareness of where to access healthy (and tasty) food via events, the local food directory and weekly food columns.

Long term aims

- Create more spaces to eat, cook and socialise together. Specific ideas for doing this included: creating a Lancaster food court in the empty BHS building, and creating a communal kitchen. If we prioritise this, the rest will follow...
- Increase access to healthy food on the high street (all retailers pledge to serve a % of local and healthy food).
- Support the development of a food culture where 'healthy' is the default. (Get businesses to pledge to recreate a lunch hour, retailers to always make sure a healthy (and tasty!) option is available.
- Develop local food pride (health and food festivals etc).

Food Access: Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food.

What we hope to achieve:

- Joined-up planning and working that takes things beyond the food bank.
- Data collection that provides a measurement of food insecurity.
- Action plan for tackling food poverty with agreed outcomes.
- Networked provision of holiday hunger support (where identified as a need).
- Food clubs in every neighbourhood.
- Healthy food available to all (widely available and affordable).
- Easier access to 'waste' food.
- All year round access to food for those in need.
- Reduction in number of people experiencing food poverty.
- Change in welfare policy/ laws both nationally and locally.
- Statutory responsibility to address right to food.

Our priorities and aims

Short term aims (by 2020)

- Strategic food poverty action group formalised and meets regularly. City and county council needs to budget for a full time food poverty worker. (Put less stress on volunteers and create paid posts to drive this work forwards.)
- Accurate mapping of current needs and resources.
- List of current schemes/ groups/ distribution.

Long term aims

- Sharing of good practice and successes.
- Route developed: crises and food bank to long term solution.
- Food clubs established in schools
- List of current schemes/ groups/ distribution.
- Depot/ transport needs met.
- Collaborative action around holiday hunger that has shared publicity.

Food Skills

What we hope to achieve:

RESOURCES

- Community fridges, drying and storage spaces for produce.
- Pop up resource for sale and swap of produce with no barriers.
- Composting dump areas for council collection as in refuse.
- Shared resources: land, tools, seeds, communal kitchen with processing facilities.
- Food cooking lessons
- All council mown land allocated as community growing spaces
- Fruit tree planting in all communities with no barriers.
- Network/ space for bringing community groups together to cook together, share resources and skills and share best practice.
- Mechanism developed to link university researchers with community research needs.

VISIBLE DEMOS

- Food preparation demos in town, shops, churches, schools, part of food festival
- Drop in area for learning basic cooking skills.
- School facilities, grounds and buildings open and available to grow/ cook/ teach/ store/ distribute produce.
- Schools become more involved with the healthy food agenda.
- Teachers and students growing, cooking and eating together in schools.
- Food growing, processing and cooking vocational training opportunities.
- Children understand what is healthy and want to learn how to cook.
- People coming together to share food and eliminate food poverty.
- Council resources used to advertise current experts/ land projects to improve access.
- Government agencies point people to communities that will help them eat healthy food.
- Paid food growing experts in every community, advertised and supported via city council to visit allotments and gardens involved in incredible edible spaces.
- Every cafe/ shop has posters stating what is locally produced, grown, organic...
- 'Science shops' - better knowledge exchange!
- Work placements to facilitate community land projects.

SKILLS

- Develop skills in adding value to grown produce, processing, selling, marketing, accounting, self employment, insurance.
- How can we better facilitate skills and resource sharing? Look to other places for inspiration/ best practice. Create a community centre/ food hub? How finance this?

Our priorities and aims

Short term aims (by 2020)

- Establish a working group that facilitates skill and resource sharing - including spaces for storing and processing surplus food.

Long term aims

- There is no shortage of food skills locally, but the 'stuff around the edges' is important and needs support developing e.g. tax advice, marketing, removing barriers (legislation etc) for producers to engage (getting produce to market, sharing surplus, shared facilities for processing, access to land).
- Create links and mechanisms that connect our local universities with community research needs (to facilitate meaningful and useful research).