

The Faces Behind Our Food

Interview with Bruce Crowther, The FIG Tree

Interviewer: Desna Mackenzie

Johnny Bean also present

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Time (minutes.seconds)	Interview transcript
0.00	<p>Interviewer in bold, Bruce in normal type Interjections in [square brackets], other sounds and notes in (these brackets)</p> <p>Yeah. OK. Thanks for having us round today Bruce and talking to us a bit about The FIG Tree and Fairtrade chocolate. And I can repeat any of that if you (laughter) need me to because it was a long question wasn't it.</p>
0.21	<p>Yeah, absolutely. Well myself um er I used to be a vet, I qualified as a vet in Liverpool, um er, and then I got involved with Oxfam after Live Aid in nineteen eighty-five. Er campaigned with Oxfam for many years throughout the nineties. When I came to Garstang we set up the Oxfam group in Garstang. Started campaigning a lot on fair trade, that became quite a er a bit of an important issue for us. And in those days it was very difficult, we were banging our head against a brick wall, we weren't getting very far at all.</p>
0.50	<p>And then in the year two thousand we had this idea to invite everybody to a meal where we gave them a meal of fair trade products and local produce. Very important to us that farmers in this country also suffer from not getting a fair price for their goods too. So we invited people to a meal of local produce and fair trade, and we asked them not to give us any money, we didn't want money. We gave them a meal and when they felt a bit bad that they want, because people want to give something when they come to a meal like that, we asked them to sign a pledge form saying that they would support buying fair trade products and local produce when they could. The local angle is very a, very important for us too.</p>
1.27	<p>So we did that and we ended up getting everybody signing the pledge form. We ended up getting ninety-five percent of all the businesses, the Council, er the Council came on later, I have to be honest. Erm, we got all the schools, the churches, erm, all signing this form. So then we had this idea that we had in effect created a fair trade town. So in April of two thousand at a public meeting the people of Garstang, not the Council, declared Garstang the first Fairtrade town in the world. This immediately opened up a can of worms. We had people coming from Australia, from Japan, to see what was going on. This first Fairtrade town in the world – what does it mean? We didn't know at that time what it meant, but we worked with the Fairtrade Foundation – we set in what are not the five goals that make a Fairtrade town. And we were officially declared in two thousand and one.</p>

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2.14	We've set the ball rolling then for Fairtrade towns all across the country. It then became popular right across the world, and cutting a very long story short we now have one thousand eight hundred and thirty Fairtrade towns in twenty-eight countries across the globe. Recently this year we held our annual Fairtrade towns conference in Lebanon, believe it or not, where they have nine Fairtrade villages despite all the problems that they have, and all the refugee problems that they have with the Syrians and so forth, they still have nine Fairtrade towns and they hosted the international conference. Which I think says a lot for what Fairtrade towns represents.
2.49	Erm, The FIG Tree, back at the same time we became the Fairtrade town, we also did a project that linked erm, Garstang and nearby Lancaster – so Lancaster, this is when Lancaster became very important - with Ghana. So we were already working in chocolate, we found chocolate was a good issue to promote fair trade with, going into schools and getting the children interested in chocolate. Erm, and we were working with Divine, Divine Chocolate Company, the Fairtrade chocolate company. Erm, so we already had the link with Ghana there because Divine is owned by the cocoa farmers erm, in Ghana. Er, and we wanted another link, so we looked at the Lancaster slave trade. Lancaster's the fourth biggest slave trade port in the UK.
3.31	Er there so we had an old trading system that was actually bad for people in Ghana and a modern trading system, fair trade, that was good for people in Ghana. So at first it was very simplistic. We took a group of young kids over to Ghana as part of that project, er, we met some friends in a cocoa farming community called New Koforidua. And that started a link with those people there. And then the, the link with the slave trade became stronger and stronger. We realised that our campaign on fair trade today had similarities with the campaign to abolish the fair, er the slave trade two hundred years ago. So their message was quite clear – it's simply immoral for people to be allowed to suffer to provide us with luxuries like tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar at a cheap price, that's exactly the same message we're doing today.
4.17	You have cocoa farmers in Ghana growing cocoa for our chocolate that don't even have access to clean drinking water. And yet, you know, erm, er that's still happening today. So it's not the slave trade, but we still have people suffering to give us cheap chocolate [yeah]. So that was a message we, we, we stuck with, with. We had lots of people coming to Garstang to see the first Fair trade town. So we opened up the FIG Tree in two thousand and eleven to host these visits. Erm, it started to become quite difficult for me to do my vetting job as well as this, so I ended up giving up the vetting job when we set up the FIG Tree. Erm, I then took on a position of Fairtrade towns ambassador internationally. Going round supporting Fairtrade towns across the globe, which was absolutely fantastic. I went to Japan, USA, places like Cameroon which have started Fairtrade towns. I mean, it's quite extraordinary (cough) you know, how it's grabbed peoples' imaginations.
5.10	Erm, and the FIG Tree was there really to host people coming to Garstang. We were here for three years. Sadly, I have to say we don't have a very progressive

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	council in Garstang and eventually the place we rented off the council, we were paying them to rent it, eventually we couldn't renew our lease [mmm]. And we got a bit fed up, really. We didn't feel we were welcome here, to be honest, in the first Fairtrade town. Fantastic what had happened in Garstang, but it wasn't carrying on, certainly through the council. So we decided to up shop and move to Lancaster, which was quite appropriate because we were doing a lot then with the Heritage Lottery Fund. We had lots of projects [when, when was this that you (inaudible)] around Lancaster.
5.48	This was two thousand and fourteen we closed in Garstang [right right], and then we set up in St John's church in March of two thousand and fifteen, so last year. It was slow. We had to take a massive back step because what we'd built up in Garstang was fabulous, erm and we had to go back again and start up again. But, we were building something up and then of course we were hit by the flood in December [mmm]. So, we had to leave there. Erm, the building was owned by Churches Conservation Trust, so we didn't have problems with having to sort the building out, that was their problem. But we didn't have a home.
6.20	So we tried to carry on. I'm glad to say the Heritage Lottery Fund project we were able to continue. They said as long as you carry on with your heritage around Lancaster slave trade and you do produce these materials, which we are producing, and find a home for it at some stage, which is what we're busy trying to do now, erm, then you can carry the project on. We had an extension to that erm, and that now finishes in March of next year, erm when we have a Georgian weekend planned for Lancaster. So that's something else.
6.50	Erm, and then we started finding we needed an income, so when we were in The FIG Tree. Our chocolate workshops erm, with schools, we got better at making chocolate. So then when we set up the FIG Tree in St Johns we started selling it retail, and then this year I had the idea that we could sell it wholesale. So now we make our Bean to Bar chocolate, which is what I'm doing today, and er we sell it to the Single Step on Penny Street in Lancaster, who wholesale it for us. Erm, it's going very well, so now I'm very busy because we only make very small batches, as you can see, you know, the amount that we're making at the moment is actually very, very small indeed. Erm, er, so, it's trouble meeting demand, so we're busy making chocolate for Christmas now.
7.35	How many people are involved in this? Is it just you, or do you have other volunteers?
7.39	Erm, I mean, it it's captured peoples imagination. Erm, Fairtrade towns did, erm obviously chocolate does. They say nine out of ten people like chocolate, the tenth person always lies, it's very popular. Erm, but we did lots of other things as well, I mean, we had the heritage project, so people who were interested in St Johns church, or were interested in Lancaster's history. Er we have great supporters people like Melinda Elder, a renowned historian in in in Lancaster. It's grabbed everybody's attention from all ages, all backgrounds. It's really quite remarkable. Erm, we worked, I mean, we tried to target more disadvantaged

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	groups, erm, but we do erm really get everybody on board. So, we, we had a great team of volunteers in Garstang, when we moved to Lancaster we lost some of those, but we soon built up an even bigger team in Lancaster. Erm, course we get a turnover of students erm who come and join us so it's really quite incredible.
8.32	Erm, er, I'm so glad to say that it, it's not one type of people that we get on board, we get a complete mixture. And we learn from them. I mean, we always say with our workshops. Erm, I call it the Roald Dahl school of education because we teach the children through chocolate and Roald Dahl always had a problem with schools, but he didn't, he loved chocolate. And he always said that, you know, the children should learn about chocolate. And what we do, we teach maths, we teach geography, we teach global citizenship, by getting them to make chocolate from bean to bar. It's a fantastic way, the kids just love it, and they listen. Er and what I usually say is that we don't teach the kids, we learn together. Er, I'm not a teacher, so I've learned a lot from the kids as well.
9.16	And, most importantly the kids go away and I go away motivated. Feeling that, you can change this world. So, again we look at the abolition of the slave trade, those pioneers, and it wasn't just Wilberforce. To be honest I get fed up of everybody going on about Wilberforce. He was the politician, very important, but it wasn't him, it wasn't about him. It was about the Quakers particularly who pioneered the [inaudible], people on the street, and most importantly, which is not often recognised, women. On the streets, in places like Lancaster where, at a time when they didn't even have a vote, they weren't even allowed into a meeting place to hold a discussion or a debate, and yet they're on the streets, getting petitions signed, getting erm, boycotting sugar, er a hundred years or more before the suffragette movement, these women were doing this at a time when they didn't have a vote.
10.09	So, I often say to our young girls particularly, if they could do that when they didn't even have any power what on earth can you do now? How you can change the world. You know, we can do so much more now. So the kids go away motivated, feeling. You know, I ask them is there anything wrong with this world today, you know, erm. Because we look at the slave trade, it's obviously wrong. People fail to see what's wrong with the world today. I hope in two hundred years' time they'll look back at us and see those mistakes that we're making today. But, we get our children to say is there anything today that's wrong, and if there is, don't be afraid to try and change it. [mm]
10.45	So, I mean, would you say you've dedicated your life to fairly traded chocolate? And, and however you answer that, what started the interest and what continues to drive it? I mean, I think you've just referred to some motivating factors, but is there anything else...
11.00	Y..Yeah, this, I get asked this question all the time (laughs) – what what what motivates you. Erm, erm, I mean, one I have dedicated my life to fair trade, er er not not just to chocolate, although now it's becoming chocolate, erm very much so. But, I love it – I mean, I've gone from being a vet to a chocolatier. Erm, I've

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	got no regrets, er it's fabulous. If I can make a living, and that's the hard part at the moment, it's not easier to make a living as a chocolatier, erm, certainly as a social enterprise, a social entrepreneur chocolatier, erm, as it is to make a living out of a vet, I have to be honest. So, that's the difficulty, is getting ourselves off the feet and actually making a living out of it so that we can actually, you know, do it twenty four hours and twenty four seven, erm.
11.40	What motivates me. It goes back to Live Aid, er the time of Live Aid, erm Bob Geldof didn't just raise all that money for Live Aid. He suddenly made people understand that poverty was about. And I learned from Oxfam, I went to an Oxfam workshop, that a child dies every three seconds from poverty. That was nineteen eighty-five. It's still true today. Now what's worse about that statistic – is it's preventable, it's man-made. It's not due to hurricanes or due to natural disasters. It's the fact that the trading system that we have, the way the world is built up is actually causing that to happen. And it's a legacy of the slave trade, the imbalance of power that we have today, it's all that, and that's what – I've been on this massive journey and I've learnt all that. And I want our kids – not just kids but adults too – to be on the same journey to learn that. Because when you suddenly think that a child dies every three seconds from poverty and its man-made, I then throw the question back and say, well, why is everybody not up in arms about this? Why are we all not trying to stop this? To me, it's the greatest injustice in the world today. And we all should be doing something, and we all can, even if it's just buying fair trade chocolate. It's very simple.
12.52	Thank you, yeah. Ok, so can you tell me a bit about what goes into making your chocolate bars. Could you talk through the whole process maybe, starting with the farm, i...? [Yeah] (inaudible) okay.
13.04	Yeah, it's a, it's a long process [is it] which again, I hope people really appreciate, that erm it's not easy. We should be paying more for chocolate, erm, real chocolate as well because there's an awful lot of cheap chocolate on the market, erm, and they cut corners. So real chocolate, I mean, once it's grown, the chocolate we use w..., it's our friends. So the, what's in this melanger now, a man called Frederick has grown these beans. In the conservatory, we'll get some photos, we have the, the beans erm, as we get them. But, they're grown in Ghana. The farmer doesn't just grow the beans, and I say just, but that's a big thing in itself. But they also do a process called fermentation. So once the beans are harvested they cut open the pod, the beans are put into...onto leaves and they're covered with banana leaves and they're fermented – that means turning the sugar into alcohol.
13.51	They don't want the alcohol, that flows into the ground, but it changes the flavour of the beans. And that's a very skilled process, in fact, the quality of the <i>final</i> product of chocolate relies very much on what the farmer's done in the middle of the jungle in Ghana in that process. Er, and people don't really appreciate that. Erm, and then they're put onto racks to dry and then that's the point when they're dried they come to this country for big companies, or ourselves, to make into chocolate. So that's the farmer's bit, which is very important. They work is very very hard, like I say, sometimes they don't even have access to clean drinking

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	water or education or healthcare.
14.29	What we do, the first thing we do, we roast them. Erm, again that's another critical process, you have to roast the beans, beans are made up of about fifty percent fat, what's called cocoa butter. So you roast the beans to release the flavour again. And if you roast them too much you will burn them and, you know, destroy the flavour. So that's the first thing we do, we roast them. Then you have to do the awful laborious process, which we still do by hand, of taking the shells off each single bean. That is incredibly long. It's quite enjoyable, but now I'm totally sick of it, so we really do need to mechanise that process. Erm, er, but again it's quite difficult. In the big factories they have massive big machines, to do it small scale is quite difficult.
15.10	And I'm just gonna to point out at this moment that you do all of this in your own [yeah, all, yeah] ordinary kitchen. [Yeah...]
15.15	I was up late last night doing the de-husking for the chocolate that we have today, because I realised we had to get the photographs today. So, it, and it's a long process, it takes hours and hours. Erm, er, so then once you've de-husked them you have the, what's called the cocoa nib, which is the black central bit. I can show you all these, again you can get photographs. Erm, and then we, we, er, traditionally, if you go back to the Aztecs, they would grind them out on a stone and make them into a paste. We use a grinder, so we do, use, use some mechanics there, we don't use a metate stone, I'm glad to say. Erm, er, and we grind them down into a paste.
15.50	And then what we do we put them into this machine, which is the machine you can hear whizzing around, er which is called a melanger. And the cocoa paste goes in there, and this has got two big stones it grinds it down into fine pieces. And then we add the ingredients into the melanger. Everything's ground down to save the, the grinder from having to do too much work. So we add the ingredients, we add the sugar, so this is soya milk alternative chocolate for Single Step, er there's a lot of vegans there, so we make soy. So that we will add um, milk, soya milk powder, erm, sugar and cocoa butter. So we're adding that bit by bit so it doesn't clog up. It's a very slow process again, so while we're doing that we're doing the rest of the chocolate making as well.
16.34	Er, so then it, and then it stays in once you've added all the ingredients, it's then in the melanger for about, erm, thirty-six hours, er, for...thirty-six to forty-eight hours. So, it's, it's, and we have to keep it going, make sure it doesn't stop, even in the middle of the night. So I was up at five o'clock last night in the morning to make sure it wasn't stopped. So you have to make sure it doesn't stop or else again it'll go gloopy, you have to rescue it. So then when that's finished, you then take it and put it into the bain-marie, so this is then moves onto our second lot, this is dark chocolate that we have in the bain-marie at the moment. Erm, and then you have to temper that chocolate, which again is a difficult process, quite skilful. Almost an art rather than a science, to be honest. And I'm still learning this one, I mean, I've learned this, I've learned a tremendous amount, but I'm still learning every single day.

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<p>17.20</p>	<p>So you have to temper the chocolate, and then when you've tempered the chocolate you put it into the moulds, which we have here. You can see that's our Christmas mould, it's our newest addition, for Christmas. Erm, and you put it into the moulds, and then it's set, and then the chocolate's turned out and then that's it, you just have to package it. Again all the packaging and the labelling, it's all done by hand [mhm]. So that's why, some people when they first come to our chocolate when they go to Single Step, they say, well, it's quite expensive. Well, we have a lovely girl, who c... was going to come today, a la..a girl called Reem who said that to me on a stall, so I started to tell her how we make it. And then she was so keen she started coming and making chocolate with us. And then she put something on Facebook and says now I know why it's so expensive.</p>
<p>18.00</p>	<p>Erm, but, if you're gonna to pay everybody what they deserve, and I have to say at the moment, we're not commercially viable. For the time I put in, it's not commercially viable. Erm, we want to eventually, erm in fact, what we're trying to do now is to raise the money to buy premises, erm in, in or around Lancaster, to actually set up a chocolate factory. Erm, and then actually have workshops in the chocolate factory. A chocolate house? Because by god Lancaster needs a chocolate house. Almost every city around the UK has a chocolate house, and York has about three or four. And I, I, I was brought up, my parents were from Yorkshire and my brothers and sisters from Lancashire, so I was brought up in the war of the roses, and, and I can't believe that we, we let York do so much (laughs) and Lancaster does so little.</p>
<p>18.45</p>	<p>So I really think we need a chocolate house. So, we want to set up a chocolate house where we can again, bring the kids in, they can learn about chocolate, they can see chocolate being made, and we can sell it bean to bar, and do all the wonderful stuff. And, all we want to do is make a living, we don't want to be get rich from it, we just want to make a living, because at the moment we're not commercially viable and we have to be commercially viable.</p>
<p>19.09</p>	<p>So how does your chocolate supply chain differ from that of a non fairly traded chocolate bar. So, uh, for example, a Mars Bar, what's the, what's the difference in the supply chain.</p>
<p>19.19</p>	<p>Well, there's, there's two things with that question. There's, one is, um, what we see as fair trade commercially. So, for example a Cadbury's Dairy Milk is now Fairtrade, it has a Fairtrade mark on. And the, what that means, and this is the important thing really because, what it means is the farmer at the farm gate is paid a fair price [mmm]. It doesn't make any difference how much Cadbury sell you do that chocolate for, so when people knock down Fairtrade chocolate in the supermarket and it's it's half price or whatever people say aw you that's cheating, it's it's not, because it what matters to the farmer they don't care how much you pay for the chocolate, what matters to the farmer is how much they get paid for the cocoa.</p>
<p>19.52</p>	<p>So, that guarantees that farmer's been paid fairly. So that's the Fairtrade mark system. Now, that's the system was really set up for the big corporations, we couldn't go through the rigmarole of getting the Fairtrade mark on our chocolate,</p>

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	so our chocolate isn't Fairtrade as in that sense, it's fairly traded. And that's fairly traded because we buy it from our friends. So, you can't get anything, for me, you can't get anything better than this. So I literally go to Ghana, I'm a chief in the village, they've made me a sub chief, so erm er and I meet the farmers, erm, and we buy it off them. And they determine the price. Now you can't get any fairer than that. Erm, and we pay what they ask for. Again, it's a friendship.
20.35	I mean, to me, trading, real fair trading, and trading as it used to be, should be a friendship. In Ghana they do a lot of bartering, which I like, but at the end you end up, you've made a friend and you've ended up with a price that both the buyer and the seller is happy with, whereas in this this world, and it's true of our own farmers, you have a price where the buyer is determining how much the seller sells it for. And often, they're cheated. So, so, they're our friends, so we don't want to cheat our friends, and they don't want to cheat us.
21.05	So you've got a direct trading relationship with a, a village in Ghana, basically, that's [absolutely] [right] [Yeah, yeah, it couldn't be more direct.] And fairly traded cocoa beans that have the Fairtrade mark are they aggregated somehow and then bought by the manufacturers?
21.20	Yeah, I mean, like I say, it's a it's a very different thing to what we're we're d...I mean, and we're ridiculously small scale so erm, erm, you couldn't do what we're doing in a on a on a large on a large scale. So, erm, so for example, Divine chocolate, I mean, Divine chocolate not only is the beans that go into Divine chocolate Fairtrade, but the cocoa farmers actually own fifty per cent of the company, which makes it incredible. Erm, I'm a great fan of Divine chocolate, it was set up about ninety-nine, that's when we first got involved with chocolate through Divine, erm, er and they buy the beans from a, a co-operative called Kuapa Kokoo .
21.54	So the farmers in New Koforidua that we know they are members of the Kuapa Kokoo society. So they sell their beans to Kuapa Kokoo, Kuapa Kokoo then sell their beans to Divine, and to Cadbury's indeed, that's where Cadbury's buy their, their beans from as well, so it's the same beans. Erm, erm, and then, er, they they are fair traded, Fairtrade marked (pause).
22.20	Okay. Erm, you said it wouldn't be viable for you to get the Fairtrade mark certification. Can you talk a little bit about what [erm] the obstacles [erm, I mean] and barriers are with that?
22.30	It gets, it gets complicated really. I mean um one of the things ry um erm I, I used to work for the Fairtrade Foundation for quite a few years and quite often I'd give talks about, you know, promoting fair trade and so on. And people would often ask, you know, straight after each other two questions. How do we know it's it's it's erm it's real, how do we know we're not being cheated, how do we know the farmer's definitely getting a fair price? That's the first question. And then they would say why is Fairtrade chocolate more expensive, which I have to say it's not any more, when Cadbury's changed to fair trade it wasn't, so I mean that's a myth anyway. But, the answer to that question is, is one answers the

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	other.
23.09	Because in order to have a Fairtrade system with a mark and a label and a certification, you have to guarantee, so you have an awful lot of paperwork, you have an awful lot of administration, you have people who have to go out there and monitor the farmers, and, and, and, and make sure that all that's happening. Now that costs money. And really, so the to in order to get the Fairtrade mark the company has to pay a licence fee to use that mark. So a big company like Cadbury's they would pay a certain licence fee depending on the percentage of er er er erm er as a percentage of what they sell. Erm, now one, (sigh) you know, we're as a Community Interest Company we, we couldn't go through the administration and all that anyway, but erm, but also we couldn't afford any costs on top of what we already have, so that's it.
23.53	So they're they're two different systems really [yeah] and I think it's important that people really understand that. It it gets quite complicated and therefore people are often are shy to go into that complex, er complex [okay] situation. So, and it's sadly then you get a situation where there's no mark on our chocolate some people may say it's not fair trade, well. There are other fair trade systems around as well it's not just the Fairtrade mark system. Erm, I mean you could say that's probably the best in a v and it's certainly very rigid and it does a lot more than just guarantee farmers get more than a fair price, there's a social premium on top of that and so forth as well, so there's a lot more to it. Erm, but we shouldn't think that fair trade is just the mark and nothing else.
24.33	Okay. Right at the beginning of the interview you talked a little bit about that early meal that you organised and you brought together people erm people for a fairly traded meal which included local produce, and, and local produce is very important to you as well. Can you talk a little bit about any tensions that there might be between local food movements, and striving to source local produce, and the fair trade movement which supports food imports [yeah]. O...Is there a tension for you, or...?
25.05	No, there never has been, never will be. I, I can't really underst...there's a lot of things in life where you've got conflict, you know, it's like science and religion. Sometimes I think we create conflicts for s... no reason. Th...I don't see, what is the problem here? You know, you have farmers here selling milk who don't get a fair price for their milk, they don't even get the costs of production. It's wrong, it's immoral. You get farmers in Ghana who don't get the costs of production for their cocoa. Our farmers don't grow cocoa, erm, so what's, what's the problem? To me, they are both in the same boat. The difference is, and which is one reason why fair trade doesn't apply to farmers in this country is because these people are often at a life or death situation.
25.48	Now, when we did the meal and people said that to us they said ah well it's it's different you know because the poverty level is a lot higher. Well, yes, but the issue's the same. Now when you have dairy farmers not too far away from here committing suicide because of the price of milk, then you can't say it's not an important issue. So the issues are the same. And I find when you go across the

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	<p>world, you know, it's the same with farmers wherever you go. So I've I've had the great privilege of talking to coffee famers in Peru, cocoa farmers in Ghana, dairy farmers in Lancashire, and they all say the same thing. They don't want charity, they don't want subsidies, they just want to get paid a fair price that covers the cost of production and gives them a living wage. Now it's very simple. And we, we complicate matters too much. And then you get tensions, that people create these te...and they start fighting with themselves.</p>
26.38	<p>And I often compare it to...I say, it's like a lot of farmers in, you know, from different countries in rowing boats that all sinking, and they're all trying to bail out the water from their boat and throw it into their neighbour's boat. Whereas they're not tackling the problem, which is really the trading system, and the, the big corporations, I have to say, the supermarkets, who are cheating all those people. So that's the people they should be uniting with. So, so fa, so, you know, when we did the exchange back in 2004 we actually involved a cocoa farmer and a local dairy farmer, and they became friends and, and it's about...I...understanding each other's issues.</p>
27.12	<p>We've we far to...to be honest it's a bit like this with the immigration problem we get at the moment. It's very easy to find someone to blame for everything and it distracts you from the real problem. And we see that again and again and again. And I find it really, really quite depressing. Er, you can, you can see it with for example with something as obvious as the Holocaust where people actually who committed those atrocities actually believed that Jews were not human and they were, they were actually making them poor. Er, we're we're not far off that stage now, where people actually think that because they can't get to see a doctor immigrants are to blame.</p>
27.49	<p>I'm straying off chocolate a little bit, but this is (laughs) really important. You know, this is what we tried to do with our workshops is to get people to understand. These cocoa farmers in Ghana, they're not aliens, they're not subhuman. You know, like we did with the slave trade, we sub-humanised these people so we could do these horrible things to them. You know, they are real people who are trying to make a living, just like we are. And, they're not the enemy, there's plenty of people around, look, look and find out why you can't get an appointment at the doctors [yeah], you know, it's not because there's an immigrant taking your place, or why you can't get housing. It's because of government policy, and we should (inaudible) look at that.</p>
28.26	<p>And I find it amazing that we still are arguing about all these immigrants. I've just come back from Lebanon. Now Lebanon's a very poor country, it's about the size of Cornwall. They have something like half of their population now is made up of refugees, and here we are in the fifth richest economy in the world, much, much bigger than Lebanon, arguing about taking twenty thousand. I, sometimes I feel ashamed, you know, I really do, it's shocking. It's gone off chocolate, but that's what we teach through chocolate [yeah, no] (laughs).</p>
28.59	<p>So, bringing, bringing you back to chocolate [yeah (laughs) always a pleasure] What do you see the role of chocolate being in a sustainable food</p>

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	future, a global, globally sustainable food future as well as a locally... one?
29.12	Oo that's a difficult question. Erm, probably (inaudible) the sort of question I would even think about. Erm, because, it's it's like so many things really. Erm, we we we sort I mean we say in a perfect world, erm, we would all be growing our food, erm and, and again we even say this about people in Ghana. Er, oh but they're, they're so poor they shouldn't be growing cocoa for our market they should be growing their own food. Brilliant. But we're not in a perfect world, and we're never gonna be in this perfect world. We're always going to eat chocolate, so whatever happens, we're going to eat chocolate.
29.47	You know, either I reckon in the old days it will be just the rich or it will be lots of people. But what we've got to understand is that chocolate costs money. So, it's not a right of ours to have chocolate cheap, it costs money, it's a luxury item. And if we can't afford to pay to have it, we shouldn't have it. You know you you can't say well you know er it's my right to have gold, or my right to have erm, caviar. You know, wh...why do we think we have to have this choice to be able to buy cheap chocolate. So, we all have to live fairly and sustainably. And, so, I, I think, we're always going to have chocolate we've just got to find a way of making it fair. [mmm, okay]
30.31	Ooh this is er, another sourcing question. You, you have other ingredients that you include apart from chocolate [mmm], or, or the cocoa [laughs]. So you've got soya milk, you've got... I seem to remember you doing orange chocolate which is really nice [yeah]. So where do you source your other ingredients from and what sort of [mmm]...erm, yeah, what are your criteria for that?
30.50	I, I'm glad, I'm glad you asked that because that's such an important qu...We always try to do the best we can. Now, er, again, this is one thing, I keep drawing back to the slave trade abolition because it's really easy for us to see how wrong that was. And how right those amazing people were that pioneered the abolition campaign. But those people were all a part of the problem as well. So people like Thomas Clarkson, a great tremendous... he used to stay awake at night because he couldn't stand what was happening. But he was complicit to that. So when he bought his goods or if he, you know, he was a part of that problem. Now, there is nothing we can do about that, and I say that to the kids, you know, we are, you know, we cannot be squeaky clean unless we go and live in a cave we cannot be squeaky clean. We are a part of the system. But all we can do is try to make that system a little bit fairer and a little bit better. And that's what we try to do. So we try our very best. So, the FIG Tree is a Community Interest Company, we have lots of stakeholders. So we try and involve our stakeholders when we make a decision.
31.53	So, we have to think very hard about all sorts of questions. You know, with the ingredients for example. So, so with the milk powder – I would love, and particularly at the moment, we are actually looking at a premise which is near a dairy farm. Ideally I would love to put his milk, you know the farmer next to us, into our chocolate. But can we do that? No, course we can't because, you know,

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	we can't put unpasteurised milk in, we have to get milk powder, we have to all sorts of problems to go with that. So we do the best we can. At the moment we have to use milk powder. The only place we can source milk powder- we buy it from the Co-op supermarket, just because the umm, the Co-op is something that, you know, I have some, some respect for. But again, even the Co-op doesn't treat its farmers well. So, we are still not, we are not, we are still complicit with the system that we are in. But then we have to do that. So that's what we do about..
32.44	The soya milk powder, we buy it from Single Step because again we have great admiration for what they are doing with their workers' cooperative. Ummm, so we buy it from them. And again, sometimes this puts the price up but, you know, if we are trying to talk about fair trade we have to pay that price. So, urgh, the cocoa butter we buy erm from a a a chocolate company, so that comes in the big tubs over there. The sugar, we buy Fairtrade sugar from the Co-op. So all of the Co-op's sugar is Fairtrade. Erm, the flavourings again- we buy it from a company called Holy Lama, which is an Indian based company. Do you know them? Erm, erm, great company. Erm, again, real purists. They are quite erm, they are quite, quite erm expensive so again we we we we pay for it because we think we should pay for it. And that's pure essence. Our orange is pure, orange, essence. Er, some of the, erm. We've got over there raspberry crumble which is freeze dried pure raspberry. So we try to be the best we can.
33.45	But we are not squeaky clean. So somebody could come along and analyse us and say oh well, yeah but you do this, and you know, you've got a bank account with so and so or what. You know, we try the best we can. And really that's all I would say to anybody. You know, when people say to us, well we can't buy Fairtrade coffee because of this, that and the other... Well, do the best you can. That's all we try to do.
34.09	OK, so. Last question now. Erm, you talked a little bit about wanting to set up, erm, a premises in Lancaster and a chocolate house and stuff. Are there any other opportunities or challenges facing the FIG Tree that we haven't covered?
34.23	Oh, we've got masses of challenges (laughs). [We've only got about...] Yeah, yeah, we've got masses and masses of challenges. I mean the biggest challenge at the moment- we need premises. We, we, we, couldn't make it work in Garstang. We've tried to look for a partner because we feel the FIG Tree has a lot to offer. Sadly we live in a world where people don't really int... they are not really interested unless you've got money. Er, er I mean, working for the council in Garstang is always, it's not in the public interest. And I always thought well, we've got an international centre- we are bringing visitors in from all over the world, we are bringing in the economy. But it's not in the public interest? What they mean- it doesn't get them any money. And sadly everything is dictated by money. So we are struggling to find a partner that can actually realise that we have a lot to give them. Erm, if they can give us, for example, premises. So we've struggled with that. So we have come to the conclusion that we have to get our own.

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35.11	<p>So we're gonna, it's very ambitious, but our aim is to now, we have actually got a place in mind which I'm almost afraid to mention because it's too early days. Erm, but erm, er we have got a place in mind and we are going to try and get grant funding to help us buy the premises and then we are going to launch a crowd funding appeal. So the more people that help us with that, the better. Erm, so, we should be doing that hopefully this side of Christmas. If not, certainly in the, in the New Year. Erm, so look out for that crowd funding appeal. We've got our stall- we trying to sell our chocolate.to try and get some what income we can there, we've got a stall on the Midsummer, I mean Midwinter market – 16th December- in the square. Er, we are of course selling through Single Step and then Saint Nicks Arcade – again they have allowed us a week in the Arcade in the week before Christmas. So anybody that wants to buy our chocolate, erm, come along to the Mids Midwinter Market on the 16th, or the week before Christmas just look for us in Saint Nicks Arcade.</p>
36.08	Excellent. Thank you ever so much. [pleasure].