

THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD CITIES AWARD



Criteria and application process



The Sustainable Food Cities Award is designed to recognise and celebrate the success of those places taking a joined up, holistic approach to food and that are achieving significant positive change on a range of key food health and sustainability issues.

The Award is open to any place - be it a city, town, borough, county or district - which:

- Has an established cross-sector food partnership in place
- Is a member of the Sustainable Food Cities Network
- Is implementing an action plan on healthy and sustainable food.

There are three tiers to the award - bronze, silver and gold - each requiring an increasing level of achievement in terms of action and outcomes. Details on how to apply for the bronze and silver awards are presented below. The gold award will be launched in 2017. Applications will be reviewed on an annual basis by a national panel of experts. Places achieving an award will be able to use an award badge in their communications and marketing materials.



For each level of the award, a place must meet a number of **minimum requirements** relating to their: **1) food partnership**, **2) action plan** and 3) the extent to which healthy and sustainable food is embedded in **local policy**.

As well as meeting these minimum requirements, applicants will have to provide evidence of action and outcomes **across six key food issues**:

1. Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public
2. Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food
3. Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects

4. Promoting a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy
5. Transforming catering and food procurement
6. Reducing waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.

BRONZE AWARD - for bronze you must meet the relevant minimum requirements and achieve three points for action/outcomes under each of the six key food issues.

SILVER AWARD - for silver you must meet the relevant minimum requirements and achieve six points for action/outcomes under each of the six key food issues.

The awards aim to recognise both the totality of food-related activity and continuous improvement year on year. So while a bronze award may be given based entirely on evidence of food related activity and achievements to date, silver and gold awards will only be given where there is clear evidence that such activity and achievements are building year on year.

We recognise that circumstances, challenges and opportunities differ between places and want to celebrate innovation, so **under each of the six issues you can score one of your three bronze points or two or your six silver points for actions that are not listed in the tables but that you believe are contributing to tackling that issue.**

To score a point, your action must be deemed 'significant' by the selection panel. So, for example, if you want to score a point for 'The public have a wide range of free opportunities to see, taste and learn about healthy and sustainable food - e.g. through demonstration, sharing and celebration events such as food festivals and town meals', you will need to show that you are doing a number of these things, not just one or two. There may also be a number of actions which contribute to tackling more than one issue. Where this is the case, you will only be able to cite this action under more than one issue if you can show that it is being done to a sufficiently significant degree to warrant the additional points.

To help places navigate the award process and to provide guidance on the relative significance of various actions, applications will be facilitated by a member of the Sustainable Food Cities Team. This will involve an initial discussion, reviewing a draft application, providing feedback on areas of weakness, attending a meeting of the local food partnership (at silver) and, should a final application go to the expert panel, acting as the advocate for that application. The selection panel's decision is final, but feedback will be given on both successful and failed applications.

You do not have to achieve the bronze award before applying for the silver.

To make the process as transparent as possible, one condition of receiving the award is that all successful applicants agree to make their application accessible to other members of the Sustainable Food Cities Network through the Sustainable Food Cities web site. We will also expect applicants to provide short case studies on selected areas of their work. We will help you to identify the most suitable case studies during the application process, based on particularly innovative and inspiring initiatives that other members of the Sustainable Food Cities Network can learn from.

Each award is given for a three year period. If the award holder has not made an application for a higher award by the end of that period, they will be expected to stop using the award and to stop referring to themselves as awards winners in all communications and promotional activity or to reapply for their existing level award.

If you would like further information on the award or to discuss a prospective application, please contact Tom Andrews: email tandrews@soilassociation.org or call 07717 802 188.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO FOOD PARTNERSHIP, ACTION PLAN AND POLICY:

Lancaster's socio-economic context

Lancaster is a small University city located in Lancaster District, in the county of Lancashire, North West of England.

Lancaster District covers an area of 576 square kilometres and operates under a two-tier authority; making it difficult to engage with services covering the wider area of Lancashire. The District includes the city of Lancaster, the towns of Morecambe, Heysham and Carnforth, and the surrounding rural villages. The 2017 population estimate for Lancaster District was 142,487, with Lancaster City having an estimated population of around 50,000.

Lancaster's economic profile indicates a high score for business and enterprise (91.44) that appears to be primarily made up of micro businesses (employ up to nine employees). The District has several economic assets of national economic importance: Lancaster University, Heysham Power Station and Heysham Port. The Port of Heysham operates both commercial and passenger transport and is also a supply base for offshore gas fields and wind farms. Lancaster has been identified as a key area in the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership's 'arc of prosperity'.

Lancaster is largely an affordable area of the country to live in with high levels of access to the natural environment - the predominant land use being 'green space'. Urban areas include open and green spaces and the hinterland includes large parts of the AONBs of Arnsdale & Silverdale and the Forest of Bowland. Agricultural land in Lancaster District is mainly classified under grades three to five, with dairy and livestock grazing in less favoured areas and lowland livestock grazing being the most common farm types. Carbon dioxide emissions in Lancaster District are below the national average, but emissions from transport are particularly high.

Lancaster's ethnic cohort is predominantly white (95%), which is higher than both the county and national average. Approximately half of the population are dependent on others, which is significantly higher than the average for the county, but in line with national figures. Lancaster District hosts two universities and includes several popular coastal retirement destinations. The proportions of residents in the 15-24 and 65+ age groups are therefore higher than the national average.

Population density is the second lowest in the county – and significantly below both the county and national averages. The District has a relatively high Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), particularly in regard to inequality, health, environment and employment. The 2015 Indices of Deprivation ranked Lancaster as the 125th most deprived area out of 326 districts and unitary authorities in England.

Morecambe's West End is one of the most disadvantaged communities in the UK, ranked in the bottom 10% of communities nationally. The area is a regeneration priority for Lancaster City Council, which is working to the West End Master plan following on from an Action Plan agreed in 2002.

Sustainable Food City (SFC) Lancaster's story

Lancaster's SFC group started in 2014 and was initiated by members of Transition City Lancaster. It has since been comprised of a small steering group that have met monthly to oversee the development of collaborative food work locally. Since its founding, a Lancashire Sustainable Food group emerged to try and tackle food issues holistically at a County level, with both the County and Lancaster City group initially linking formally and now informally due to the Lancashire group's work primarily focusing on Preston.

In January 2018, upon receiving a coordinator grant, SFC Lancaster began the process of developing SFC Lancaster's partnership structure and action plan which has evolved rapidly with the increased capacity offered by a part time paid coordinator. [LESS](#), a Lancaster based CIC, employs the SFC Lancaster coordinator and has agreed to match fund the coordinator role going forwards.

SFC Lancaster's vision is a thriving local food system that is healthy, resilient, sustainable and fair.

Its mission is to:

- Develop a collaborative cross-sector food partnership that oversees the development and delivery of an action plan that brings 'good' food back to the table of all in Lancaster District.
- Harness local passion and expertise for sustainable 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 sustainable food sector.

BRONZE

Achieved?

Partnership

Terms of reference for partnership in place with list of member names and organisations.

Sustainable Food City (SFC) Lancaster has agreed terms of reference and its governance structure, which are available to view [online](#). The structure of the organisation is inspired by sociocracy, with working groups created around key themes (local food economy and procurement, food & environment, food & health, food access & poverty and food skills), and at least one representative, (ideally two to form a double link), attending quarterly food partnership meetings.

Cross-sector (public sector, business, NGO, community group) membership of partnership.

Sustainable Food City (SFC) Lancaster's steering group meets on a monthly basis and its members include the North West representative for the Landworkers' Alliance, representatives from Transition City Lancaster and the

treading lightly network, Lancaster University, a local Land Trust, Claver Hill Community food project, LESS and University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust. The steering group currently oversees the administrative elements of SFC Lancaster's work but are slowly merging its functions into Lancaster's cross sector food partnership. We aim for this process to be completed by end of June 2019, with administrative elements incorporated into the partnership's meetings.

Lancaster's cross-sector food partnership meets quarterly and is attended by representatives from five working groups (local food economy and procurement, food & environment, food & health, food access & poverty and food skills) who report on progress. Representatives include a Lancaster City Council officer who coordinates the food poverty group; the previous manager of Growing Well who coordinates the economy and procurement group; a rep from Lancaster Royal Infirmary who coordinates the health group; the founder of Lancaster University's community fridge who coordinates the environment group; a Lancaster University lecturer and community garden coordinator who oversees the community skills group. Other attendees include a LESS director, Single Step Wholefood coop, Backsbottom Farm, Transition City Lancaster food group, FarmStart project coordinator, and the coordinator of SFC Lancaster (employed by LESS and also sits on the management committee of Claver Hill Community Farm).

Overall the partnership has representatives from the local farming community, local food businesses, the public sector, NGOs, community groups and academia.

Partnership has met at least 4 times spanning the last 12 months and evidence that meetings are leading to implementation.

SFC Lancaster's steering group meets monthly and has met regularly since 2014. It is currently evolving to ensure its ongoing resilience and success; merging and sharing its responsibilities with a quarterly food partnership meeting that is attended by representatives from five working groups (local food economy and procurement, food & environment, food & health, food access & poverty and food skills). Each working group reports on progress against [SFC Lancaster's Action Plan](#).

Working groups that are functioning well and meet regularly include:

1. Food Access & Poverty working group. This group meets monthly and is coordinated by Richard Walsh – a Lancaster City Council Officer. It has representatives from Lancashire County Council, Morecambe Bay Food Bank, Lancaster District Food Clubs Alliance, Citizens Advice, CVS, Together Lancashire and the Morecambe Bay Poverty

Truth Commission. It has received funding from Food Power for a food poverty officer, which is being matched with council funding. It has also secured funding for a local food depot/ hub.

2. Food & Environment working group. This group meets every six weeks and is chaired by Martin Paley, the coordinator of Lancaster University's Community Fridge and a Precious Plastics project. It has representatives from LESS, Lancaster Environment Centre's Sustainability Group, the Global Eco Innovation department at Lancaster University, Single Step wholefood coop, Sustainability Morecambe, Scotch Quarry, Claver Hill Community Food Project, Lancaster's Seed Library, the Radish, the Green Party and Feedback. This group has secured a funded internship with the Global Eco Innovation department at Lancaster University to conduct an environment audit of charter market traders to support them in reducing their ecological footprints and remove the use of single use plastics - to support the implementation of council policy. A best guidance book will be produced from this work and will be shared with other local food businesses.

3. Local Food Economy & Local Food Procurement. These two themes have merged to form one working group as they had similar interested stakeholders, aims and outcomes. This group meets every three months and is chaired by Claire Louise - the former business manager of Growing Well - a local organic care farm. It has representatives from Backsbottom Farm, Growing Well, Single Step wholefood cooperative, Landworkers' Alliance, Lancaster City Council, Feedback, a local land trust, LESS and Lancaster University. As part of this group's work LESS has run two FarmStart co-design sessions and secured funding to run a FarmStart organic growers support course during the 2019 growing season. It is also in the process of agreeing a contract for a piece of land on the edge of Lancaster – to run the FarmStart scheme in the long term.

The Local Food Economy & Procurement working group is also a partner of a recently successful N8 bid that will pay Lucy Antal to scope options and barriers for key institutions in Lancaster and Leeds to procure local and sustainable food.

Groups that are currently less structured but are active in taking forward certain actions include:

The Health & Food Group organises the now annual Lancaster Health Festival - entitled 'The Lost Art of Living'. It is coordinated by Ian Dewar, the chaplain at Lancaster Royal Infirmary, who regularly meets relevant local stakeholders for one-to-one meetings and coordinates the Health Festival and its partnership meetings.

The Food Skills group's actions overlap with other working group actions, and so this group has become more of an informal network that is brought together by regular annual events such as Potato Day and a harvest festival. Transition City Lancaster's food group has also agreed to organise winter skill share events to support this group- the next of which is a fruit pruning and grafting workshop on the 24th February.

Plan **Action plan outlining key objectives for at least one year ahead. It does not matter if the action plan is in draft form, but it should be available for interested parties to read and reflect the six key issues listed previously.**

SFC Lancaster's [Action Plan](#) is a live document (and therefore always in draft form!) and is available to view online. The action plan includes both long term and short term aims and was developed by SFC Lancaster's working groups. Updates are reported at steering group meetings and quarterly food partnership meetings, and minutes are shared with all SFC Lancaster's members. Key updates are also shared via a weekly local food column in the Lancaster Guardian, which is also shared on our local food blog and via social media.

Policy **Evidence that healthy and sustainable food is 'recognised/referred to' in city policies and strategies.**

- Lancaster City Council has made food poverty a strategic priority (“Work with others to address health inequality, food and fuel poverty, mental health, loneliness.”) and is currently developing a food poverty strategy for the District that feeds into SFC Lancaster's plan. The working group formed around this was facilitated by Sustainable Food City Lancaster and is now chaired by a Lancaster City Council officer- Richard Walsh.
- Lancaster City Council declared a 'climate emergency' on the 30 January 2019¹ and passed a motion to become a zero-carbon city by 2030. This will inevitably address our local food system. SFC Lancaster ran two workshops at a Climate Emergency event for local authorities in March 2019, held at Lancaster City Council's town hall and hosted by a local councillor. We have also been invited, and accepted, to sit on the council's climate liaison group to shape this work going forwards.

- Lancaster City Council passed a motion to explore options for replicating a 'Preston-model' like scheme in Lancaster District and the council officer (Anne Whitehead) overseeing this work is seeking to incorporate FarmStart into this work. Anne Whitehead currently attends food economy & procurement meetings.
- Lancashire County Council commissions an integrated "Active Lives and Healthy Weight" service that brings together previously fragmented services and incorporates weight management, obesity prevention and opportunities for physical activity. The service takes a life course approach, with services available for people of all ages. As well as helping to prevent dementia, activities are also available for people with dementia, including community food growing². Other areas of delivery also include cooking and nutrition.
- Lancashire County Council's Social Value Policy and Framework references Fairtrade food, working towards a living wage, reducing waste, and sustainable sourcing³.
- Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan 2014 - Lancashire Enterprise Partnership. This document provides the framework for drawing down resources from the European Structural Investment Fund within Lancashire as a whole. The partnership's strategic outcomes (up to 2025) are to deliver: 50,000 new jobs; 40,000 new houses; and £3 billion additional economic activity, above the local trend rate. The strategy recognises the strategic economic importance of Lancaster District (as part of its 'arc of prosperity') and recognises the importance of food manufacturing as a key employment sector in Lancashire.

2 <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/905829/lcc-dementia-strategy-2018-2023.pdf>

3 <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/898255/approved-social-value-policy-and-framework.pdf>

KEY ISSUE 1: PROMOTING HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD TO THE PUBLIC

1 Healthy eating campaigns - such as breastfeeding, healthy weight, 5-a-day, Eatwell, cook from scratch, and sugar, salt and fat reduction - that aim to change public behaviour, particularly among hard to reach audiences, are being delivered. 1 point

1a Summary of action/outcome:

We believe that behaviour change is best brought about by offering advice and networks of support and so have focused 'campaign' work on these.

- Many groups work around healthy eating issues in Lancaster and a platform for this work is emerging through the Lancaster's Health Festival - The Lost Art of Living. This annual event is viewed as a campaign in itself to shift towards more healthy lifestyles and a preventative approach to health care. Health Festival partners include Lancaster Business Improvement District (BID), Central Lancashire High School, NHS, Morecambe Primary School, Lancaster CVS, LESS, The Dukes, Lancaster University and Lancaster City Council. The [Festival](#) has become an annual 'health' event in Lancaster with a strong holistic healthy food theme. It saw more than 2000 people attend events in 2018, with healthy eating and cooking from scratch events including a bread making workshop attended by 10 local teenagers and run by our local 'slow bread' bakery. A Chef from Sous Vide ran cooking demonstrations with 40 local residents, using local produce from Claver Hill community farm. Participants left with recipe cards for healthy seasonal meals and knowledge of where to access fresh, affordable and organically grown local produce. As part of a seasonal Harvest Market (attended by 600 people), a health MOT activity was run by NHS staff and the Royal Lancaster Infirmary chefs ran healthy cooking demonstrations.
- Lancashire County Council (LCC) supports and promotes breast feeding via Families and Babies (FAB). FAB in Lancaster supports mums on the maternity ward at the hospital and offers home visits in the community. Breastfeeding welcome venues have been listed⁴ in and around Lancaster and a number of breastfeeding support groups are organised by the

4 <https://babymaze.co.uk/breastfeeding-friendly-venues/>

NHS⁵. Trading standards at LCC also include Breast Feeding Friendly as part of the award criteria for their recipe4health award scheme for high street restaurants and cafes⁶.

- Lancashire County Council commissions an Active Lives Healthy Weight service through Lancaster Council under the banner of 'Active Lives'⁷. This service offers community weight management and targeted physical activity programmes which run for 12 weeks following an initial assessment upon referral. Referrals are made via health professionals or are self-referred by individuals looking to take up the programme. Services are available to children (5+), adults and family and areas of delivery include cooking/nutrition, food growing and other educational sessions.
- A number of community centres, churches and schools run regular cooking from scratch (and on a budget) sessions throughout the year. Data on numbers of people involved in these projects has not been collated, but case studies can be found online e.g. Skerton community centre fork to jar work⁸; using spices to engage young people⁹; Firbank Children's Centre¹⁰. These came out of a food practitioners networking day organised by CVS¹¹. The healthy eating plate was also explored during this day and a food trail map for Lancaster developed after¹². A Food for Thought cafe was established in 2018 that runs cooking from scratch classes with users of a food bank. Lancaster University has also run cooking from scratch sessions with students and has developed a Lancaster recipes website: recipes.lancaster.ac.uk.

5 https://www.lancashirecare.nhs.uk/media/Publications/CHild_Family_Health_Service/Breastfeeding-Groups-2019/Jan_Mar%20NL_BF%20groups%20North2019%20-%20BB%20removed.pdf

6 <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/recipe-4-health/recipe-4-health-award/>

7 <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/salt-ayre-leisure-centre/active-lives>

8 <https://vimeo.com/128366447>

9 <https://vimeo.com/134297729>

10 <https://vimeo.com/129763915>

11 <http://lancastercvs.org.uk/projects/>

12 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Food-Trail-Map-1.pdf>

5 Public understanding of food, health and sustainability issues is being raised through a variety of communication tools including web sites, social media, magazines, film shows, radio and press pieces, talks and conferences. 1 point

5a Summary of action/outcome:

SFC Lancaster's marketing strategy includes a weekly food column that is published in the Lancaster Guardian (readership of around 6500), on our food blog (www.lessuk.org/blog) (current daily page views is 51), and shared via Facebook (maximum page reach of 5836) and Twitter (2374 maximum impressions) - under 'Feeding Lancaster'. Column topics cover the six SFC themes (food poverty¹³, healthy food¹⁴, ecological impact of food^{15 16}, food economy¹⁷ and procurement¹⁸ and community food skills¹⁹). These are written by a range of local stakeholders, including local food businesses, academics, farmers, community food projects, local chefs, consumers etc. Although hard to quantify the impacts these columns have on public understanding, we have received letters asking for advice, column readers have attended events and participated in challenges e.g. the milkman challenge, and we recently got asked to talk on 'food citizens and the role of local food networks in fixing our broken food system' at Lancaster Royal Grammar School.

The Faces Behind Our Food (FBOF) exhibition was effective at supporting more diverse audiences in understanding the place of food in their lives/exploring sustainability issues. FBOF features photographs and stories of 12 local food producers; exploring a range of issues linked with Lancaster's food system. FBOF toured Lancaster for 210 days in 2016/17 and is available online²⁰. 1198 people viewed the online exhibition in 2017 and 11962+ attended the live exhibition. 40% of people that engaged with the exhibition AND completed an evaluation form learnt something new about the provenance of their food. 11 animation workshops

13 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2018/03/08/ingredients-needed-to-overcome-food-poverty/>

14 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/01/15/cutting-out-the-sweet-stuff/>

15 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2016/08/26/exploring-the-topic-of-sustainable-food/>

16 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/01/29/kathy-barton-talks-about-her-history-with-food-waste/>

17 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2018/10/18/lancasters-local-food-directory-updated/>

18 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/09/07/celebrating-lancashire-school-dinners/>

19 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2018/04/05/community-food-growing-in-lancaster/>

20 www.lessuk.org/blog/the-faces-behind-our-food

(95 attendees) and seven events (1095 attendees) ran alongside the exhibition. A launch event involved featured producers attending to informally share their stories. The final event featured a local-food café; farmers' market and fair trade chocolate making workshop. Workshops attracted a diversity of ages and ethnicities and 42% of workshop participants' evaluations showed increased understanding about the provenance of food. Event attendees that viewed the live exhibition and completed an evaluation form tended to be older and were engaged with local food already - highlighting the role workshops played in engaging more varied audiences. To build on this exhibition's success, we collaborated with Walter Lewis to bring a locally adapted 'Feeding Body and Soul' exhibition to Lancaster in 2018 which explored additional issues e.g. women in farming, organic+, climate change adaptation. Events run alongside this included the FarmStart feasibility report launch, a 'marginal lands' talk and a 'In Our Hands' film showing.

A huge number of talks/ conferences are held in Lancaster around the theme of food, health and sustainability. Some of these are discussed on www.lessuk.org/blog. They are attended by varying numbers of people depending on the topic, venue and marketing budget! (from 10 to 100+). Events over the last year have included a political cafe around Food Sovereignty at Halton Mill; 'from food consumer to citizen' workshop at Lancaster University and Lancaster Royal Grammar School; going beyond food poverty event at Lancaster and Morecambe college; vegan milk making workshop; exploring soil with Starhawk at Claver Hill; Potato day event, open farm events at Cockerham Boers and Claver Hill; tomato day at Growing With Grace. Upcoming events in 2019 include a nutritional disco, a Feeding Body and Soul talk with Walter Lewis, a gleaning trip and preserving workshops. A funding bid is also being developed by the food and environment working group to deliver a year-long series of 'sustainable food' workshops.

6 The public have a wide range of free opportunities to see, taste and learn about healthy and sustainable food - e.g. through demonstration, sharing and celebration events such as food festivals and 'town meals'. **1 point**

6a Summary of action/outcome:

Lancaster hosts a variety of annual events throughout the year that provide free opportunities to see, taste and learn about healthy and sustainable food. These include:

- Monthly vegan pot luck events that are hosted by Lancaster Climate Action. These take place on the last Friday of each month and are attended on average by 20 – 30 people. Everyone is welcomed - non vegans included - offering a space for people to try an array of home-made vegan dishes; share recipes and cooking tips.
- Since August 2015, Lancaster People's Cafe have run pop up cafes that aim to cook healthy food from intercepted waste food and seasonal surpluses. These are held in a variety of venues that include churches, community centres, markets

and Lancaster University. They have on average run an event every two months which is always very well attended (approximately 100-200 people depending on the venue).

- After the success of its 2018 event, Transition City Lancaster will host an annual harvest meal in October; inviting attendees to cook a dish from locally grown produce. In 2018 around 50 people attended, all of which voted to hold another in 2019²¹. 2018's meal was also followed by a performance by 3 Acres and A Cow - singing about land resistance movements in the UK.
- A number of food festivals have been held over the years in Lancaster, all of which offer food demonstrations and tasters. These range from the huge Local Food & Drink Festival hosted annually at Lancaster Brewery which is now in its seventh year and is attended by a range of local food producers. (Over the last six years the organisers at Lancaster Brewery have seen more than 45,000 visitors attend the festival²²). Smaller community food festivals have included biennial One Planet Festival events^{23 24} organised by LESS; a local food month coordinated by Transition City Lancaster²⁵; The Lancaster Health Festival (now in its third year and attended by approximately 2000 people in 2018) and a Harvest Festival (around 400 attended) organised by Lancaster University in 2018 (with plans to repeat it in 2019). These festivals have involved too many food workshops to name e.g. cooking from scratch workshops, a nutritional disco, preserving workshops, foraging and cooking walks, bread making, themed pot lucks etc.
- Quarterly seasonal markets are held to tie in with the seasons: Spring, Midsummer, Harvest and Midwinter. Each brings between 15-30 local food businesses and community food initiatives into Lancaster's central market square, and demonstrations are run as part of these events. Over the three years they have run they reliably see around 600-700 people attend each event and demonstrations have included sauerkraut making, cooking demos by a variety of local chefs, local heritage apple tasting and goat meat tasting!

21 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2018/10/11/a-great-harvest-meal/>

22 <https://www.lfdf.co.uk/page/57/About-the-festival.php>

23 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/10/15/the-one-planet-festival-returns-to-lancaster/>

24 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/One-Planet-Festival-Programme.jpg>

25 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2014/09/25/something-for-everyone-in-lancasters-local-food-month/>

KEY ISSUE 2:TACKLING FOOD POVERTY, DIET-RELATED ILL HEALTH AND ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTHY FOOD

1 point

1 A multi-agency partnership - involving key public and voluntary organisations - has been established to assess and tackle the full range of issues that contribute to food poverty in a joined-up strategic way.

1a Summary of action/outcome:

A food poverty working group has been established for Lancaster District that meets monthly and is coordinated by Richard Walsh – a Lancaster City Council Officer. It has representatives from Lancashire County Council, Morecambe Bay Food Bank, Lancaster District Food Clubs Alliance, Citizens Advice, CVS, Together Lancashire, Morecambe Bay School and the Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission. It has received funding from Food Power for a food poverty officer, which is being matched with council funding, to create a Public Health role that will chair the group and oversee the development and implementation of a food poverty action plan.

This group shares its minutes with the SFC Lancaster steering group and is represented at SFC Lancaster’s quarterly food partnership meetings by Richard Walsh. Its action plan is summarised in [SFC Lancaster’s Action Plan](#). Its current priorities are ‘evidencing need’ and areas at higher risk of experiencing food poverty (to better focus energy and new work locally), and supporting the establishment of a local food depot – to support the more efficient distribution of surplus local food locally.

It has therefore appointed two people from the Operational Research Society to do research and data analysis to identify high risk areas in Lancaster District. Previous to this, the group had started gathering data about schools in Lancaster District regarding free school meals - to better target work such as holiday hunger clubs.

The food poverty working group has also secured funding for a local food depot/ hub to support the better distribution of intercepted and surplus seasonal food locally. The group are currently in the process of signing a lease for the depot.

3 For those in urgent need - and particularly benefit recipients facing delay or suspension in payments - relevant agencies are providing rapid referral to hardship funds and emergency food aid. *1 point*

3a Summary of action/outcome:

- Lancaster City Council has a discretionary hardship fund that people with housing related benefits can apply for without referral. Citizens Advice, the jobcentre, NHS wellbeing workers, social workers, doctors/nurses, and various other professionals can refer individuals to emergency food aid. Details regarding the total numbers distributed to how many people could not be found or accessed for the District as a whole. However, Foodbank vouchers issued from 06/04/2018 to present date via Council Housing (which includes the tenancy support workers) was 42; 16 via Morecambe Town Hall customer services and 22 via Lancaster Town Hall customer services.
- Local food banks are now starting to work with the network of local food clubs and community food projects to diversify the support they can offer following emergency support. For example, Claver Hill community food project, located off the Ridge estate, offers the opportunity for people to take produce in return for work, or local residents can pay a small donation for produce. Food from this project is now sold at a low price through the local community centre and growing beds have been created to grow produce specifically for local food banks- to increase distribution of fresh produce.
- Emergency provisions of up to 600 are fed per month via Morecambe Bay food bank, using a recorded tonne of surplus food from Morrison's, Lidl and Bookers especially milk and veg fruit and veg. 11 food clubs distribute food to between 25 - 60 members per week and several other food banks also exist around Lancaster District.

6 Efforts are being made to maximise the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, free school meals and social food provision - such as lunch clubs and meals on wheels - for vulnerable people who might otherwise go hungry or suffer malnutrition.

1 point

6a Summary of action/outcome:

Healthy Start redemption rates for all England varies between 83-86% and there is no regional or district break down for this.

In December 2018 in Lancaster, the uptake rate of families eligible for Healthy Start Vouchers was 74%. For comparison, the two lowest districts in Lancashire's 12 districts were Ribble Valley 48% and 50% in the Fylde area. The highest uptake was Burnley at 75%. Lancashire County Council (LCC) aspires to improve both the families' uptake side and the retailers' uptake side with support from the District Councils - including Lancaster. LCC's plan at present includes: making sure Health Visitors and School nurses are aware of the criteria and offer in regards to healthy start vouchers and healthy start vitamins through links to services in out 0-19 commission with Virgin Care. It is in discussion with district councils and their market management teams to develop a plan to make it easier for the exchange of vouchers in markets for fruit and vegetables. LCC Twitter and facebook send reminders

for people to use their Healthy Start vouchers as 15% are claimed but then unused across Lancashire. It is producing a film with Salford Media students to look at the benefits of school meals.

Lancashire County Council's Public Health department are encouraging the uptake of free school meals and paid for meals, and is trying to reduce the preference for sandwich-based options. It is also in the process of exploring barriers to free school meals registration and is considering the best approach in relation to lunch boxes other than the 'healthy' lunch box route.

Lancashire Catering Services provides in the region of 70-80% of schools across Lancashire with school meals with reduced salt, sugar and fat, and age appropriate calories based on professional nutritional advice. It is also working with 15 schools across Lancashire, 2 of which, Ryelands and Westgate are in Lancaster, towards the Soil Association Food for Life Programme to improve food culture - including food growing, education and encouraging school meal uptake. Lancashire County Council are also in the process of discussing some media work around the promotion of school meals for the Lancashire footprint together with students from Salford University.

A network of [food clubs](#) has been established throughout Lancaster District that distribute 'intercepted food' to members of food clubs – those experiencing or at risk of experiencing food poverty. Several of these food clubs ran holiday hunger clubs during the past summer holidays which was supported by money from Lancashire County Council and through the current Lancaster Mayor's fundraising activities. There are 11 clubs and clubs have between 25 to about 60 members per week. All are over-subscribed with waiting lists, and a strategy is being developed to work towards a vision of a 'food club' in every neighbourhood.

A Food for Thought Cafe opened in Lancaster in October 2018 that runs a Before School Breakfast Club. This delivers breakfast bags to a number of children and schools, with 138 children having been identified for the scheme in October²⁶.

As part of its current research work, the Food Poverty Working Group has started gathering data about schools in Lancaster District regarding free school meals - to identify areas at 'high risk' of food poverty in order to better target work aimed at addressing and supporting those in need going forwards.

26 https://www.foodforthoughtlancaster.co.uk/2018/09/28/foodforthoughtopen/?fbclid=IwAR2gALVqugRsyUrx74BvedKX4ubuli1Tf0co_-qmuyTYfvOUadhAg77tsKM

KEY ISSUE 3: BUILDING COMMUNITY FOOD KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, RESOURCES AND PROJECTS

1 A network for community food activists that enables them to share information and resources and that helps direct them to advice, training, grants and/or tools has been established. 1 point

1a Summary of action/outcome:

Lancaster has an extremely active community food activist scene which is supported via online forums and regular networking events.

- A series of online networking spaces exist that support information and resource sharing amongst Lancaster's community food activists. These include an active Incredible Edible Lancaster Facebook page (636 members), Incredible Edible Forage Walks Facebook Page (159 members); Green Lancaster Facebook Page (1577 likes); Food Of Lancaster Facebook Page (511 follows) and a Transition City Lancaster Facebook page (572 followers). Individual community food projects also have their own pages, which are well connected, and a local food resources page can also be found on the LESS blog²⁷.
- A working group has been established around this theme to formally support this work in being conducted more strategically through SFC Lancaster. However, this work is already supported through Transition City Lancaster's food group which meets monthly and organises two key networking events each year: Potato Day and a Harvest Feast. The Annual Potato Day event sees a range of local community food projects run stalls and around 200+ local growers come together to swap seeds, share news and join community growing initiatives in the Spring of each year. The Harvest Feast is held in the autumn and is used to celebrate the growing season and bring people together to support networking and information sharing. In 2018, 50 people came together to share locally grown and cooked dishes. Going forwards Transition's food group may pick up this more strategic work and has offered to run skill share events during the winter – the latest of which was a community fruit grafting and pruning workshop on the 24th February that saw 20 people attend.
- LESS's quarterly seasonal markets are also picking up part of this networking role very practically; creating a community around the markets which has led to collaboration and resource sharing outside of the markets between different farmers and community groups.

27 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/resources/>

- A Lancaster Green Spaces forum²⁸ also meets regularly to support networking, resource sharing and collaboration amongst Friends Of Groups and Community Food Projects. This includes support with funding, site visits and legal matters.

4 Community food growing is increasing through increased allotment provision and/or the development of edible landscapes in parks, borders and verges and through city-wide food growing initiatives such as *The Big Dig* and *Incredible Edible*.

1 point

4a Summary of action/outcome:

- Lancaster District has 23 Allotment sites that are managed by Lancaster City Council. About 5 years ago one new allotment site was established - expanding alongside an existing allotment, but no further new allotment sites are currently planned. In 2012 LESS offered support to allotment sites to develop and maintain their associations. A development framework and example questionnaire came out of this work and is [available to view online](#).
- In terms of community food growing, there is an increase in the number of community food gardens and orchards found around the District. This growth is facilitated by the active and supportive local food activist network and Lancaster's community plant nursery which distributes community grafted fruit trees and soft fruit bushes for free. [A community food map](#), created 5 years ago, highlights the key Incredible Edible and Transition City Lancaster Food projects²⁹. These include forest gardens, pollinator roundabouts, raised herb beds, community orchards and 'fruity corners' in a number of public parks. Since this map's creation, the Ridge community orchard has doubled in size; a Morecambe community food gardening group has been established; Lancaster Seed Library has set up seed growing beds at Claver Hill and expanded seed saving collaborations with other northern UK towns (Bradford, Darlington and York); three new orchard projects have started this winter- two of which are linked to local schools. Scotch Quarry has expanded its activities, as has Claver Hill- with both seeing its members increasing in numbers and diversity. For example, one of Claver Hill's members (just received refugee status) has received funding for a project to work directly with Lancaster's asylum and refugee community around food growing. This project started on Sunday 31st March.

28 <http://www.lancastergreenspaces.org.uk/>

29 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Food-Trail-Map-1.pdf>

In addition to the above, an organic growers support course is running during 2019's growing season to support some community growers and others in transitioning to organic commercial growing as part of a new FarmStart scheme. Applications closed at the end of March: it was oversubscribed with 23 applications, 7 of which will be supported with bursaries.

5 Primary and secondary schools are adopting holistic school food education and engagement programmes - such the *Soil Association Food for Life* - including growing, cooking, farm visits and improvements to meals and dining culture.

1 point

5a Summary of action/outcome:

As part of LESS's Off The Ground Project, it supported 20 schools across Lancaster District in developing food growing initiatives. An evaluation report, case studies and key learnings from this work can found on the LESS website³⁰. These projects were left at points where they could continue on their own and new projects are now emerging. For example, at Lancaster Central High School a horticulture course is run that produces food as a by-product of the learning process. Surplus is given to the school canteen and is made available to food tech, including fresh herbs. Some produce is sold to staff when possible to help the students understand the economics of food production and how even on a small scale it can be profitable/beneficial to grow your own produce. Organic food production is taught to the pupils, and visits to Claver Hill community food project are organised as part of this course. A range of issues are discussed regarding food sustainability, food miles, seasonal produce, packaging etc as part of the process. 2 x 2hr sessions are run per week for KS4 only, with currently 10 pupils in year 11 and 6 in year 10. It was recently agreed that students on this course will contribute Lancaster Guardian columns about their horticulture work – to encourage wider teenage engagement.

Lancaster Grammar School's geography department runs a pre-university course on food which explores the politics, environment and social justice issues surrounding our food system. Its modules cover organic and agro-ecology production, food sovereignty, climate change, local food networks and the green revolution etc. The teacher overseeing the module runs lunchtime talks related to students' work and an SFC Lancaster rep got asked to talk about 'from food consumer to citizen; the role of local food networks in fixing our broken food system'. Following this session, it was explored how this food module could be shared with other secondary schools in Lancaster District via a local teachers forum. Work-in-progress! And an community grafted fruit trees were gifted to the school to create an orchard.

30 http://www.lessuk.org/downloads/Off_the_Ground_Evaluation_Report_FINAL.pdf

Lancaster University also runs a 'Schools Go Green' where it plans and delivers school visit days based on the themes of renewable energy and sustainable food. Lancaster University has also facilitated a tree planting day for members of Lancaster's newly formed Environment Youth Forum.

Lancashire County Council's School and Residential Care Catering group was awarded the Soil Association's Silver Food for Life Catering Mark in recognition of the fresh and healthy meals it serves in 485 primary and secondary schools across the county. Lancaster City Council confirmed that 1,128,790 meals are served annually in 51 Lancaster primary schools and 117,610 are served annually in two Lancaster secondary schools. This data was based on the 2017-18 academic year. In addition, Lancashire County Council is also working with Ryelands and Westgate schools in Lancaster towards the Soil Association Food for Life Programme to improve food culture - including food growing, education and encouraging school meal uptake.

KEY ISSUE 4: PROMOTING A VIBRANT AND DIVERSE SUSTAINABLE FOOD ECONOMY

- 3 Shops, restaurants and markets selling healthy and sustainable food are being promoted to the public using a range of communication tools, such as marketing and branding initiatives, directories, 'restaurants weeks' and food awards. **1 point**

3a Summary of action/outcome:

SFC Lancaster offers a range of communication tools to support local food businesses, including an online [local food directory](#) (average of 24 unique views each month) that is updated annually and filters businesses using a range of ethical criteria including organic, fairly traded, free range, Ethical Small Trader Association³¹ member, cooperative, not for profit etc. Listed businesses are sent a local food directory window sticker to display in their businesses' windows.



Food treasure hunts and trails have been run to promote some of the listed businesses³² in addition to food festivals and seasonal markets (average attendance 650 people). These are treated as a marketing tool rather than running them for financial reasons only (thus being run quarterly as opposed to weekly). These bring between 15-30 local food businesses and community food initiatives into Lancaster's central market square. A marketing plan for the directory is currently being developed to increase its reach.

A Little Book of Food and Drink and a seasonal food calendar³³ was created by LESS and thousands of copies have been distributed throughout Lancaster. Visit Lancashire's website lists Lancashire producers³⁴, and a Lancashire Life Food & Drinks award is run annually³⁵. A weekly food column in the Lancaster Guardian (readership of around 6500) is written by a range of local food stakeholders and features local shops, restaurants and the seasonal markets, whilst also aiming to discuss all aspects of a

31 <http://www.lancasteresta.org/>

32 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/10/28/local-food-treasure-hunt/>

33 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/LOW-Res-Seasonal-Local-Food-Wallchart.pdf>

34 <https://www.visitlancashire.com/food-and-drink/lancashire-food-produce/lancashire-producers>

35 <https://www.lancashirelife.co.uk/food-drink/2018-lancashire-life-food-and-drink-awards-the-shortlists-1-5714822>

resilient food system. Columns are then shared on our blog³⁶ (daily page views 51), and shared via Facebook (maximum page reach of 5836) and Twitter (2374 maximum impressions)- under 'Feeding Lancaster'.

Other events, including a '[Faces Behind Our Food](#)' photography exhibition (1198 people viewed the online exhibition in 2017 and 11962+ attended the live exhibition), film screenings, talks and food festivals are also used to promote and explore local food businesses' values. The Feeding Body and Soul exhibition³⁷ run in 2018 was viewed by an estimated 8816 people.

Sharon Peacock of Cockerham Boers commented on their involvement with these tools: *"The markets and the other local food events offer multiple benefits for us: from raising awareness directly of our products to generally raising awareness of the higher sustainability of some local products, which in turn leads more customers to question their purchasing choices and ultimately to buy products from us and other smaller producers. Being a part of the Sustainable Food City Lancaster group has helped with the change in the ratio of local and distance sales in the last few years and we hope for this trend to continue with the ongoing support of the group. The Faces Behind our Food exhibition was fantastic to be involved with as...this event enabled us to pass a type of information to the consumer that they may otherwise not have discovered - our story, motivations and the environmental and animal welfare values underlying our business. The online food directory is also a fantastic resource for raising awareness of local food businesses...Raising awareness about the need for more sustainable and resilient food systems with consumers is very difficult for the small producer who stands alone. It is therefore vital that there are support groups who can help small businesses get this sort of message across.*

4 Efforts are being made to increase consumer spending in independent local food businesses through the introduction of local currency and loyalty schemes. 1 point

4a Summary of action/outcome:

In conjunction with a local food pledge campaign^{38 39}, an Independent Lancaster loyalty card has been established: <http://www.independent-lancaster.co.uk/>. The card aims to encourage shoppers to spend their money locally by supporting the independent businesses in and around Lancaster. Traders can join the scheme for free just by pledging a discount or offer of their

36 www.lessuk.org/blog

37 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2018/09/26/women-in-farming/>

38 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/05/21/220/>

39 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/06/02/a-message-from-a-pledger/>

choice to reward cardholders with. The cardholders then simply have to shop at the business or buy the requisite item/s and show their card to claim their offer. Independent Lancaster currently has fifty-five local businesses supporting the card and over three hundred loyalty cards distributed. Participating local and more sustainable food businesses include The Sunbury Coffee House (offers a vegan menu); the Borough (part of ESTA and offers a range of seasonal dishes that use local ingredients); Roots Vegetarian Cafe (offers healthy 'take away food and uses local, seasonal and sustainable ingredients); Whale Tail Cafe (vegetarian restaurant that sources local and sustainable ingredients) and Lancaster Brewery. An Independent Lancaster Story trail has been created to promote Independent Lancaster businesses⁴⁰ and is promoted via our local Tourist Information Office and BID.

A food loop game was created in 2015 to track and evidence the value of spending money locally in Lancaster through the creation of local money loops⁴¹. The Food Loop Game essentially⁴² tracked spending in Lancaster's local food economy in real time and demonstrates the benefits of spending money locally through regular updates via infographics posted on the game's Facebook page⁴³- please see the example below. In September 2016 £12,519.66 had been spent by players and 139% of this had been re-spent by food retailers with other local food suppliers. The total value of goods bought equated to £29,924 and 43 money loops had been created.

40 <https://visitlancaster.org.uk/see-and-do/lancasters-independent-story-trail-guide/>

41 <http://www.lessuk.org/blog/2015/07/23/introducing-the-food-loop-game/>

42 lancasterfoodloopgame.weebly.com

43 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/380260925504448/>

Total number of Customer Trades 1164	01-Sep-16 average cost of each customer trade £10.76	£12,519.66 Total Customer Spend	
139.0% Percentage of Customer spend re-spent by retailers	Total local value of the money spent so far £29,924.71	£9,961.50 79.6% <small>£17,405.05</small> <small>£9,978.96</small>	
	Retailers Re-spend2 (Link2)	£5,249.17	41.9%
	Retailers Re-spend3 (Link2)	£2,041.17	16.3%
	Retailers Re-spend4 (Link4)	£153.21	1.2%
	Retailers Re-spend5 (Link5)	£0.00	0.0%
	Retailers Re-spend6 (Link6)	£0.00	0.0%
LM Value 2.39	Number of Loops Created 43		
	Value of all money 'caught' in a loop	£271.40	
£17,405.05	Added value in the local Food Economy		

Over a two year, Lancaster Food Loop tracked the local food spending of thirty people and how that spending continued to work within the local food supply chain. It was able to demonstrate how a retail spending of £26,544 went on to facilitate a further £41,093 worth of trade in the local food supply economy. This represented a multiplier value of 154%, which is well above average for local spending. There were a total of 2322 customer purchases averaging £11.43 each with 132 local food retailers with the additional value being added for an additional 45 suppliers.

Michael Hallam of Small Green Consultancy is now voluntarily developing the Food Loop Game into 'Local Loop Game'(LLG) which considers the whole local economy rather than just food. Michael has focused his time on developing a mobile app that can streamline data collection and processing. In February 2017 a Masters Student completed a thesis on the LLG; proposing algorithms that could be used to analyse data and identify money loops. Shadowcat Systems, a Lancaster-based open source developer, used this work to develop the 'local loop' mobile app on a voluntary basis. This app is currently being tested by several people. As of August 2017 the game had 80 registered players.

This new version will more actively link customers and businesses together with bargain and discount offers for 'loyal' local customers and will offer feedback on whose spend is having the biggest impact on generating turnover and adding value to the local food economy.

- 7 Local producers can connect direct with consumers and/or better access wholesale and retail markets through events, on-line tools and cooperative marketing and retailing initiatives. **1 point**

7a Summary of action/outcome:

- Lancaster's online [local food directory](#) (average of 24 unique views each month) lists independent local food businesses - including local food producers that consumers can buy directly from. A number of veg box schemes and farm shops are promoted through this, the weekly food columns, in addition to handing out leaflets at local events.
- Two weekly charter markets are held in Lancaster which bring local food producers into direct contact with consumers e.g. Billy's Eggs and Manseurgh Hall. To complement charter markets, quarterly seasonal markets have been organised by LESS to tie in with the seasons: Spring, Midsummer, Harvest and Midwinter, and to bring small local food producers into the city centre who cannot commit to the weekly charter markets. Each market brings between 15-30 local food businesses and community food initiatives into Lancaster's central market square, and demonstrations are run as part of these events. Over the three years they have run they reliably see around 600-700 people attend each event and food producers have included Growing With Grace, Cockerham Boers, Growing With Nature, the Average Cabbage, Backsbottom Farm, Billy's Eggs, Bowland Smokehouse, Simply Country & Co, Claver Hill, Filberts Bakery, Doormouse Cheeses, Borough Brewery, the Coppice Coop, the Fig Tree etc. Since starting these seasonal markets we have noticed

more local food producers attending the charter market and during the summer months Lancaster City Council has started offering free market pitches to new traders. It also offers budding entrepreneurs the opportunity to have free Wednesday charter market pitches for the first four weeks of trading.

- A Food Assembly was trialled in Lancaster but didn't work. This project is being reviewed with the aim of developing an adapted model better suited to Lancaster. This development work will occur alongside the development of a local FarmStart project which we are initiating this year⁴⁴. The next step to achieving a cooperative local food delivery scheme will be to test appetite by running a weekly local food stall at Lancaster's charter market (we plan to trial this in May 2019). This will sell a variety of local food products – supplied by our seasonal market producers and more- and we will rotate who mans the stall.
- A Community Economic Development(CED) Plan⁴⁵ was completed in March 2016. This lays out a strategy for increasing access to local food in Lancaster District. The report drew on the Growing Our Local Food Economy's engagement work with over 600 consumers; more than 210 food businesses; two undergraduate research projects and other stakeholders.

44 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1beLDSVNbaZY04-f0bMY4rej-p8zKPgIk/view>

45 www.lessuk.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/LESS-CED-Plan-March-2016.pdf

The report identified and proposed solutions to overcoming barriers to buying and distributing local food - offering a great basis from which to develop a cooperative local food delivery scheme.

9 Any other 'significant' action/outcome that promotes a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy.

1 point

9a Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze):

LESS has completed a FarmStart Feasibility report⁴⁶ that aims to support new entrants into organic+ farming. This projects' long-term vision aligns with SFC Lancaster's strategy: a ring of thriving and financially viable small agro-ecological producers around the city that collaborate to supply local people with sustainable, healthy and affordable food. The Feasibility Report provides more details around our approach to achieving this vision.

Whilst we secure land for the initial FarmStart training site over the next year (we ran two co-design sessions with key partners to inform this work), we have secured funding to run a FarmStart organic growers support course during the 2019 growing season. This starts in April and will involve one key training day per month for 23 local residents, delivered by local organic farmers on several organic farms in Lancaster District: Growing Well, Growing With Grace, Backsbottom Farm, Claver Hill and the Eco Hub at Lancaster University. This course aims to develop an interested and invested community in the long term FarmStart vision, whilst also building relationships with experienced local organic farmers.

TOTAL POINTS AWARDED

46 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1beLDSVNbaZY04-f0bMY4rej-p8zKPgIk/view>

KEY ISSUE 5:TRANSFORMING CATERING AND FOOD PROCUREMENT

1 A cross-sector sustainable food procurement working group, network or equivalent forum has been established to bring together procurement officers, caterers, suppliers and other decision-makers. *1 point*

1a Summary of action/outcome:

A cross-sector Food Economy & Local Food Procurement working group has been created that meets every three months and is chaired by the former business manager at Growing Well - a local organic care farm. It has representatives from Backsbottom Farm, Growing Well, Single Step wholefood cooperative, Landworkers' Alliance, Lancaster City Council, Feedback, a local land trust, LESS and Lancaster University and the Lancaster Royal Infirmary. SFC Lancaster's coordinator currently minutes these meetings and the chair reports back to the quarterly food partnership meetings. The group is working towards its short term and long term aims, found in the [SFC Lancaster's Action Plan](#).

Sustainable and local food procurement by local institutions is one key long term aim of this group. To support the group in achieving this, it has partnered on an N8 project that is paying Lucy Antal to scope options and barriers for key stone institutions in Lancaster and Leeds to procure local and sustainable food. Not only will it interview and build relationships with Lancaster's hospital, school and university catering departments, but it will interview small scale and large scale local food producers regarding selling to these institutions. The work has also expanded to include a second strand of paid work around how Brexit may or may not affect current food procurement contracts. One key outcome of this work will be a report that offers guidance on key next steps for supporting Lancaster's keystone institutions in procuring sustainable and local food. We plan to find funding for follow up work to help us in delivering the project's recommendations.

We are aware of a supply issue in regard to meeting large scale contracts, if and when they become a reality for local food producers. The FarmStart project seeks to start the long process of working towards the gap between local supply and demand, with parallel work looking into local distribution networks and models.

3 **Individual public sector bodies have adopted healthy and sustainable food policies e.g. nutrition standards, healthy options in catering and vending, ‘tap water only’ policies and/or ethical standards such as cage-free eggs, sustainable fish and *Fairtrade*.**

1 point

3a **Summary of action/outcome:**

- Lancashire County Council’s Social Value Policy and Framework references Fairtrade food, working towards a living wage, reducing waste, and sustainable sourcing⁴⁷. This policy sets out the legal context for social value and the approach Lancashire County Council (LCC) should adopt to deliver social value through commissioning and procurement activities. This policy applies to Lancashire’s District Councils – including Lancaster City Council- and procurement at the County level also covers services in Lancaster. Trading standards at Lancashire County Council also include Breast Feeding Friendly as part of the award criteria for their recipe⁴health award scheme for high street restaurants and cafes⁴⁸.
- Lancashire County Commercial Group is a member of the Lancashire Healthy Eating Development Group, a part of the Lancashire Healthy Schools Programme⁴⁹. The group was formed and tasked with developing a nutritional policy for school lunches in Lancashire which links with school objectives. As a result, Lancashire Catering Services provides school meals to 70-80% of schools across Lancashire (including in Lancaster) with reduced salt, sugar and fat, and age appropriate calories based on professional nutritional advice. It is also working with 15 schools across Lancashire, 2 of which, Ryelands and Westgate are in Lancaster, towards the Soil Association Food for Life Programme to improve food culture. As part of this scheme schools will be required to have a school food policy with a timetable for action around offering more healthy and sustainable food.
- The University Hospital Trust of Morecambe Bay’s 2016 Food & Drink Policy references a Sustainable Food Policy. It states a commitment to buying products that: reduce the carbon footprint of the Trust, support local businesses, farmers and producers. It states *‘When the menu planning group are planning menus for both patients and the restaurant they*

47 <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/898255/approved-social-value-policy-and-framework.pdf>

48 <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/recipe-4-health/recipe-4-health-award/>

49 <http://servinglancashire.org.uk/catering/cateringNutritionalInfo.php#>

will take into consideration: The availability of locally produced/grown seasonal products. To not use fish species that may be deemed as being at risk by the Marine Conservation Society. Use ingredients that cause minimum harm to the environment e.g. through farming methods. Cooking methods that reduce water, electric and gas consumption. Fairtrade coffee is used in the restaurants and vending machines. Food packaging where possible is recyclable. Purchase food low in additives and salt content'. Its Sustainable Food Procurement document⁵⁰ references Sustain's Seven Principles of Sustainable Food and the policy's KPI's include: 'List the food from farming systems that minimise harm to the environment, such as certified organic produce, actively take part in at least one certified schemes in any one year; ensure that 80% of meat, dairy products and eggs are produced to high environmental and animal welfare standards; exclude all fish species from the menu as identified as most at risk by the Marine Conservation Society, and only choose fish from sustainable sources, such as those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council; Avoid bottled water and instead serve plain or filtered tap water in reusable jugs or bottles at all patient bed sides.'

- In 2018 Lancaster City Council 'pledged its support to tackling the scourge of plastic waste' with the launch of a plastic campaign;⁵¹ focusing on reducing single use plastic bottles and disposable coffee cups with the simple message of reduce, refill, recycle. A working group was established to support this campaign and have developed informal policy. As part of this work it committed to installing water fountains around Lancaster District and started this process in 2018⁵² and is running a 'refill' scheme. Biodegradable coffee cups have also been introduced in its retail outlets e.g. Williamson Park, and measures have been taken to eliminate the sale of non-recyclable single-use take-out cups, slush cups, plastic straws and cutlery. It has also adapted its event organiser requirements to include no use of 'single use plastics'.
- Lancaster District is a Fairtrade District and as part of this scheme Lancaster City Council has a policy of committing to promote awareness of Fairtrade; to allocate Fairtrade District responsibilities to a member of staff; to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee at its meetings; to make it easy for district residents, tourists and businesses to locate local Fairtrade

50 https://www.uhmb.nhs.uk/files/6215/1067/2098/Sustainable_Food_Procurement__Management_of_V2.0.pdf

51 <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/news/2018/aug/everywhere-you-go-always-take-your-water-with-you>

52 <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/news/2018/aug/everywhere-you-go-always-take-your-water-with-you>

suppliers; to attract and encourage Fairtrade press coverage; to support Lancaster, Morecambe and District Fairtrade Group.^{53 54}

4 Public sector organisations and large private caterers have achieved quality, healthy, sustainable and/or ethical food accreditation, such as the *Food for Life Served Here*, *Sustainable Fish*, *Good Egg* and other awards. **1 point**

4a Summary of action/outcome:

- Lancashire County Council's School and Residential Care Catering group was awarded the Soil Association's Silver Food for Life Catering Mark in recognition of the fresh and healthy meals it serves in schools and care homes. The award is a commendation for the 70,000 meals served every day in 485 primary and secondary schools and in 23 care homes across the county for pupils, students and adults. When asked for data regarding how many Lancaster District schools this applied to, Lancaster City Council confirmed a total of 1,128,790 meals served annually in 51 Lancaster primary schools and 117,610 served annually in two Lancaster secondary schools. (This data was based on the 2017-18 academic year.) Regarding care homes this equated to 16836+ meals served in three care homes in Lancaster.

In brief, the Food For Life Silver award recognises schools that serve meals with proper crockery as opposed to plastic 'flight trays'; the standard requires schools to serve food that is healthy, ethical and uses some local and organic ingredients (a minimum of 5% organic ingredients used in menus), they should have a cooking club where pupils get to cook with and eat produce grown in school at least once a term and the school should be involving parents and the wider community in food education via food-themed events etc^{55 56}.

53 <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/information/fairtrade>

54 <https://committeeadmin.lancaster.gov.uk/documents/s8223/Sustainable%20procurement%20policy%20appendix.pdf>

55 <https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/schools/criteria-and-guidance>

56 [https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/~media/files/criteria%20and%20guidance/894-00-ffl-criteria_silver-gold---final-artwork.pdf](https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/~/media/files/criteria%20and%20guidance/894-00-ffl-criteria_silver-gold---final-artwork.pdf)

- One of Lancaster University's retail outlets have achieved Gold Food for Life standards, seven have achieved silver and one bronze.^{57,58} Julian Ankers, the former Executive Head Chef at Lancaster University wrote a column about this work in 2015.

He said: "The food we serve to students on campus is very diverse. We cater for a wide range of dietary requirements and religious beliefs. Customers are therefore given the information they need to make an informed choice when buying food, and we change the menus to match the seasons. Some food outlets, like the lounge, offer a menu guided by homemade and seasonal produce. To support our local food economy we use local suppliers for our meat, vegetables, smoked products and dairy. I also run many cookery events across campus for students and staff alike. We have been working with the Soil Association on the Food for Life partnership, and... hold two gold awards, one silver and four bronze awards. We were recently awarded the best University caterer by CUBO (College and University Business Organisations), which has helped us to adopt an approach to menu design that accounts for local ingredients. This has helped us move towards becoming the 'supplier of choice' on campus that boasts both retail and food outlets."

The gold and silver standards are a huge achievement, ensuring that caterers are 'sourcing higher welfare, ethically produced ingredients, such as Free Range, organic, MSC certified, Fairtrade, Leaf marque and RSPCA assured'; they are sourcing ingredients for the local area and the UK and are 'taking steps to make healthy eating easier for customers, such as by reducing salt and sugar, introducing pulses and vegetables to menus and using wholegrain ingredients'.

- All of Lancaster University's own retail outlets and service types only sell Free Range eggs, no GMOs and no fish are served from the (MCS) 'fish to avoid' list etc⁵⁹. Further details regarding number of meals served was not available.

57 <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/eat/accreditations.php>

58 <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/eat/news/lancaster-university-achieves-food-for-life-catering-mark-once-again>

59 <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/eat/policy.php>

KEY ISSUE 6:REDUCING WASTE AND THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM

- 2 **Farmers, growers and land managers are being provided with training, advice and support on how to adopt low ecological impact production and management techniques such as organic, permaculture and pesticide free.**

1 point

Summary of action/outcome:

Lancaster District has a number of training opportunities, advice and support available on how to adopt low ecological impact production and management techniques such as organic, Permaculture and pesticide free growing. Opportunities include:

- Backsbottom Farm and Middlewood Trust is a registered LAND centre⁶⁰ located in Lancaster District. It offers a variety of formal and informal Permaculture training opportunities, including an annual Permaculture Design Course⁶¹. Rod Everett, the man behind Middlewood Trust, also runs 'slow the flow' training and has worked with farmers and the Rivers Trust around the Lune Valley in Lancaster District to manage flooding using low impact and more sustainable techniques e.g. leaky dams.
- Bill Grayson in the Silverdale area offers advice on nature reserve management to Farmers in the District and has supported farmers in developing their land to support greater biodiversity. The Coppice Coop, based in North Lancashire, also provides training and volunteer opportunities to learn about more sustainable woodland management practices⁶².
- South Lakeland Orchard Group runs orchard workshops and Transition City Lancaster organises annual fruit tree grafting and pruning sessions and seed saving workshops that act as an informal forum for discussing forest gardening and permaculture techniques.
- Lancaster University has collaborated with a range of stakeholders to offer training for local farmers. For example it is in the process of planning workshops in collaboration with Natural England and local conservation groups for farmers in Lancashire and Cumbria that focus on soil health and management (Spring/Summer 2019). This initiative will involve

60 <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/land>

61 <http://www.rodspermaculture.co.uk/courses.html>

62 <http://coppicecoop.co.uk/wp/>

researchers from the university and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and will provide training in soil health indicators for farmers and management techniques relevant to the local region for improving soil health. SFC Lancaster hopes to develop this sort of collaborative work going forwards.

Lancaster University has also run an N8 AgriFood workshop on Grassland and Grazing systems at Myerscough College (November 2018). This event offered advice and support to farmers and Myerscough agricultural students around the challenges of designing more sustainable grassland systems. The main aim of the workshop was to build collaborative networks around areas including soil health, reducing inputs and managing land for positive environmental and societal outcomes. This event led to the funding of research projects which were co-designed with farming stakeholders.

- A number of Lancaster's community food projects also run workshops and offer advice on organic and permaculture farming practices. For example Claver Hill has run regular workshops on no dig gardening, grafting and pruning. Scotch Quarry has been training people in 'growing nature connected communities' using the 8 shields model and has run coppicing courses. Lancaster University's EcoHub offers opportunities for students and staff at the university interested in growing to learn low ecological impact techniques and has also run an Introduction to Permaculture Training Course.
- LESS's FarmStart Growers support course, commencing April 2019, focuses on organic and Permaculture farming methods and is being delivered by local organic farmers. It is hoped that this training will be run annually going forwards.

5 Producers, processors, retailers, caterers and the wider business community are better able to access training on how to reduce food packaging and waste and how to improve energy, water and other resource efficiency. *1 point*

5a Summary of action/outcome:

- A funded internship with the Global Eco Innovation department at Lancaster University has been secured by SFC Lancaster to conduct an environment audit of charter market and seasonal market traders to support them in reducing their ecological footprints and remove the use of single use plastics – supporting them in complying with Lancaster City Council's single use plastic policy. This work commenced this month (February) and, in addition to offering market traders support in reducing their ecological footprints, a best guidance book will be produced from this work and will be shared with other local food businesses. This work will address energy and water consumption, waste, food miles and banking.
- Lancaster University's Centre for Eco Innovation runs a number of projects with regional businesses – including food businesses - which aim to reduce CO2 emissions and at the same time to support the businesses. As part of its work it

has carried out an audit of Lancaster University campus businesses and discussions were held via forums with businesses to provide support to reduce packaging and waste.

- Lancaster University runs a [Low Carbon Innovation Forum](#) that brings SMEs together to complete workshops, masterclasses and to discuss ways in which they can address challenges such as plastics. A big element of the Low Carbon Innovation Forum is the peer to peer development and new working partnerships between businesses has been one of the main outcomes from previous cohorts. Participants included local dairy business - Stephenson's Dairy - who commented 'the standout experience of the Low Carbon Innovation Forum was the company visit to Lancaster City Council, at which the participating SMEs saw for themselves the scale of today's plastic waste challenge. "Up to then, I felt we were really doing something," she says, talking about how the Forum enables like-minded business people to rethink their processes and seek out a competitive advantage'. Since the Forum Stephenson Dairy has gone on to work with another local food business- Atkinson's- to collaborate around reducing their carbon footprint and waste.

8 Local charities and social enterprises are collecting consumable surplus food and redistributing it to organisations feeding people in need, while working to raise the nutritional standards of the food aid being offered.

1 point

8a Summary of action/outcome:

A number of local charities and social enterprises collect surplus food, redistribute it and are working to raise the nutritional standards of food aid being offered. The following map was created to raise awareness of key people and projects working around this agenda as part of a series of 'going beyond food poverty meetings' held in Lancaster in 2018:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1GUdoKcRMfJIP4vhDHo9wDTv-lwMhquiw&ll=54.03874187570969%2C-2.8894031608949717&z=12>. (The organisations located in the sea are national networks and therefore not physically locally based.)

To support this work in becoming more efficient and sustainable, two new initiatives are commencing in Lancaster. The lease for a local food depot is being signed as we write. This will support surplus local food in being dropped off in a location central to Lancaster and Morecambe, allowing easier access for local organisations to collect food (rather than them having to drive to Preston- identified as a barrier to this work scaling up). Feedback are also training up a local gleaning coordinator -starting this month- and will supply contacts for local farms to glean from. This project aims to collect surplus from local farms and gardens (and ideally pay something for produce) and deliver this to the local food depot for distribution and potentially processing as well.

The key organisations that will end up using the depot include

- A network of 11 food clubs around Lancaster that each distribute food to between 25 - 60 members per week (plus each has waiting list.) Food club users are exposed to new foods, including new fruit and vegetables, and cooking suggestions and recipe cards are shared.
- Three key local food banks distribute an estimated 9 tonnes of food per week. The biggest is Morcambe Bay Food Bank that provides emergency provisions of up to 600 per month, using a recorded tonne of surplus food from Morrison's, Lidl and Bookers especially milk and veg fruit and veg. To support the food bank's work, Claver Hill community food project has established a 'giving beds' project that is growing veg, using organic methods, to distribute through the food bank and increase access to fresh vegetables for food bank users.
- The recently established Global Village Cafe⁶³- run by refugees and asylum seekers- offers catering for a variety of events that include community meals. They also utilise surplus local produce to help in bringing costs down, whilst keeping food fresh.

Other initiatives working around this agenda include the Lancaster University Community Fridge. It has 41 volunteers that collect and facilitate the distribution of surplus food on campus to students and other people who walk through the campus. The project currently has 1525 followers on Facebook and has a University-wide presence. They saved an estimated 1.5 tonnes of food from the general waste stream in its first year November 2017 - September 2018 and subsequently ~1 tonne* CO₂e of avoided landfill emissions and ~5 tonnes** CO₂e of avoided food production and transportation emissions (of food that would otherwise have been purchased by the end-user). It is now internationally recognised with messages from various universities in Canada, Australia, UK. This group, alongside Green Lancaster and Feedback also organised a Harvest Festival to support the University in 'popping the campus bubble' - helping them get local food producers to attend to help raise awareness of food waste issues and local food initiatives. Photos from the festival can be found [online](#). As part of the festival a couple of gleaning trips and a Disco Soup event (under the name of a Nutritional Disco) were held at Lancaster University. Around 400 people attended.

9 Any other 'significant' action/outcome that reduces waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.

1 point

9a Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze):

As a group we feel the above categories do not quite capture the work we are doing, and so feel the below is worth recognising as it is what we have chosen to focus our long term strategy on.

SFC Lancaster's Food & Environment working group meets every six weeks to develop and implement a strategy around reducing the ecological footprint of our unique local food system in Lancaster. This is incorporated into [SFC Lancaster's Action Plan](#). A key long term strategy of this work is to support Lancaster City Council in meeting its updated target to become zero carbon by 2030 and for its climate strategy to meaningfully and holistically address food. It similarly seeks to support the council's single use plastic policy in being implemented!

To facilitate the climate strategy work, Martin Paley – the group's chair- spoke at a council meeting that debated the motion to declare a climate emergency. This motion was passed and we have since been invited (and accepted) to sit on a council climate liason group. A local councillor- Kevin Frea- hosted a Climate Emergency summit at Lancaster Town Hall at the end of March 2019 that was targetted at local authorities. Food and Environment group reps ran two workshops at this event where we explored how localities can leverage action around climate change through food- drawing on SFC Lancaster and other case studies. A second session was run around climate change, food waste and poverty- how these issues are interlinked and need to be holistically addressed ⁶⁴. This was supported by Richard Walsh- the chair of Lancaster's food poverty and access working group (and a city officer). Going forwards SFC Lancaster will feed into the strategy for reaching the ambitious zero carbon target by 2030, ensuring that food is not missed out of discussions and action taken is holistic. We also plan to regularly attend council meetings to question progress on meeting carbon targets in an attempt to ensure it does not get lost. We also seek to collaborate with other SFC groups to share how best to approach the recent flurry of climate emergency declarations and ensure food is incorporated into long term responses; with the hope of running a workshop around this topic at 2019's SFC National gathering.

To support work around the council's plastic policy, this group has secured a funded internship with the Global Eco Innovation department at Lancaster University to conduct an environment audit of charter market traders to support them in reducing their ecological footprints and remove the use of single use plastics – supporting them in complying with Lancaster City Council's single use plastic policy. This work commenced in February and, in addition to offering market traders support, a best guidance book will be produced from this work and will be shared with other local food businesses. A campaign is also incorporated into this work that encourages businesses to 'work out loud' and shout about what they are doing well with regards to going plastic free and reducing their ecological footprint.

The Food & Environment working group is also running a Seastraw campaign and is planning a community composting scheme trial that will hopefully be incorporated into a Green City Councillor's manifesto in the upcoming local elections. It is also developing a funding bid to run a programme of sustainable food/ climate related events during 2019/20.