



ANNUAL REPORT



2015

Food Durham



The first Annual Report of the County
Durham Food Partnership



annual report

FOOD DURHAM

1. Introduction and Background

Welcome to the first Annual Report from Food Durham!

The purpose of the Report is to provide an overview of the work of the Partnership from when it was formally established in May 2014 to the end of August 2015. The early months were taken up primarily with securing funding to enable us to carry out our plans. The decision about what our priorities should be was based upon the **Sustainable Local Food Strategy 2014 – 2020**, also launched in May 2014.

The Partnership was formed as a result of the first stage project which ran from November 2011 to May 2014. This achieved its aims of developing a local food strategy and partnership, bringing together organisations, groups and individuals involved or interested in sustainable food. An evaluation of this project can be seen on our website: <http://fooddurham.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Final-Evaluation-Report-August-2014.pdf>.

Structure and Governance

Food Durham is hosted by Durham Community Action (DCA), who take responsibility for all the issues around employment of staff and holding and administering funds. DCA is a well-established charity with a long history of project development and support. A Memorandum of Understanding between DCA and Food Durham has been agreed this year to set out the various responsibilities and roles of each party in more detail.

Food Durham operates as a network and is open to any interested organisations or individuals in County Durham, or further afield where appropriate. It is comprised of a **Partnership Board** with representatives from the public, private and voluntary and third sectors, three **sub-groups** (Public Sector Food Procurement, Food and Health, Community Growing), and a **general membership**. The Partnership Board have agreed Terms of Reference (Appendix).

Board Members 2014 – 2015

Jane Gray (Chair, Broom House Farm)

Stephen Beresford (DCC Sustainability Team)

Graham Black (DCC Spatial Policy Team)

Jamie Bond (New Close Farm)

Mel Campbell (Volunteer: bid writing/food activist/gardener)

Liz Charles (Project Coordinator)

Grace Crawford (Groundwork)

Josephine Ellis (DCC Green Infrastructure)

Michelle Gorman (Visit County Durham)

Richard Graham (Evaluator Stage 1)

Sam Hillyard (Durham University Researcher)

Shona Miller (Durham University Catering)

Amy Mycock (Durham Local Food Network)

John Turner (Durham University Catering)

Louise Wilson (Food for Life Partnership)

Tim Wright (DCC Public Health)

2. Our Work and Key Achievements

The Board decided to prioritise two areas to take forward from the Sustainable Local Food Strategy: researching how to make the local food supply chain more efficient in a way that might attract more suppliers into the market, and increasing opportunities for more people to grow some of their own food. These two very different areas of work have the potential to address a number of the Strategic Objectives in the Strategy: A Strong Local Food Economy, Food Fairness, Resilient and Active Communities, and Health and Wellbeing.

Growing Durham

Growing Durham is our community growing project which aims to support more people to grow food in a community setting. From April 2015 we employed two part-time Community Workers (Hannah Murray-Leslie and Peter Samsom) to help create a network



of new and diverse community growing schemes that will improve access to fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit. They can also offer advice to existing schemes.

The benefits of such projects are enormous: ranging from providing people with new opportunities to get active and healthy whilst also meeting new people; providing people with new skills and renewed self-esteem; managing and improving the local environment and changing the way we think about food and our surroundings.



A community growing project could be as simple as getting together to plant fruit trees on public land where anyone can pick them, to setting up accessible raised beds for families or elderly people, or even starting a social enterprise or a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project.

The project is funded for two years by the Tudor Trust and the NHS Health Improvement Fund. Derwent Valley Partnership and Durham City AAPs have also funded a day a week each for 12 months to be spent working exclusively in their areas.

So far Hannah and Peter have visited 23 existing projects and are developing work in 11 settings where a new project might develop. They have given advice to 5 existing projects. There is a Growing Durham facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/GrowingDurham>.

This project also includes revitalising the Community Growing sub-group, which will bring together community growers from across the county to support and learn from each other. The Annual Gathering on 17th September has the theme of Community Growing and is the first of a series of events to establish this group as a source of on-going support.

Food Hub Feasibility Study

We are undertaking a feasibility study to find out if we can improve the efficiency of the local food supply chain for business to business trade. If we can achieve this it will provide a more secure route to market for growers and producers wanting to sell for local consumption, and give confidence for growth and for new entrants into local food production. It will also make it easier for businesses such as hotels, pubs, restaurants and B&Bs to source traceable locally produce food which can be confidently branded as such.

The work has included developing databases of demand and supply businesses and undertaking surveys to ascertain potential levels of demand and supply and produce types.

Various options are being looked at including a physical Food Hub and a Virtual Hub. A report and business plan will be written when the study is completed and funding sought for the implementation phase if appropriate.

This work is being funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

'Sustainable Local Food for the Public Sector': mini conference

The Public Sector Food Procurement sub-group includes representatives from Durham University, Durham County Council, Taylor Shaw, the North East Procurement Organisation, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust and the Fire and Rescue Service. It meets quarterly to develop and share good practice around sustainable food procurement and members are benefiting from sharing information and finding opportunities for collaboration. Durham County Council published a 'Sustainable Buying Standard – Food' which is mandatory across all Departments (available at:

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/media/6824/Sustainable-Buying-Standard-Food/pdf/SustainableBuyingStandardForFood.pdf>).



FIGURE 1 DELEGATES SHOW OFF SUSTAINABLE FISH & CHIP DINNERS FROM BELLS FISH RESTAURANT

The group organised a mini conference held on 1st July at Durham City Town Hall entitled “Sustainable Local Food for the Public Sector”. The speakers were:

- ❖ Mike Carden, Food for Thought, Liverpool “Food for Thought and Liverpool Sustainable Food City”
- ❖ Jamie Thomas, DCC Procurement Officer “How does public sector procurement work?”
- ❖ John Turner, Durham Uni Catering “University Catering, a Case Study”
- ❖ Mark Stein, Salford University “Ethical Dimensions – Fair Trade and the Limitations of ‘Local’”
- ❖ Liz Charles, Food Durham “Food Durham Sustainable Fish City Campaign”

Cllr Bill Moir (front of photo above), the Deputy Mayor of Durham City, also spoke in support of the Sustainable Fish City campaign.

A Round Table discussion was led by Jamie Thomas, with a panel composed of the speakers and questions from the floor.

Presentations from the event are available at: <http://fooddurham.net/events/past-events/sustainable-local-food-for-the-public-sector-july-1st-10am-1pm-durham-city-town-hall/food-procurement-conference>.

The conference was well received and the innovative work on procurement by our Partnership members in County Durham is being acknowledged more widely. Durham University has received a number of prestigious awards for sustainability in catering and the approach of working directly with local food producing businesses and a local distributor is informing the work of the Feasibility Study. Other areas are also beginning to look to Durham as a model of good practice that can be replicated elsewhere.

Durham - Sustainable Fish City

Sustainable Fish City is an ambitious campaign for towns and cities to buy, serve, eat and promote only sustainable fish in response to declining stocks of commonly eaten fish. Starting in London, the campaign's first winning step was to help the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games organisers to adopt a sustainable fish policy. The campaign is an initiative conceived and supported by an alliance of not-for-profit organisations already working on sustainable seafood issues and administered by Sustain, the alliance for better food and farming.



Cities who sign up to the campaign are required to achieve standards in five categories, for which they are awarded a star. Businesses and organisations must sign a 'Sustainable Fish Pledge' which commits them to sustainable fish principles detailed in the pledge.

Food Durham signed up to make Durham City a Sustainable Fish City. Durham City has been awarded 4 out of a possible 5 stars and is now second only to Bournemouth and Poole (the only city to have achieved full SFC status). This was announced at the Public Procurement (food) mini conference held on 1st July and articles appeared in the local press and Taylor Foods were interviewed by Star Radio. Businesses and organisations who have signed a Fish Pledge, committing to sourcing only sustainably sourced fish are (in their 'star categories'):

Local Authorities and Schools	Durham County Council Taylor Shaw
Hospitals	County Durham & Darlington NHS Trust
Universities	Durham University New College Durham
Restaurants and Iconic Businesses	Botanic Gardens, Bells Fish Shop, Café on the Green, Castle Eden Inn, The City Hotel, Oldfields, Taylor Foods Innovative campaign: #FishFace Durham . In March 2015 WWF, the Marine Stewardship Council, Durham University and sustainability champions the Whitby Fish and Chip Company collaborated to celebrate and raise awareness about sustainable seafood. The #FishFace campaign asked Durham students to share fish-face selfie on Twitter and Instagram, whilst learning about sustainable fish and fishing and sampling MSC Certified fish and chips.

Workplaces	Durham County Council staff canteen New College Durham on site restaurant - Le Nouveau Restaurant Durham University staff dining County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust staff and visitor dining Tiffins Sandwiches (a national firm serving 7m meals of which over 30% contain fish)
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Food & Health

The Food & Health sub group reports to both the Food Partnership and the Healthy Weight Alliance. It has produced an Action Plan based on the Local Sustainable Food Strategy and the Healthy Weight Framework and has worked in a number of areas to improve the uptake of healthy diets:

- Supported the OASES (Outdoor And Sustainability Education Specialists) project to enable it to extend its cultivation work to a number of additional schools. The work is linked to the National School Food Plan.
- Undertaken a food accessibility mapping exercise and produced a report. The findings are being disseminated via the Area Action Partnerships.
- Influenced the procurement of cold and hot drinks for vending machines in DCC buildings including leisure centres, by the insertion of best practice nutritional guidance.


Contact details

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 @Food_Durham

September 2015

Appendix



COUNTY DURHAM FOOD PARTNERSHIP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

To work together for a more equitable, sustainable, fairer food system for County Durham providing access to food that is healthy for people and the planet.

Functions

- ✓ Advocacy – influencing and contributing to policy formation
- ✓ Fostering collaboration and coordination between different parts of the food system
- ✓ Developing programmes for action and overseeing where appropriate

Responsibilities

- ✓ Oversee the implementation and development of the Sustainable Local Food Strategy
- ✓ Lead on securing funding and resources to run programmes and administer the Food Partnership in consultation with DCA.
- ✓ Respond to relevant local and national consultations.
- ✓ Identify priorities and set a work programme.
- ✓ Establish robust monitoring and evaluation systems.
- ✓ Promote learning and dialogue about food system issues, both within the Food Partnership and more widely.
- ✓ Act as a forum for networking, coordination, and information sharing to ensure best use of resources.
- ✓ Work with relevant bodies locally, regionally and nationally to further the purpose of the Food Partnership.
- ✓ Produce an Annual Report to be available on Food Durham website.
- ✓ Appoint a representative to take part in any recruitment and selection process.
- ✓ Produce reports and data as and when required by investors for funding purposes.

Structure and Membership

The Partnership is run and managed by Partnership Board. Members are nominated from named bodies/key stakeholders. Additional members can be co-opted as deemed necessary to fill gaps in expertise. The Partnership Board will appoint a Chair.

Sub-committees will deal with specific areas and report to the Partnership Board. These groups are self-selected.

A wider general membership is open to all who are invited or sign up via the website.

Meetings

Meetings of the Partnership Board will be held no less than four times a year.

Decision making at Partnership Board meetings will be by consensus and a quorum is deemed to be operating when 50% of the membership is present.

Should it be necessary to put a decision to the vote it will be carried on a simple majority of members present, with the Chair having a casting vote.

Where a potential conflict of interest arises for a Board member during any discussions or decisions made, the member must declare an interest and absent themselves from all such discussions and decisions.

The Agenda will be circulated to members at least three working days before each meeting.

Minutes will be circulated to members no more than two weeks after the date when the meeting is held.

The first Annual Gathering will be held no later than 15 months after the first meeting of the Partnership, and at no more than 14 month intervals after that. The Annual Gathering will be open to members from all categories and will be for the purpose of reporting the year's progress, networking, and sharing information and expertise.

To be reviewed annually.

Reviewed and amended August 2015.