



ANNUAL REPORT



2016

Food Durham



The second Annual Report of the County
Durham Food Partnership

the
Tudortrust



annual report

FOOD DURHAM

1. Introduction and Background

This is our second Annual Report and covers the year from September 2015 to August 2016. It is presented at our Annual Gathering in September and highlights our key achievements.

Our overall purpose, as stated in our Terms of Reference (Appendix 1), is “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”. This is a broad and ambitious statement, but we aim to move step by step, influencing where we can at local, regional and national level, working together across all sectors, and running programmes that have a direct impact on our local residents, policy, and practice.

It can be a difficult area to work in, not least because of the complexities involved, and progress often has to be won through negotiation, persistence and patience, working with partners who often have differing agendas and priorities. We are very pleased with what we have achieved this year, especially with Durham City’s award of 5-star Sustainable Fish City status (only the second City in the Country to achieve this level), the stimulation of new growing projects and support given to existing projects through Growing Durham, and the development of our Food Hub model.

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 sets 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 2015 – 2016

Jane Gray (Chair) (Broom House Farm)

Dr Andrew Baldwin (Durham University) **

Samantha Davies (NFU Northumberland and N Durham County Advisor) **

Stephen Beresford (DCC Sustainability Team)

Graham Black (DCC Spatial Policy Team)

Jamie Bond (New Close Farm)

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

Dr Liz Charles (Project Coordinator)

Jim Cokill (CEO, Durham Wildlife Trust) **

Grace Crawford (Groundwork)

Lucy Wearne (Visit County Durham) *

Richard Graham (Evaluator Stage 1)

Dr Sam Hillyard (Durham University)

Shona Miller (Durham University Catering)

Amy Mycock (OASES)

John Turner (Durham University Catering) ***

Louise Wilson (Food for Life Partnership)

Tim Wright (DCC Public Health)

* from Feb 2016

** from May 2016

*** to June 2016

2. Our Work and Key Achievements

In 2014 the Board decided to prioritise two areas to take forward from the Sustainable Local Food Strategy (<http://fooddurham.net/sustainable-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. In April 2015 we employed two part-time Community Workers to help create a network of new and diverse community growing schemes that will improve access to fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit. They also offer advice to existing schemes across the County.

There are many well documented benefits of these types of projects 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.¹

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

We are working with a total of 33 active groups involving 308 individuals. Of these groups, 29 are new, and 4 involve significant developments of existing projects. The projects span a wide variety of models and approaches and include a garden run by residents of a supported living home for older people, a community orchard, community gardens, single plot gardens, and a Children's Centre project.

The Elms at Chester-le-Street

Cestria Housing's new assisted living complex for older people had a community garden planned into its design and about six months after opening in late 2015, the scheme manager contacted Growing Durham to work with interested residents to get the garden started. Initially the Community Worker met with some of the residents to discuss their ideas and in the early stages he helped with some of the sowing, planting and carrying of water during a dry spell. The group has blossomed over the summer growing both flowers and vegetables. In August they sold the first of their surplus vegetables to other residents with the money being set aside to buy supplies for next year. When asked about what they get out of the garden, the responses focused very much on the pleasure of being involved.



¹ Schmutz, U., Lennartsson, M. et al 2014 *The benefits of gardening and food growing for health and wellbeing*. Garden Organic and Sustain.

Love Spenny Garden - St Paul's Spennymoor



The community worker approached the vicar in 2015 with the idea of developing something in the green space around the church which would tie in with some other developing projects in the town. The relationship and ideas developed and in June 2016 a Tesco's Bags of Help funding bid was submitted, which looks highly likely to be successful. The idea was to create a growing area around the church which will be accessible to all and provide opportunities for people to share skills, resources, volunteer and signpost to other growing projects.

We are now in the process of bringing partners together to discuss more detail around ideas and joint delivery, and carrying out further consultation with the local community. If the funding is awarded then this project should become a visible focal point for community growing activity in the town and also support other projects and initiatives including health, probation, alternative education and churches together.

We helped several groups with funding applications. Successes included The Alt Group and Laurel Avenue Children's Centre and Kings road church who received 12K and 10K respectively from the Tesco bag fund.

The Community Growing Group (a sub-group of Food Durham) was re-launched at our Annual Gathering in September 2015. There has been one steering group meeting and four skill sharing events held: Winter Fruit Pruning, Composting, a Seed and Seedling swap and Water Management. We send out useful information via email to members of the group and this year 42 mailings were sent with information about events, funding opportunities and relevant news items.

In addition to the Growing Durham facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/GrowingDurham/>) we publish regular Newsletters that are circulated to all Food Durham members. Three editions have been published this year and are available at: <http://fooddurham.net/news/growing-durham-newsletters>.



Growing Durham Pruning Workshop

Durham Food Hub

A feasibility study to find out if we can improve the efficiency of the local food supply chain for business to business trade was completed in December 2015. The recommendation was to adopt a model that we called a 'virtual hub', working in partnership with a North East Wholesale company (JR Holland Food Services Ltd). This builds on a strong local asset, which is the transformation of food procurement at Durham University, work led by the late John Turner (see tribute below). This project can 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 study was funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and at the end of August we heard that they have also agreed to fund the establishment of the project over the next three years.

Durham - Sustainable Fish City

Durham City became only the second city in the UK to achieve the 5-star Sustainable Fish City status following two years as participants in the national campaign. The news was announced at our Public Sector Procurement conference on 1st July 2016, where Ruth Westcott from Sustain (the alliance for better food & farming) presented the award to Cllr Bill Moir, Deputy Mayor of Durham City.



Representatives of some of the Fish Pledge signatories with Cllr Bill Moir

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. 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. See <https://www.sustainweb.org/sustainablefishcity/>.

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.

The five-star Sustainable Fish City rating recognises that the city's top restaurants and workplaces, as well as the University, hospitals, council and schools have collectively pledged to serve and promote only sustainably sourced fish. The award means that food served across all Durham University colleges and departments will only ever contain sustainable fish, as will all meals served to patients, staff and visitors in County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. Sustainable fish will be on the menu at Durham County Council's offices, in school meals in all the county's primary schools, and in food served in New College Durham, East Durham College and Finchale College, Durham's Botanic Gardens, and across many of the city's top restaurants. The combined commitments cover businesses and institutions serving well over **12.5 million meals per year** and mean that the majority of fish served out of home will be covered by a

pledge. This figure excludes the impact from the pledge made by Tiffins sandwiches. They supply 7 million sandwiches/year nationally and it was not possible to provide numbers for Durham.

Wider impacts were also made as Taylors (local fish supplier) have lots of customers not on this list that are outside Durham in the wider NW region. Taylor Shaw (school caterer) are also strongly considering taking this step across all their business following Durham's lead.

Cllr Bill Moir, Deputy Mayor of Durham City, helped to promote the award by turning his hand to frying fish at Bell's Fish and Chip shop:



To become a Sustainable Fish City Durham needed to gather a target number of pledges in 5 sectors...



‘Healthy, Sustainable, Local Food’: mini procurement conference

The Public Sector Food Procurement sub-group meets quarterly to share skills, learning and experience around sustainable food procurement between agencies working across the County.

Following a successful conference in 2015 a second event was held on 1st July at the Durham Centre, this year focusing on Health within the context of sustainable procurement. It was attended by 32 delegates from the private, public and third sector, and academia.

The speakers and topics covered at the event were:

- ❖ Jamie Thomas (Sustainable Procurement Officer, DCC): ***Developments in Public Sector Food Procurement: Where have we come since last July?***
- ❖ Barbara Tocco (Newcastle University) & Dr Mary Brennan (Edinburgh University): ***Strength 2 Food: A major new EU-funded research project***
- ❖ Tim Wright (Public Health Portfolio Lead, DCC): ***Developing a Healthy Eating Policy for Durham County Council***
- ❖ Dr Liz Charles (Food Durham Coordinator): ***Introducing the Durham Food Hub: A local food supply chain for businesses***
- ❖ Ben Reynolds (Sustain): ***Sugar Smart Cities – a new food health initiative***
- ❖ Ruth Westcott (Sustain): ***Sustainable Fish Cities – a successful campaign for Durham City***

These presentations can be seen at: <http://fooddurham.net/events/past-events/mini-conference-on-healthy-sustainable-local-food>.

Judging by comments after the event the conference was very much appreciated and informative. It showcased some of the innovative work taking place and planned in the County. Durham County Council is collaborating with the Strength 2 Food project and Food Durham is in discussions with Sustain about participation in the new Sugar Smart Cities campaign.

Food & Health

The Food & Health sub group was established to develop and co-ordinate food and health programmes in line with a population based approach (as outlined in NICE guidance) and aligned to the Local Sustainable Food Strategy and the CVD prevention and Healthy Weight frameworks for County Durham. It reports to both Food Durham and the Healthy Weight Alliance and has an action plan based on the NICE guidance. During 2015/16 the following were achieved:

- Advocacy: Food Durham responded via a press release issued on 12/3/15 to the impact in County Durham of a sugary drinks duty of 20 pence per litre. In addition, a submission was made to Durham County Council on the Issues and Options in the revised County Durham Plan.
- The Director of Public Health’s Annual Report was focused on obesity and gave recognition to the role of sustainable food as being part of the solution.
- Work has commenced on a DCC Healthy and Sustainable Food Policy following some initial work on attempting to secure a healthier vending machine contract.



Annual Gathering 2015

Food Durham's first Annual Gathering was held at Grey College, and hosted by Durham University. The theme was 'Community Growing' and it was also the re-launch of the Community Growing sub-group. 51 people attended (including Growing Durham staff and speakers) and it was very well received (see box for summary of evaluation questionnaire responses). Many thanks to Durham University for hosting the event, and especially to the Catering Team who provided a magnificent lunch. Following the event delegates were able to visit the Botanic Gardens and take part in a guided tour.

Evaluation Questionnaire Responses

Quality of the event: 96% "excellent or very good"

Content: 96% "extremely or very helpful"

Speakers: 100% "extremely or very engaging"

"inspirational; inspiring, informative and great fun; really enjoyed the speakers, learnt a lot; Good stalls. Everyone was welcoming and enthusiastic about their work; Best lunch I've ever had at a work event – in fact probably one of the best lunches I've ever had full stop! Great selection, fantastic quality."

Tribute to John Turner, 1959 – 2016



John joined what was then the Steering Group in Phase 1 of this project in January 2012. He was Community Executive Chef at Durham University and brought with him a wealth of experience and knowledge about sustainable procurement, experience that enabled him to transform the catering arrangements at the University. His work at the University has led to a raft of awards including a Green Apple Award (2014), a Footprint Award (for Sustainability in Education 2014), and they have been MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) University of the Year for the past two years.

His contribution to Food Durham has been invaluable and he demonstrated the true spirit of partnership working, sharing his time, skills and experience freely. His enthusiastic commitment to sustainability and determination to implement change was infectious, his support well beyond what might be expected, and his big personality and sense of humour made him a delight to work with. He can take most of the credit for our success in the Sustainable Fish City campaign and the Durham Food Hub is modelled on the system he developed for sustainable procurement at the University. Just before he died Food Durham acknowledged his contribution by giving him a special award for "Outstanding Contribution to Environmental Sustainability".

John, we miss you and will be forever grateful that we were privileged to work with you for those few years.

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.


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