

# Eating Affordances and Decent Helpings: Working Together to Reduce Food Poverty and Improve Public Health

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## Overview:

There is an emerging context of social support withdrawal as a result of funding withdrawal by central government is creating a context within which individuals, households and communities are having to increasingly seek support from third-sector organisations in the UK. This is happening through:

- ⇒ The introduction and eventual rollout of Universal Credit is contributing further to these inequalities, but there also may be opportunities for improving diets.
- ⇒ There is a squeeze on the abilities of local authorities to support their communities as local authority remits have expanded to include addressing diet-related public health and public health inequalities, which include health inequalities that arise out of food poverty. Local authorities will also become responsible for supporting the way in which individuals and families will have to cope with the transition to Universal Credit. At the same time, as local authority remits are expanding they are facing draconian cuts to their budgets such that there are staff reductions resulting in cuts to the capacity of the LA to deliver programmes.
- ⇒ There has been a rise in community and third-sector organisations who are concerned with helping to reduce health inequalities by helping to reduce food poverty.

**Given the importance that resilience is playing in helping local authorities to resolve the gaps that austerity is creating, it is clear that more research is needed that examines the dimensions of resilience (adapting, coping, transforming). Specifically with regard to how:**

- ⇒ **Activities within these three areas can contribute to different scales of resilience (individual, household, community, and local authority area);**
- ⇒ **How collectively activities within an area contribute to a landscape of resilience enabling support.**

A more collaborative approach may enable local authorities to better work with these third-sector organisations to best realise the possibilities that partnership could provide. **Recommendations for more collaborative working are detailed** in this report and are based on community-based research, participant observation, consultation with community organisations and local authorities, and the outcomes of a co-production workshop.

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# Eating Affordances and Decent Helpings: Working Together to Reduce Food Poverty and Improve Public Health

## 1. Introduction: Feeding Affordances and Decent Helpings

For some time discussions of global hunger have tended to focus on national level statistics that demonstrate wealth and current food abundance in industrialised nations compared to those that are less industrialised. Within this global dialogue, some scientists are warning that population growth, increased urbanisation, and resources depletion is producing a context for global food insecurity. This warning has led governments, international organisations and industry to focus on ensuring that enough food is produced and entered into a global marketplace, without adequately considering how people will be able to access that food. Others acknowledge that people are hungry now, even in countries that have an abundance of food, including countries that are the wealthiest in the world.

Fortunately, the problem of ensuring that there is access to enough food that is healthy, safe, and affordable for people to eat is becoming a talking point in those wealthy countries and different approaches have arisen to address this problem. On the one hand, the food sovereignty movement is a radical approach aimed at changing the structure of the food system in order to return the ownership of resources associated with food production to those who do the work of producing the food. Similar to Food Sovereignty, Food Justice is based on the notion that all people should have access to food to meet their needs and is sourced in a manner that is fair. Food Justice, however, differs from Food Sovereignty in some important ways. Firstly, Food Justice tends to start with the eaters of food, rather than the producers of food, with the aim of understanding and changing the food system to reduce hunger that is endemic for certain groups, improve the access to and the availability of food that is healthy, high quality and culturally appropriate for those living in underserved areas, and to ensure that those who are working in that food system are fairly compensated for their effort. Secondly, the Food Justice approach tends to adopt primarily a progressive stance toward acting against food poverty and food insecurity through a reformation of existing systems with the eventual goal of altering social values along the way but first and foremost the aim is to address the needs of eaters right now. By focusing on eaters, the Food Justice approach also reveals new questions around how people can access food that is safe, affordable, culturally appropriate, and that contribute to a healthy diet that are linked to the ways in which eaters are situated within social, physical, economic, and political contexts.

This research extends from the Food Justice approach to offer ways in which local government might work with third-sector organisations to effectively deliver programmes and resources that

move us beyond a reliance on food banks to support continuous access to healthy, safe, culturally appropriate and affordable food; reduce the burden of diet-related non-communicable disease on public services and within communities and families; and support the economic and social well-being of communities through food.

This remainder of this report is structured by a collaborative research methodology developed for this research that is modelled on a SWOT analysis. Although SWOT is used primarily in organisational strategy development, its structure lends itself well as a participatory methodology because it enables both data gathering and analysis that is focused and which seeks to combine both real experience and larger contextual forces. Thus, the SWOT methodology as a data gathering phase that for this research involved undertaking a community case study followed by a collaborative SWOT workshop attended by forty participants. Participants included representatives from a range of food related third-sector organisation, local government public health workers, and academics who study food poverty. In the SWOT workshop, data is gathered along two dimensions by posing the following questions: a) what are the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organisations involved in delivering solutions to food poverty and the related health implications of food poverty (i.e., what is under the control of the organisation(s)) and b) what is the nature, both positive and negative, of the context within which the organisation (s) find themselves, labelled as opportunities and threats. The specifics of the data gathering are described more fully in the methodology chapter (section 5), and in Appendix A. The product of a collaborative workshop using the SWOT approach is presented in Appendix B. The analysis of the data then involves inverting the SWOT structure to consider firstly, Threats and Opportunities then secondly, Weaknesses and Strengths (TOWS). To pull the collaborative aspects of the research through the whole of the project, an earlier draft of this report was circulated for comments from representatives from the community case study and all those who attended the workshop. Comments were also solicited from several local authority public health directors in the North of England, and a number of other organisations who support third-sector development or who are engaged in addressing the issue of food poverty who were not in attendance. Approximately 20 individuals offered comments, which are reflected in this final report.

The main findings of the research are elaborated in Sections two, three, and four. Section two focuses on the first two aspects of TOWS (Threats and Opportunities) identified by the data gathering phases. These contextual elements are supported by further information gathered from existing published research, grey literature, and when this was unavailable expert comment and news coverage. This review helps to frame the possibilities and the context within which community resilience may occur and change can happen. Section three turns to consider weaknesses and strengths that are internal to third-sector organisations and local authorities. This discussion is derived primarily from the research data, comments from participants at the SWOT workshop, and solicited feedback. Importantly, many of the strengths of local authorities map onto weaknesses of third-sector organisations, thereby suggesting there is an abundance of opportunity for productive working together. Section four addresses the next stage of the analysis. In this part of the analysis weaknesses and strengths are matched to identify ways that objectives can be achieved, opportunities are maximised, and the impact of threats may be minimised. In this case the objectives of the research are threefold: First, to identify mechanisms that can be mobilised to support community resilience in the face of contextual threats; second, to offer suggestions that

would help both third-sector organisations and local government to overcome internal weaknesses within the system that leave communities vulnerable to contextual threats; and third to propose pathways that would enable third-sector /local authority relationships that take advantage of opportunities that are presented.

## **2 Threats and opportunities for enabling food justice through local authority collaborations with the third-sector**

### **2.1 The current context of food poverty in England**

Today in the United Kingdom there are nearly five million people who are living as food insecure (Resolution Foundation 2014), which for context equates to about half of the population of London or two cities the size of Greater Manchester. Professor Wendy Wills, as quoted by the Fabian Commission in their Food and Poverty report (2015), defines this as *those who are unable to acquire or consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food made available in socially acceptable ways or who have the (regular) uncertainty that they will be able to do so*. At the same time, the Malnutrition Task Force (2016) reports that just over one-third of the approximately three million people who are malnourished in the UK are elderly with the vast majority living in the community (approximately 93%). There are no clear figures on the number of children living in food insecure households, but we do know that approximately 1.6 million children are living in severe poverty (Save the Children, 2012). Moreover, reports indicate that for school-aged children living in these households, the only hot meal they will get is the one they receive through school lunch programmes, meaning that these families struggle more during school holidays.

In the UK, the term food poverty has emerged to describe those families and individuals who are not able to purchase food that is healthy and safe because of a lack of household financial resources (for a review see Dowler et al 2001). In 2013 Oxfam UK estimated that “36% of the UK population was just one heating bill or broken washing machine away from hardship”. But the truth is we do not know the extent of food poverty in the UK because we do not keep any statistics that specifically measure household food insecurity, despite the fact that there is a well-tested and internationally recommended way to do so (Food Foundation, 2016). Instead, we rely on data collected by emergency food providers themselves. The largest emergency food provider is the Trussell Trust, which reported that the first six months of 2016 that they distributed more than half a million emergency food parcels. Their food parcels supply three days of meals, and is typically comprised of food that is donated into collection bins at supermarkets and other public locations or via food drives. People using Trussell Trust food pantries must be referred and this is usually, but not exclusively by a Jobcentre councilor. This form of food distribution is probably just the tip of the iceberg as the Trussell Trust do not capture those receiving food parcels from other sources. In Greater Manchester, for example there are 54 Trussell Trust distribution points, but a recent review undertaken by Greater Manchester Poverty Action revealed that there are at least 135 emergency food providers located in churches, community centres, charities, and local action groups (GMPA, 2017), thus suggesting that in some locations Trussell Trust data may be significantly undercounting those who access emergency food assistance.

The strategies that are used by families that are food insecure, which do not include accessing a

food bank (research suggest that food parcels are the last resort for most people who use them, Lambie-Mumford et al 2014), include parents forgoing meals to feed children, cutting back on portion sizes, balancing household food against household energy supply (e.g. forgoing heat and electricity for cooking) and trading down with regard to the food that they do purchase (e.g., buying lower quality, cheaper food that is filling). We also know qualitatively that there is a very wide range of ways that food related programmes provided by third-sector organisations support those who are in or at the edge of food poverty. This landscape of provision includes social eating accessed for free or very low cost, a donation, or via a time voucher or meal donations. Social cooking activities that may include cookery lessons in a community hall or school setting or cooking together for example in a hostel or hospice setting. There is also social redistribution via community shops or markets, community pantries and food exchanges that provide food to households or help to redistribute surplus food from producers and retailers to community facing organisations either for free or for a low cost to help cover the distribution and coordination costs. Some organisations also offer community growing activities as well.

In many cases a range of food focused activities are offered by a single organisation who may also provide a food parcel service for those who are in particular need (see appendix D for the variety of activities provided by community organisations in the case study community). In addition, the organisations who are undertaking these food related activities are frequently providing other non-food related services such as drug counseling, mental health support, legal support, information about employment, health screening and referrals, access to technology and the internet, volunteer opportunities, grief counseling, slipper swops for the elderly, activity programmes for children, and so forth. However, similar the situation regarding the data on those in need of food support, there is no systematic data on the quantity, quality, and variety of support that is available in places across the UK (this point is also elaborated in section 2.2).

As an indicator, FareShare, the largest food to third-sector, surplus-food redistributor supports nearly eight thousand organisations in the UK and they suggest that there may be more than thirty thousand organisations overall (though not all are supporting vulnerable populations). While community members declare the importance of these organisations to their lives and communities, we also have little understanding of how these organisations help solve food poverty in the long term. Likewise, we do not know the extent to which a mixed service delivery model compared to a single service delivery model is used by organisations that support hunger and the degree to which that distinction matters in both the short and longer term effort to address poverty in the UK. What is clear however is that there is a wide array of ways in which these organisations support those who find themselves in poverty. **As such, there is a need to find a new and more precise language that better represents this variety rather than relying on the single term, food bank, to represent all these organisations.**

Within the food poverty definitional context, income inequalities are foregrounded and aligned with nutritional divisions between foods that are low-quality in terms of their nutrient value and



Third-sector food provider

those that may be considered high-quality. While access to food in ways that are not subject to social stigma plays a key role in concepts of food justice or food security, much of food poverty practice tends to be less directly focused on how people access foods in ways that are fair. In other words, within this concept, emergency food parcels and soup kitchens become an acceptable response to the rising numbers of people who are unable to feed themselves. While these responses do go some way to supporting those who are hungry now, even food banks acknowledge that other solutions are needed (see Riches, 2002 for more on this debate).

Since the economic crash in 2008, the UK has seen increases in numbers of people presenting at food pantries or reporting that they have difficulty accessing food. The Doncaster-Edlington case study and the SWOT activity conducted for this research paints a grim picture of future expectations about increases in food poverty in England that is supported by emerging evidence from the grey literature. The first area, which is also underpinned by corroborative research, focuses on national policy shifts, specifically in the areas of welfare reform and cuts to local authority spending that has been spearheaded by central government as part of its austerity policy since 2010, but which is an extension of the neoliberalism that began under the Thatcher government. A third section focuses on changes in the context of the third-sector activity, some of which is the result of changes in local authority spending allocation and the drive by national level government to privatize services. While the discussion is not exhaustive, the material presented is intended to convey a sense of the cumulative impact of the political and economic contexts within which low-income people are seeking to survive and the ways that these contexts also shape the potential for response by local authorities and third-sector organisations.

Larger structural factors, such as the super-marketization of our food system and national level political ideology and the lack of a national level food poverty policy were also mentioned in the SWOT activity. While many of the third-sector organisations that participated in this research are undertaking some activity to try to make food available in ways the challenge or are alternative to a capitalist system or are lobbying government for changes in its overall policy stance, the fundamental concern was one around pragmatic, local and authority level responses and actions that could be taken to modify the effects of recent changes that have given rise to the current system. As such this report focuses primarily on how recent changes (since 2010) in the context of the UK impinge on the ways lower-income people access food in their communities. Furthermore, as there are a number of existing reports such as the Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty's *Hungry for Change*; the Church Action on Poverty, Oxfam and Trussell Trust's *Below the Breadline*, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Charitable Trust's *Feeding Britain: A strategy for zero hunger in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland*, among others that focus on and make recommendations for national-level policy responses this report does not consider nor make recommendations for action at national or international scale. Importantly, many of these reports also make recommendations for what local authorities might do but offer very little advice as to how they might undertake such action in the face of current budget constraints. For illustration Appendix, F lists policy recommendations from 5 of these reports.

The final area highlights concerns the vote to leave the European Union by the United Kingdom. While article 50, which triggers the process of leaving, has been invoked, there are as yet many unknowns about the potential implications for the UK food system scholars, third-sector



organisations and businesses are beginning to speculate on its implications with regard to food poverty. Despite the fact that article 50 has yet to be triggered, we are now beginning to see changes in currency markets that have implications for food prices. Participants did identify potential opportunities where a more equal food system might be found that included the possibility of reshaping our national food system away from the dependence on international and global supply linkages as a potential result of Brexit and/or local social mobilisation and increased national interest and awareness of the environmental and social problems with our current system, but the feeling was one that in order for change to work for everyone *there must also be a justice aspect included*, which would be a difficult task.

### 2.1.1 Welfare Reform

Much of the rise in the use of food banks since 2010 has been coincident with changes in British welfare policy. Benefit changes were first initiated under the coalition government, and the traces of this focus on change became visible almost immediately (Wilson 2016). A solidifying of this reform agenda is demonstrated in the introduction of the welfare reform act in 2012, which brought in a number of important and immediate institutional changes to the way benefits are provided to low-income households that have had further implications for family budgets and their ability to afford food. Since May 2015, a subsequent raft of welfare reform has been initiated that that promises to bring further change and financial losses for both benefits claimants and the communities in which they reside (Beatty and Fothergill 2016). Beatty and Fothergill estimate that the cumulative loss to the welfare spending because of changes since 2010 is approximately £27bn per year, which they equate to £690 for every working age adult.

Beatty and Fothergill (2016) highlight a number of reforms. There are two lists provided in Table 1; the first is pre-2015 followed by the 2015 reforms introduced by the Conservative government upon their election (lists based on Beatty and Fothergill 2016:6-8). All of the pre-2015 reforms were fully implemented by March 2016 with the exception of the changeover from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), which will be fully implemented by March 2018. Those within the second list are currently in the process of the roll-out. A further benefit reform, not discussed in the Beatty and Fothergill report is the introduction of Universal Credit, will replace or repackage a number of existing benefits. Pre-2015 reforms include (lists adapted from Beatty and Fothergill, 2016 pp6-8, they also offer a more expansive description of each reform as an appendix in their report).

Rather than review how all these reforms will affect individuals and families, the remainder of this section will highlight a few of these reforms and suggest how each individually has implications for the food security of individuals and families. The important message, however, is to consider the cumulative impact on individuals, families and communities, as it is quite likely that not only will people be affected by changes to a range of benefits but as Beatty and Fothergill point out, the reforms impact unevenly across the country and are felt disproportionately by families with children, but in particular single-parent families. They conclude that it is those local authorities with the greatest amount of deprivation who will also experience the greatest losses such as “older industrial areas, less prosperous seaside towns, some London boroughs and a number of other towns” will be hit the hardest, while “much of southern England and London escapes lightly” (2016, p3).

Reforms 2010-2015	Reforms 2015 onward
<p><b>Housing Benefit—Local housing allowance</b></p> <p>Changes to the rules governing assistance with the cost of housing for low-income households in the private rented sector. The new rules apply to rent levels, ‘excess’ payments, property size, age limits for sole occupancy and indexation for inflation.</p>	<p><b>Local Housing Authority cap in the social rented sector</b></p> <p>Housing Benefit in the social sector limited to the equivalent local private sector rate</p>
<p><b>Housing Benefit—Under-occupation in the social rented sector (bedroom tax)</b></p> <p>New rules governing the size of properties for which payments are made to working age claimants.</p>	<p><b>‘Pay to Stay’</b></p> <p>New requirement for higher-income tenants in the social rented sector in England to pay market rents, mandatory in local authority housing and voluntary for housing associations.</p>
<p><b>Non-dependent deductions</b></p> <p>Increases in the deductions from Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and other income-based benefits to reflect the contribution that non-dependent household members are expected to make towards the household’s housing costs (including adult children and lodgers).</p>	<p><b>Housing Benefit: 18-21 year olds</b></p> <p>End of automatic entitlement for out-of-work 18-21 year olds</p>
<p><b>Benefits cap</b></p> <p>New Ceiling on total payments per household, applying to the sum of a wide range of benefits for working age claimants.</p>	<p><b>Benefits Cap</b></p> <p>Lower ceiling per household than previous cap. Applicable to a total sum of a wide range of working age benefits.</p>
<p><b>Council Tax Support</b></p> <p>Reductions in entitlement of working age claimants arising from a 10% reduction in total payments to local authorities.</p>	<p><b>Mortgage interest support</b></p> <p>Change from a payment to a loan to be repaid</p>
<p><b>Personal Independence Payment</b></p> <p>Replaces Disability Living Allowance. Includes more stringent and frequent medical tests, as the basis for financial support to help offset the additional costs faced by individuals with disabilities.</p>	<p><b>Universal Credit</b></p> <p>Includes tapers and thresholds for withdrawal of benefits. Includes a reduction in the level of earnings and an increase in the rate at which Universal Credit awards are withdrawn. Universal Credit will replace or include tax credits including those listed in the left column</p>
<p><b>Employment Support Allowance (ESA)</b></p> <p>Replacement of Incapacity Benefit and related benefits by ESA, with more stringent medical tests, greater conditionality and time-limiting of non-</p>	<p><b>Employment Support Allowance (ESA)</b></p> <p>Reduction in payment to Job Seekers Allowance rate for new claimants in the Work-Related Activity</p>

means tested entitlement for claimants in the Work-Related Activity Group.	Group
<b>Tax Credits</b>  Reductions in payment rates and eligibility for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit, paid to lower and middle income households	<b>Tax Credits</b>  A further change to Child Benefit and pre-2015 tax credits. Further, reductions in payments and thresholds, notably the removal for new claims of the 'family' element and a limit on the 'child' element to two children for children born after March 2017.
<b>Child Benefit</b>  Three-year freeze, and withdrawal of benefit from households with a higher earner (not joint household income).	
<b>1% up-rating</b>  Limit in annual up-rating of value of most working age benefits.	<b>Benefit freeze</b>  4 year freeze of the value of most working-age benefits

Beatty and Fothergill consider the financial impact of Universal Credit within their calculations in as much as these changes will affect those receiving Universal Credit, but they do not consider the transition period into Universal Credit. To fill this gap, and although there is not as yet universal rollout of Universal Credit to families, this report highlights where some of the issues may arise for individuals and families as they sign-up for or are moved over to Universal Credit. Prior to an elaboration of Universal Credit, however, two other changes to support are highlighted (changes to housing, sanctions, as they continue to have implications for those on Universal Credit). I have not focused on the changes for those currently claiming disability allowances in this discussion, as the aim here is to illustrate accumulation of disadvantage. Emphasis within the discussion is also not on the direct financial change in monetary terms as a result of these changes, as Beatty and Fothergill do an excellent job of highlighting these in their report, instead the focus is on how these programmes are being implemented and the implications this has for how people find themselves as food insecure or in a situation where their food insecurity is increased. The table on the previous page highlights welfare reforms in England.

Importantly, the Children's Free School Meals (FSM) for children beyond the age where they receive universal free school meals (Children who are in grade 3 or higher), and how the Pupil Premium will be paid to schools is still under a cloud of ambiguity. Many food support and children's charities have argued that Free School Meals are a very important source of household food (this is a point returned to later in this document). Free School Meals are discussed briefly here because there has long been ambiguity regarding how they will link to the Universal Credit benefit system. Some estimates suggest that because of the way that the trigger for Free School Meals are allocated (through housing and job-seekers allowance or child tax-credits eligibility under

the old system) children could lose out. In mid-November 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) offered some proposals that are currently under consideration. The proposal within the consultation document (Department for Education 2017) is a switch to means-testing to allocate these meals. Under the proposal, from 2018 FSM eligibility will be for children from households with an income of up to £7,400 a year, excluding benefits, which estimates suggest is somewhere between £18,000-£25,000 per year when benefits are included (Department for Education (DfE, 2017). The DfE predicts that as many as 50,000 more children will be eligible for the meals. There will still, however not be automatic enrollment, which is something that concerns local authorities and schools (Adams, 2017).

A closer look at what is referred to as the bedroom tax reveals the potential for an imposed financial burden on families as they progress through the life course. The bedroom tax is essentially a reduction in housing benefit allowance for those who live in social housing with a spare room, with the reductions calculated as 14% for one spare room and 25% for two<sup>1</sup>. The expectation is that two people should share a bedroom if they are a) a couple, b) same-sex children aged 10-16, and c) any children under 10. Children may have a bedroom of their own if there is not another child to share with (for example a child aged 8 and a child aged 11 who are not same-sex may have separate bedrooms or if there are an odd number of children). The choice for households is to move out of their existing home to smaller accommodation or suffer the reduction. What this means is that families may find that in one year they face the tax, but as children age, the tax is no longer applicable and then a few years later it becomes applicable again. Under the current system, the parent receiving a tax credit for children over the age of 16 who are receiving training should not find their housing allowance affected until the child turns 20 provided they remain in that training. Those who are under age 25 receive a lower minimum wage compared to those who receive the adult rate (over aged 25)<sup>2</sup>. While these young people may not be able to afford to move out of the family home, the implications of the bedroom tax structure combined with the elimination of non-dependent deductions suggest that they should be contributing rent payments to their parents to offset the resulting benefits reductions. While there is not a clear connection between bedroom tax burden and the rise of food bank use, those households who have seen a reduction in their housing benefit allowance will most certainly be diverting money from household resources away from flexible budget categories such as food and fuel to cover this shortfall.

A second, change is the imposition of benefits sanctions, which have been linked to increased food bank use. This change to the benefits system was implemented in October 2012, although in May 2010 there was an unannounced policy shift by ministers to encourage DWP staff to make more referrals for Job Seekers Allowance sanctions (Webster, 2016). The introduction of sanctions is intended to incentivize job search behaviour by imposing a withdrawal of job seekers allowance for

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<sup>1</sup> UK Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/housing-benefit/what-youll-get> [date accessed 8/11/16]. <http://www.minimum-wage.co.uk>. While these young people may not be able to afford to move out of the family home, the implications of the bedroom tax structure suggest that they should be contributing rent payments to their parents to offset the reduction in housing benefit.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.minimum-wage.co.uk>. While these young people may not be able to afford to move out of the family home, the implications of the bedroom tax structure suggest that they should be contributing rent payments to their parents to offset the reduction in housing benefit.

failure to meet certain conditions<sup>3</sup>. Sanctions are applied for a minimum of four weeks in the first instance, but these sanctions can be up to 13 weeks for what might be deemed more serious offences, with further with holding for 26 weeks on the second offence and 156 weeks for the third offence (Loopstra et al. 2016). For some time food banks, both Trussell Trust food banks and independent food banks, have been reporting that the primary reason people are accessing emergency food aid is as a result of benefits sanctions that have been imposed (see also Perry et al. 2014 who find that one third of food bank users had been affected by sanctions). Recent research by Loopstra et al. (2016) and commissioned by the Trussell Trust, makes a robust quantifiable connection between benefits sanctions and food bank use. Their evidence shows that in 2013 alone over 1 million people had sanctions applied. The data show that for every 10 sanctions applied, 5 more adults are fed through food banks. Furthermore, the research also shows that for those who are sanctioned, hardship is prolonged and can trigger debt accumulation within these households. More recently there is some evidence that sanctioning has been reduced in practice since October 2016 (See Webster 2016 who argues that this reduction is most likely a result of a ministerial decision but this also may be linked to the introduction of the Claimant Commitment), but the possibility of sanctioning remains. The effect of this change in practice rather than strong policy is the retention of the insecurity associated with the possibility of sanctions for those who are receiving benefits.

Universal Credit, which was to be fully implemented in 2015 but has suffered delays and is now scheduled for full roll-out by 2022, is perhaps the most significant structural reform to the UK benefits system. Universal Credit is intended to simplify the system and facilitate employment and increase family earning. Under Universal Credit benefit entitlements linked to housing benefit, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income support, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, and some social fund payments, for those households earning less than £540/month<sup>4</sup> are all rolled into one single payment<sup>5</sup>. Within the current (old) system payment for housing is paid directly to the landlord for housing allowance in many cases with the remainder paid to individuals at different times throughout the month<sup>6</sup>. Under Universal Credit, all payments are made on a monthly basis at the

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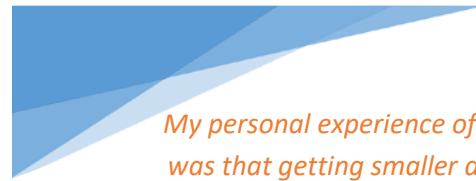
<sup>3</sup> Job seekers allowance is the According to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) benefits can be stopped if there is evidence of misconduct in a previous job, or if the job was left without a good reason. Further criteria outlined by the DWP include following the Jobseeker's agreement set out in what is known as a Claimant Commitment, being on time for meetings with the work coach and any employment scheme providers with which the claimant must engage, applying for jobs recommended by the work coach and interviewing for them if the application is successful, doing "everything your work coach tells you to do to find work, such as attending a training course or updating your CV", with the final criteria being "do all you can to find work." Work coaches are accessed through Job Center Plus, which is part of the DWP. There are about 700 Jobcentres within the UK, each servicing a geographical district.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobseekers-allowance-sanctions-leaflet/jobseekers-allowance-sanctions-how-to-keep-your-benefit-payment> [Date last accessed 09/11/16].

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-and-couples-an-introduction/universal-credit-further-information-for-couples> [date last accessed 09/11/16]

<sup>5</sup> Contributory JSA and contributory ESA, Disability Living Allowance, Child Benefit will continue alongside Universal Credit. Free School Meals and dental treatment will be gradually withdrawn for those who earn over certain thresholds.

<sup>6</sup> Please note there was a reform to how housing benefit was being paid that involved recipients paying landlords directly prior to Universal Credit called the Direct Payment Initiative. However, in practice, for

household level. In partnered households, one partner must make the application for the household and then a single payment is made. Universal Credit also retains the benefits cap and sanctions will continue but will be applied at the household level. Furthermore, in-work conditionality, the requirement to look for higher paying work if earnings are less than the equivalent of 35 hours a week at National Minimum Wage (currently £7.2/hr for those over 25, rates are lower for younger workers) and to work full time will also apply. There are some reductions in the obligation for those caring for young children. Universal Credit has currently mainly been implemented for single people and has yet to be fully implemented across the UK for families, although there has been full roll out in certain parts of the country<sup>7</sup>. In July 2013 a benefits cap was imposed such that no family could claim more than a specified total amount of combined benefits<sup>8</sup> and this will extend into Universal Credit.



*My personal experience of being on benefits was that getting smaller amounts of money regularly was easier for budgeting. When I was on the dole, benefits were paid fortnightly, but I split the money with a friend who was in the opposite payment cycle so that we effectively got paid weekly (although I also put small amounts of money from that weekly money in to a savings scheme to plan for bills etc). Admittedly, I was in my twenties at the time and I would perhaps be more disciplined now, but I found that the desire to buy 'nice' things is just very strong.*

Food SWOT Participant

There may be some advantages associated with the single household payment that would allow families to exploit economies of scale. The advantage of a larger initial pot of money would potentially allow greater access to multi-buy deals and ingredients that must be stored, which are not currently available to those with very tight and small amounts of money. However, this advantage is yet demonstrated. What is clear is that adapting to this change in payment timelines will mean people will need to develop new strategies for managing if they are to avoid further financial difficulties.

Others have argued that these changes will introduce potentially problematic power relationships within households where there may be abuse (Bennett, 2012), which has created concern among third-sector organisations focused gender equity but also organisations such as Child Poverty Action that the shift creates greater economic vulnerability, which can result in increased debt but also greater vulnerability to food poverty. In-work conditionality is also hypothesized by some researchers to have implications for in family care sharing because, for example, working-aged grandparents on benefits may no longer be able to support the child-care needs of their adult children (e.g., before or after school care that may also include providing children with meals, Borg,

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many managing the payment of rent will be a new experience when they join Universal Credit. Thank you to Ingun Borg for providing this elaboration. See also

<sup>7</sup> A map of where Universal Credit has been rolled out by job center is available from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/jobcentres-where-you-can-claim-universal-credit>

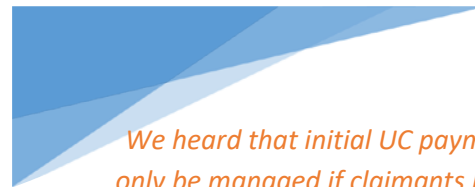
<sup>8</sup> According to the Government web site, the current benefits cap is £20,000/year for single people with children and married couples with or without children and £13,400/year for single people without children (the amounts are marginally greater for those living in London) <https://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap/benefit-cap-amounts> [date last accessed 09/11/16]

2016). There is also evidence that those receiving Universal Credit are confused about the inclusion of housing payments in the transfer, with research showing that recipients are not budgeting for rent out of their payments and then finding themselves in arrears (Department of Work and Pensions 2015).

Perhaps potentially one of the greatest concerns with regard to Universal Credit and its implications for food poverty is the fact that there will be a mandatory waiting period upon first application, including for those who will be required to switch over from the old system to the new. There is an initial mandatory seven-day waiting period built into the system<sup>9</sup>, which is then followed by a delay of about six weeks (a total of 42 days) before the first payment is made to those who qualify, levied on people with little or no savings to tide them over. In addition, because payments are on a monthly basis, this delay can be even longer, and further delays can arise through difficulties associated with claimants' understanding of the system and the application process, technological failures, lost information, and incorrect requests for evidence to support the claim (Citizens Advice 2015). Many Citizens Advice clients reported waiting as long as four months for the first payment. Quoting directly from the Parliamentary Inquiry on Benefits Delivery these delays can be quite draconian.

Further evidence provided to the parliamentary inquiry on benefits delivery shows that this is translating into debt in the form of rent arrears, inability to receive free school meals, and lack of access to free prescription medication. Department of Work and Pensions (2015) research shows that for most who experience rent arrears, just over half of those who were waiting for their first payment (56% compared to 43% of JSA claimants). The report also indicates that those who find themselves in arrears are paying back these debts, but this is putting a squeeze on more flexible aspects of household budgets such as food and fuel.

A report of research conducted by a consortium of sixteen Citizen's Advice local offices on Universal Credit (2015) argues that the first payment delay was having a negative effect on as many as two-thirds of those clients involved in the research. Those who were experiencing this hardship were "managing without heating", leaving their rented accommodation to live with family members, and struggling to afford food. The report says, "Two-thirds of respondents also reported difficulty affording enough food—a number of respondents recalling their shock at having to rely on food banks to survive (p3)". The findings go on to say that on top of trying to adhere to the



*We heard that initial UC payment delays can only be managed if claimants have savings or a redundancy payment from their last employer. While some claimants will have such funds, others will not: for example, if they were paid weekly rather than monthly, or if they have been released from prison. Carmel Keddy, from Derbyshire County Council, told the Committee that the first payment "cannot cover the six weeks previous and the four weeks going forward". As a result, she said that the situation could push claimants into debt as they were "starting with zero so six weeks down the line they have got a hell of a lot less than zero"*

[Work and Pensions Committee 2015, pg 15 para 40](#)

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<sup>9</sup> The Chancellor's Budget in October 2017 indicated that this waiting period was to be scrapped and the delay would be reduced from 6 weeks to 4. At this writing these changes have not yet been implemented.

requirements of the work coach, claimants have to negotiate with creditors and try to figure out “where the next meal was coming from (p3)”. Bearing in mind that those who are currently most likely to be receiving Universal Credit are single people, we do not yet know fully how this will affect families with children. There are some early projections that families with three children will be on average £2,540 worse off, and single-parent families will be £2,800 worse off per year (child Poverty Action Group (quoted by Butler 2017)).

The current arrangements for those who cannot manage is a system of advance payment, whereby some money to cover housing costs is paid up front, and then repayment is made as a top-slicing of benefits once they are delivered over a three month period. The Citizens Advice report indicates that this only extends and in some instances exacerbates the problem because people are trying to manage for four months with only three months income in the best circumstances. Charities who participated in the workshop that underpins this research indicated that they are making plans to support people for ten weeks, but may now rethink this duration and extend it for longer. What is certain is that a three-day supply of food offered via a food bank is not going to be sufficient for these individuals and families.

If we consider what is now known as the Just-About-Making-It (JAMS), the incorporation of tax credits into Universal Credit combined with changes to entitlement requirements will most likely increase the numbers of families who could be counted as part of this group, and for those who are already a JAM, will be pushed into changing their food practices. Resolution Foundation research (Finch 2016) argues that even after changes to the National Living Wage and cuts in income tax, alteration to entitlement requirements will mean that 1.3 families in the UK who currently receive tax credits will find themselves on average £2184 per year worse off. They also estimate that a further 1.2 million currently receiving tax credits will be eligible for Universal Credit, but will find their household budgets cut by £2132. In comparison to these 2.5 million who will be worse off, only about 200,000 will find their situation improved as a result of the national living wage and income tax cuts and these are primarily households who do not have children (Finch 2016).

Given that research shows families prioritize fixed costs when allocating household expenditure, it is probable that unless households increase borrowing, the food budget will be placed where cuts are made to accommodate these income reductions. This, of course, has implications for public health as we know that families trade down in their food purchasing, choosing lower quality food than what they previously ate as their ability to afford higher quality food is squeezed. Research also shows that this trading down is not always like-for-like but instead involves a search for better value for money. As such people will choose foods that are filling but less expensive. Fast-food outlets are perceived to be a good source of low-cost, but filling food (see Caraher et al. 2014). Our focus groups revealed that women were taking on the burden of trying to offset the attraction for fast food by spending hours carefully identifying offers from local food shops, daily shopping for those offers and then cooking multiple hot meals throughout the day to feed to their partners, working-aged children, and young children in their care. Multiple meal cooking was seen as a particularly important strategy because it meant that those who are being fed would forgo the quick, take-away meal on the way home from school or work to satisfy their hunger, and would instead eat the relatively healthier option provided at home by these women. These women also admit that this kind of cooking costs more and is very time-consuming for them compared to letting



household members eat elsewhere. With the changes in in-work conditionality and lower incomes this important household work, where it is occurring, is likely to be lost with the result being an increase in rates of diet-related illnesses.

Importantly, there are knock-on effects to local areas associated with welfare reform that will hit those authorities with the highest amount of deprivation and thereby widen the gap between the wealthiest local economies and the poorest (Beatty and Fothergill 2016).

### **2.1.2 Food Poverty Alleviation and the Context of Local Authorities in England**

While there is no strict remit for Local Authorities to address food poverty, many local authorities are adopting a Food Poverty definition as a way to understanding the problems of food insecurity in England and many are using their public health and communities remit in order to do so. What this means is that the focus of intervention often starts with either a health improvement or an economic development advantage. Food poverty links to food quality in terms of decreased access to nutrition, which in enables links to be made between rising rates of obesity, deprivation, and local food landscapes. The argument is supported by evidence that shows those areas that are characterized by high Index of Multiple Deprivation Scores (IMD)<sup>10</sup> are also areas that have worse health outcomes generally<sup>11</sup>, and specifically negative diet-related health outcomes (e.g. type II diabetes, but also heart disease, some cancers, etc.) that are also linked to overweight and obesity (see for example Dixon 2010). This research also found similar relationships between the percentage of children who are overweight and IMD (see Appendix C). Just as with the IMD, obesity statistics have now become a new basket through which to measure if not the actual presence of disease then the potential of a population to experience diet-related ill health.

The relationship between area deprivation and prevalence of overweight in an area are then set against the ways in which people in those places access food via their local food landscape. Local food landscapes or local foodscapes can be characterized as food deserts if there is low availability any food in a particular area (see Cummins, 2014 for a definition and for a critique see McEntee, 2009). An alternative characterization of a local foodscape as a food swap is when there is an overabundance of low-quality food (e.g., high calorie and low nutritionally dense foods as can be found in some fast-food outlets) such that what high-quality food is present is overwhelmed by competition (Reel and Badger 2014). Thus, the hypothesis is that places, where people are deprived, are also places where people are more likely to become overweight because their access to or the incorporation of high-quality food into family eating is limited. Evidence from research finds low income households incorporate a greater amount of low-quality food into their diets because this food it is more readily available, filling, less expensive and easier to incorporate into eating practices (see Dietz 1995 who first raised the hypothesis that hunger and obesity are causally related, see also the action brief from the Food Research and Action Centre 2015 and Martin and Lippert 2012 for a discussion of family feeding, poverty and obesity).


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<sup>10</sup> IMD brings together a range of characteristics beyond income to include aspects such as prevalence of green space, education and skills, housing quality, crime, transportation, etc. More on IMD can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>.

<sup>11</sup> See Messer et al for a discussion of the IMD, see Jordan et al 2004 for a discussion on health outcomes.

In response to the Marmot Review report Fair Society, Healthy Lives published in 2010, the UK coalition government proposed that local authorities should take over responsibility for public health, which up until that point had been under the remit of the NHS. This new public health remit had at its heart a recommendation that authorities work on addressing the social determinants that help to reproduce health inequalities within and between areas. Within this remit, local authorities are encouraged to focus their attention on the development of children as a preventative measure aimed at reducing the effects of health-related inequalities on the labour market productivity and for bringing down costs. While this may be a noble aspiration, fulfilling this role for some local authorities will be easier than will be the case for others. Councils that have the greatest levels of deprivation within their wards are also, by default, those with the least income from council tax.

With regard to national funding devolved to local authorities, there have been some important changes. In 2012/13 two important aspects of the Social Fund were given over to local authorities. The first aspect focused on welfare assistance through community support, whereby Local authorities are responsible for providing basic essentials for vulnerable residents. The Local Government Association (LGA) indicates that changes to the Social Fund have resulted in a decline in funding to support local welfare assistance. An LGA survey conducted in 2014 indicates the withdrawal of the Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans has and will continue to translate into significant negative impacts on the ability of LA to provide services and maintain services. Community care programmes are identified as a key place where cuts were made. A more recent example is Children's Centres. Children's Centres were used to support crisis needs and also offered some community food programmes, however in some LA's Children's Centres are now being closed as the result of shortages in funding as was the case in our case study community. According to evidence presented in a 2015 House of Commons Briefing paper, between April 2010 and June 2015 the number of Children's Centres declined by just about 1000 centres across the country, representing a loss of just over a quarter (Bate and Foster 2015). Some of this loss has been achieved through mergers or reallocation of services previously offered by Children's Centres, but there is also outright closure and complete loss of services and loss of free services (such as child care), including in areas that are highly deprived.



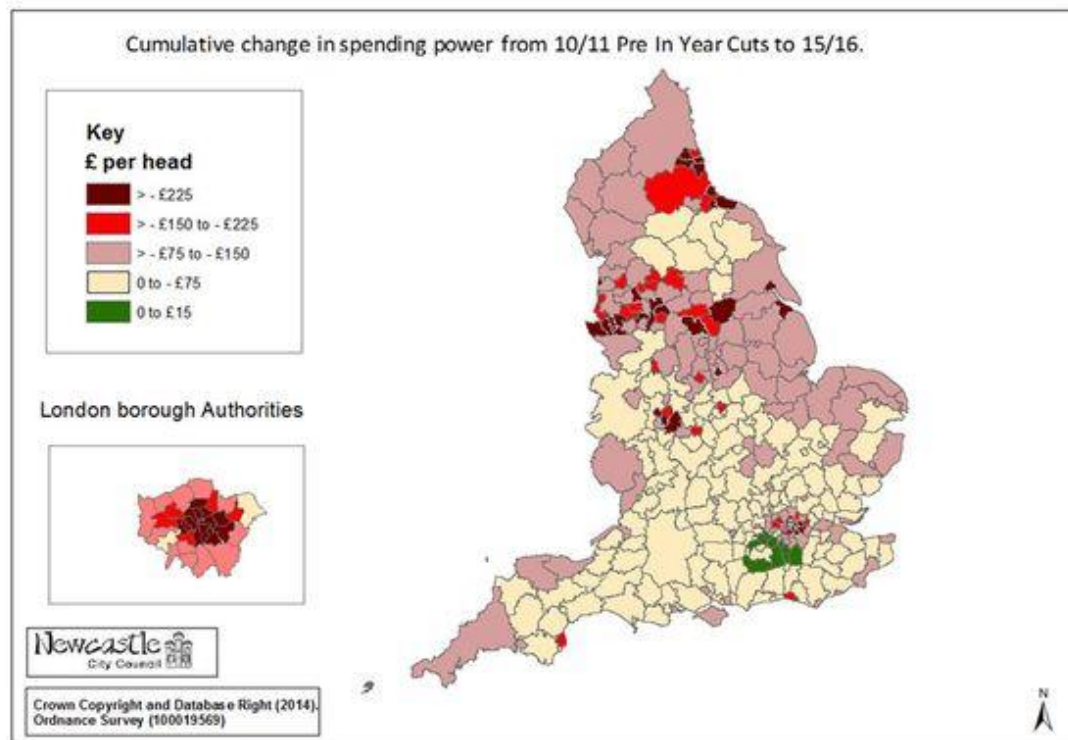
*“Health inequalities are a tragic waste of life and health and cost this country tens of billions of pounds every year in lost productivity, welfare payments and costs to the NHS from ill health”.*

Professor Sir Michael Marmot

At the same time, funding to support communities has been cut, funding to local authorities more generally has been cut such that there is a need for cumulative savings of £40b by then end of 2016 (Local Government Association 2015). This equates to approximately a 40 % reduction in core government funding to councils since 2010 (Local Government Association 2015).

Approximately 60% of local authorities indicated in Local Government Association research conducted in 2014 that efficiency savings have run out and key services in children's and adult social care would be cut (Local Government Association 2015). Moreover, those places with high numbers of vulnerable people will have to find money from existing budgets. These reductions also

amount to a regional disadvantage as many places losing out on cuts are in the north of England (see figure X). There is evidence too that some of the worst affected local authority areas, in terms of funding reductions as a result of austerity are some of the most deprived. One outcome of this is that cuts have resulted in a considerable shedding of staff, a move that has not incorporated progression and/or succession planning. The result of rapid contraction in staffing levels produces a lack of institutional memory on the one hand, a loss of time resource as the person who takes over the vacated remit must spend considerable time coming up to speed with regard to ongoing projects, a reduction in time resources devoted to projects (new or existing), or an abandonment or scaling back of projects.



The expectation within Universal Credit is that Local Authorities should envision that they will play a key role in establishing and commissioning activity that supports people and families linked to the Universal Credit process. Moreover, this focus should also consider how they can support applicants' needs through all stages of association with Universal Credit (from the application, through the waiting period, to time on Universal Credit, Local Government Association 2014). Councils are asking for discretionary benefits schemes be made available to support those who are facing hardship (Work and Pensions Committee 2015). Some LA's are supporting the development of food banks in partnership with national and community organisations as part of this remit. There is only limited capacity to offer longer-term solutions, particularly, and in the words of one local authority worker, "food poverty is not really part of our remit."

Some have argued that schools are a perfect portal through which local authorities might deliver food-related programmes that support the food security of low-income communities. This might be a logical conclusion as local authorities have long histories of working collaboratively with

schools and on first appearance, it looks like school funding for the delivery of key programmes has been ring-fenced by the government in its latest spending review, though the form of delivery may change. While this is true to some extent, the ring-fenced funding is not keeping up with costs, and there are education-linked costs that are no longer being funded, which are placing an increased burden on schools. Furthermore, there are also planned reductions to the Education Services Grant, which is given to Local Authorities for school oversight, school improvement and education welfare services. The estimated loss is approximately 7% per-pupil between 2016 and 2020 (Roberts 2016).

On top of this, within disadvantaged communities, school funding via the pupil premium is undermined by the system for allocation and there are squeezes on the funding for activities that local authorities provide to schools. The pupil premium is additional funding to schools aimed at supporting disadvantaged pupils. Schools spend this money on teaching assistants and other support aimed at helping to reduce a cycle of poverty that is correlated with low educational attainment and low earnings and later life, and a knock-on effect is the lowering of food poverty and diet-related health issues. Indeed, one could argue that being eligible for a free school meal is increasingly a sign of being educationally disadvantaged. Ironically, the Department of Education prefers to allocate pupil premium funds to schools for children based on a form that parents fill out to take up free school meals (Department of Education 2014). Children are eligible if their parent or carer receives certain benefits (for a list see <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/funding-and-financial-support/free-school-meals-pupil-premium#eligibility>).

There is evidence that despite eligibility, more than one-third of families will forgo taking up free school meals (Sahota et al. 2013). Though there are some important variations in take-up depending upon family background and residential location (pupils are less likely to take-up school meals if there are few eligible children within the school, for example, Iniesta-Martinez and Evans 2012). This parent responsibility route is the norm for calculating pupil premium awards to schools, despite the fact that the DWP, the Department for Education, and local authorities via their role in the benefits system will hold information about families that indicate children's eligibility to for school meals, whether or not the meals are applied for. Some authorities, such as Liverpool, Bolton, and now Sheffield are looking more closely at the data protection aspects of data sharing and as a result have started using their existing data on housing benefits to support schools' applications for the pupil premium funding by asking parents to opt out of registration for free lunches, though this seems not to be the norm (Tickle, 2015).

Since 2014, all children in reception, year 1 and year 2 receive free school meals regardless of income, and as a result, some schools have seen a drop in parent registrations for school meals by as much as 50% because parents do not understand why they would register for something they would receive anyway. This non-registration of children is translating into financial losses for schools and programmes aimed at supporting attainment of low-income children (Adams 2015). Programmes may include support for teaching assistants and extra teachers, but also may include the provision of school trips, out of hours activities or other interventions that support children's continued attendance at school (Carpenter et al. 2013).

While evidence is mixed with regard to the effectiveness of the pupil premium concept, mostly

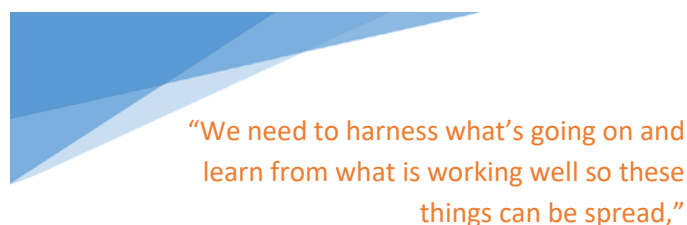
because the pupil premium may be considered a case of giving with one hand while taking away with the other (Lupton and Thompson 2015). The way funding is organized effectively pitted additional school funding for poor students against school lunch provision for all, which is shown to bring numerous benefits including public health benefits linked to reducing diet-related illness (Graham et al. 2016). This competition context undermines the potential of both initiatives to support food security in local communities. Moreover, this competition is likely to become increasingly fierce as the government is reviewing school food policy and the future of the School Lunch Grant, which subsidizes school food spending by schools and local authorities. Combined with school funding reductions, this also means losses in programmes aimed at supplementing children's learning including in areas of food education (Food For Life, 2010).

## 2.2 Public Concern over Food Poverty and the Rise of the Third-sector

Although there has only been limited engagement from central government to consider food poverty as part of their policy platform (Blake 2016), public interest in the issues around food insecurity and food poverty has increased over the last few years. While there is no hard statistical data to measure this rise, indicators of such interest include the reception of awareness-raising efforts by such organisation such as the Trussell Trust and support for Jack Monroe's call for a parliamentary food hearing. In 2015-16 the Fabian Commission also held a hears on Food Poverty, resulting in their Hungry for Change report. A number of books, such as Kayleigh Garthwaite's Hunger Pains (2016) have added depth to the discussion but also suggests that there is an interested and concerned audience.

Alongside the wider discussion, there has also been an increase in organisations that focus on rethinking how local food systems operate for example the network of Sustainable food cities. One of the planks of the Food Cities Network is specifically tackling food poverty and access to healthy food as well as supporting local economies to become more vibrant around food businesses and the employment opportunities that they bring. The network is made up of urban nodes, connected together by the Sustainable Food Cities Network Umbrella, which helps cities by providing access to toolkits and information sharing. In part, because of the research that was undertaken for this project, Doncaster Council is now pursuing the food cities approach as a way to enhance food and diet-related resilience in its communities.

Importantly, the model advocated by the sustainable cities umbrella organisation is one that takes a bottom-up approach toward addressing problems that involves tapping into existing local activity. While citizen involvement is key, local authorities may or may not be part of the collaboration. The National Audit Office (2010) identifies a number of benefits when local authority public services work with third-sector organisations that include improved understanding of the specific needs of communities and service users, the potential to deliver specific outcomes across a range of areas that authorities are unable to achieve on their own, The third-sector is made up of organisations that are neither public nor private. Public organisations are those that are operated by the



Angelo Fernandes, GP, Croydon,  
The Guardian, 15/9/17  
<https://www.theguardian.com/healthcare-network/2017/aug/15/burgers-breaded-mackerel-croydon-fighting-fat>


government while private sector organisations are controlled by individuals with the aim of achieving a profit. Third-sector organisations have a governance structure that is independent of government, but unlike the private sector tend to be value driven rather than profit driven. Another key aspect of third-sector organisations is that they tend to reinvest any financial surpluses gained through any activity the gains a profit back into the pursuit of the social value at the heart of their activity (e.g. feeding the hungry, improving community cohesion). Some are sustainable in terms of their ability to maintain the services to the communities they provide through the ways that they deliver the services, though most augment any income they receive with grant funding from charitable organisations, which distribute donations or bequeaths, and direct donations or crowdfunding.

The UK context is abundant with a range of third-sector organisations that are concerned with reducing food insecurity in the UK. These range from those seeking to grow local production of food in order to support a retail environment that is not as dependent on imports to initiatives that focus on feeding children during the school holidays or before school in breakfast clubs. Indeed the list of points of entry is expansive and targeted interventions include environmental sustainability, food-focused economic growth, farmer's rights and welfare, food workers' rights and welfare, food waste reduction and distribution, diet-related non-communicable diseases, food access and poverty. Moreover, within these categories, there is a further proliferation in terms of the focus. The pilot case study conducted for this research found that third-sector community organisations played a very important role in the supporting people and for creating resilience within communities (see appendix D for a description of activities that were provided by the two organisations in the case study location).

Since the 1990's the professionalisation of third-sector organisations has been dramatically enhanced. Begun under New Labour, but further promoted by subsequent governments there has been an increased devolution activity to third-sector organisations. Alongside this, there has been a number of market-based reforms such as payment-by-results funding, monitoring, and monetized impact. While the payment-by-results or task-and-deliver model of funding may be good for start-up projects, it also can be short-sighted as these projects are often forced to finish when the funding runs out and importantly after communities (if not individuals) have developed a dependence on those projects. Influence, likewise is particularly difficult to measure for community-based projects as the communities within which projects are operating are also subject to continuous change as the result of rapidly decreasing local government budgets, increased political turmoil brought on by two close-set general elections and the Brexit referendum. There is also lack of national, regional, and local scale data available that enable third-sector organisations to contextualise or baseline their interventions in order to show relative impact. In most instances where third-sector organisations are able to demonstrate impact, there is no easy mechanism for funding project extension. Instead, organisations are extending effort through successful rebranding projects in order to get new financing to continue projects that are working. Finally, some organisations are finding the landscape for funding is increasingly prescriptive and limiting in terms of enabling new initiatives that build on existing expertise.

By the end of the Blair-Brown era, income for voluntary organisations was at its height at just under fifteen billion, up from about £11 billion in 2004/5 (National Council for Voluntary Organisations,

2016). While David Cameron championed the notion of a 'Big Society' as a plank in the further dismantlement of the welfare state, this shift also instituted a change in how the government would transfer funds to third-sector organisations, while at the same time cutting back on funds. Compared to 2004/5 when the allocation of funding was equally distributed between grants and contracts, in 2014/15 the majority of funding was distributed via contracts (approximately 81%) with very large organisations taking the largest proportion of those funds. There has also been a redistribution in terms of where this funding is being spent whereby education, social services, and employment and training spending, development and law and advocacy services receiving a smaller cut, while health services and international aid funding has grown. Importantly, data is not available to demonstrate the proportion of funding that is specifically supporting food poverty-related activity.



*“Although Local Authorities have never been a major source of income for (Organisation name), their financial contribution has, to date, been significant. From April 2017, primarily due to cuts in funding from Central Government, Sheffield City Council direct grants to (Organisation name) will be minimal, the first time in the 35-year history of the farm.*

*Ironically the Big Lottery is becoming a larger and larger source of income to us - ‘a tax on poor people’, but at least some is being returned to where it came from.*

*Entering the fray are a motley collection of non-traditional players – Housing Associations (clearly trying to find new roles as shortages of social housing and the potential right to buy bites), local organisations encouraged to franchise their projects nationally and a plethora of new and existing quangos.*

*Yes, Sheffield and (organisation name) can have money for chickens in Dementia Care homes, business development funding or support for people in food poverty, but they must be Henpower models, Community Businesses and Food Pantries.”*

Food SWOT participant

Although there are significant funding constraints for the ways that third-sector organisations can operate, the enthusiasm and interest of people to support the needs of those less well off or their communities is high. The rise of such organisations more generally suggests there is a real opportunity for addressing food poverty and for creating opportunities for food justice more fully while at the same time supporting the need for communities to become resilient in the face of a context of poverty. Although this is not perhaps a natural disaster, certainly the toxic combination of poverty, a hollowing out of support, and a food system that is geared more toward profits than it is toward providing healthy food can be considered disastrous for the communities that are experiencing such hardship the most. Evidence shows, however, that there are communities that are bucking expectations (see Appendix C in this document for example). Platts-Fowler and Robinson (2016) argue that in the face of austerity local authorities can usefully pursue activity that adopts resilience thinking. Resilience has recently gained ground in both

research and policy for describing the ability to bounce back of a system, community, individual, or thing. Platts-Fowler and Robinson (2016) also make the point that resilience is a tricky concept that involves careful consideration regarding what interventions are pursued. Keck and Sakdapolrak identify three forms of resilience: Coping, Adapting and Transforming.

Their conceptualization is illustrated in the table below:

	COPING	ADAPTING	TRANSFORMING
<b>RESPONSE TO RISK</b>	Reactive	Preventative	Preventative
<b>TEMPORAL SCOPE</b>	Short-term	Med/Long-term	Long-term
<b>DEGREE OF CHANGE</b>	Low, status quo	Medium, incremental	High, radical change
<b>OUTCOME</b>	Restoration, survival	Security	Enhancement of present and future
<b>RESOURCES</b>	Tactical use of immediately available resources	Strategic use of immediately available resources	Strategic mobilization of external resources

The findings from this case study also suggests that there is also an argument for considering the scale of intervention (e.g. activity that focuses on individuals compared to activity that targets communities) and all three forms of resilience can manifest itself at these different social scales. For example a work training activity that draws participants from a wide array of communities, may be transformative for the individuals involved in terms of helping them to get into employment, but does very little to directly enhance the communities within which these people live. Alternatively, a project that targets a specific geographical space, such as through the building of a community centre, may do much to foster local interactions, the degree to which these interactions also help achieve individual and household resilience can be variable. Surprisingly, there is relatively little research that examines and considers the interplay between community based resilience supporting activity and the types of household resilience that this can foster and vice versa. **Given**





**the importance that resilience is playing is helping local authorities to resolve the gaps that austerity is creating, it is clear that more research is needed.**

This project considered the contribution and form of resilience enabled through food by firstly considering what is achieved via the different activities that food-using organisations within the case study provided and then mapping them against the three dimensions of resilience described above. This mapping of the activities gives a sense of the collective contribution of all activity. Conceptualizing resilience this way also lends a framework for considering what needs are being filled as well as how further work can be shared across communities through the different organisations that are involved. As already highlighted, some food-using organisations also made the point that not everything they do in their communities involves food directly, but that food gets people in the door so that they can see what else is available to support them. **This case study suggests, therefore that the ways that collectively interventions create a local landscape or network of support also plays into the levels and forms of resilience that is and can be built into communities. There is a need, however for further research that interrogates these resilience supporting networked arrangements.**

While third-sector organisations bring significant benefit to the communities, they serve they are also dependent upon people with the appropriate resources and necessary skills and local knowledge to take this mandate forward. As a result, qualitative data suggests that there are likely to be, support deserts and support swamps, to borrow phrases from the food access and obesity literature. Support deserts are places that are underserved by third-sector organisations. Cutbacks to the network of Children's Centres as a result of cuts in local authority budgets are likely to give rise to a greater number of support deserts (see Lewis 2011 for a discussion of the role of Children's centres). The opposite is support swamps, where organisations come into competition with each other for both scarce resources and constituents to serve.

They swamp effect arises when different and multiple third-sector organisations, and sometimes local authorities recognise or in some instances perceive a need in their communities that should be addressed and then end up duplicating effort. This may arise, for example by non-local organisations and local authorities targeting communities with high IMD scores, because statistically, they are likely to have a particular issue and parachuting a programme into the area without first consulting the community itself. Common initiatives include community cafés, food banks, cookery courses and the like. The effect of this repetition and duplication is that the impact from each individual activity or organisation is diluted and as such, continuation funding, which is already difficult to attract,



*“A lack of collaboration and increased competition is definitely a weakness. Community groups feel they need to keep their work under wraps so no one can ‘steal’ their ideas. We often forget what we all initially set out to do: Regenerate our community!”*

Food SWOT participant

becomes even harder to acquire because not enough people are being served. Duplication effort can also mean that individual organisations are extending a large amount of effort and resources in order to support few people per programme although within a community a range of similar programmes serve many people. Individual programmes are then evaluated and dropped because there is a lack of funding or a perceived inefficiency of resource use and as multiple organisations may be experiencing this limited take-up, all service to a particular community is dropped resulting in a service desert and the situation that led to over-provision in the first instance. On top of this, the competitive environment can divide communities rather than bring them together.

Collaborations between third-sector organisations do exist and can also provide fruitful ground for improving the lives and diets of individuals and communities, while at the same time supporting the sustainability of the organisations that are involved. Likewise, and despite the issues with school funding, there are some effective collaborations between schools and third-sector organisations<sup>12</sup>. These programmes are instigated by either the school or the third-sector organisation. Indirectly there appear to be some very important benefits that include improving children's readiness to participate in learning at school, reductions in food waste, and support for local communities. Unfortunately, there is often no systematic programme that evaluates the impact of these activities in terms of improvements in nutrition or reductions in diet-related public health let alone the more qualitative benefits to communities that these interventions can provide in both the short and longer term.

## 2.3 Brexit

In the UK today, the majority of people purchase the food that they eat from supermarkets. Some studies even indicate that *all* of us (100% of people in the UK) purchase at least some food from a supermarket (Wallop 2013) While this is not to say that all our food purchases happen in this manner, it certainly means, that unlike other parts of the world where there still exists a market system, the UK is fully dependent upon supermarket supply chains to provide some, if not the majority, of the food we eat. Importantly, because supermarkets are primarily profit-seeking agents, their logical decision making means that they will purchase food that meets a sufficient level the quality demands of consumers while at the same time seek to reduce costs associated with supplying that food and seek to exploit new markets by sourcing products that will offer the greatest sales. Furthermore, a considerable majority of food that is sold is processed food. This can mean choosing imported options over those that are produced locally and offering products that are not available from British farmers. According to DEFRA (2014), just over half of the food purchased in the UK was supplied by UK producers. The largest importer of food in to the UK is Europe (accounting for approximately 28% of all imports (DEFRA 2014). When we go on to consider food production in the UK, researchers argue that immigrant labour from Europe fills the vast majority of these jobs.

On June 23, 2016, just over half of UK voters who participated in the referendum concerning the UK participation in the European Union chose to leave the European Union (known popularly as Brexit). This will have significant implications for the UK food system. Since 2007, UK consumers

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<sup>12</sup> For more on Richmond Hill Primary School and their collaboration with the RJFP see <http://www.richmondhillleeds.co.uk/fuel-for-school/>

have experienced a double squeeze on their ability to buy food. Firstly the cost of food has increased by approximately 37% since 2007, while income after housing has decreased by approximately 5% in this time period. This double effect of rising food prices against falling income has meant that all families in the UK have had to change purchasing behaviours. According to DEFRA changes in affordability have meant that families are purchasing less fruit, vegetables and meat and have traded down to cheaper products (e.g., value branded products or changes in supermarket outlet). For low-income families who are already buying at the lowest price point, changes in affordability represent a real hardship.

Although it is still too early to tell for certain, it is likely that Brexit will affect lower-income consumers through price increases. Two ways that this will occur are through the costs associated with importing foods and through the costs associated with filling jobs. Research conducted on the 2008 financial crisis and rising food costs at that time also pointed toward the role of investment capital seeking more secure places within which to invest. Brexit uncertainty may be partly responsible for what is going on now in terms of food price increases as well, though this has yet to be researched. The Institute of Fiscal Studies makes several statements on the links between food prices and Brexit that are worth further examination (see for example Levell, O'Connell and Smith 2017).

### **3. Strengths and Weaknesses of Local Authorities and Community Organisations**

The research in both the Doncaster-Edlington case study and the Food SWOT highlighted a number of strengths and weaknesses that have the potential to support or diminish the effectiveness of delivering services that can support community resilience, reduce food poverty and improve public health outcomes. With regard to this analysis it is important to note that participants in the SWOT came with experience of a large number of authorities and from a wide experience of third-sector activity across the whole of England, as such the strengths and weaknesses identified below are generalized lists and are not specific to any single local authority or third-sector organisation. The list is provided to encourage those managing activities in both types of groups to consider how indicative they are for their specific organisations.

#### **3.1 Strengths of the local authority**

Local authorities have the ability to influence local authority policies. For example, although not mandated, some local authorities are developing public health strategies that include mandates that aim to reframe wellbeing on a par with economic growth and development.

For example, Sheffield City Council Public Health strategy states that it aims to promote:

- Stronger networks able to link with regional/national/international organisations and public bodies and with other local authorities; Greater authority with policymakers and government
- Specialist knowledge and access to data
- Able to take an overview of the whole city

- Access to funding streams not as readily available to smaller third-sector organisations

Other examples include:

- Changing local rules about how surplus from allotments can be used, for example as a way to support the development of local food cultures through food swaps, through community based preserving and sale at community based food fairs.
- Changing rate structures that enable lower rates for food initiatives that offer healthy and affordable eating options to make them more competitive with less healthy, but perhaps more profitable options.
- Working with transportation providers to find fare structures that offer greater sensitivity to the traveling needs of those in low-income areas.

Local authorities have the ability to bring people together. Doncaster's development of the Good Food Doncaster Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), also demonstrates how local authorities also are able to facilitate community-led and community-owned food partnerships aiming to support food access in their local places. Doncaster now has a six point food action plan that was collaboratively developed by this group that includes a number of action points informed by community engagement including a number specifically committing collaboration between community organisations and the local authority. Many of these initiatives incorporate developing community and household resilience and through enhancing access to food in ways that moves beyond the commercial food system.


Local authorities have scope to rethink how they view and make available for use their capital investments (e.g., buildings, land). These can be made available for markets and community led initiatives that bring people together, for example through social eating projects by providing spaces for these activities to occur.

### **3.2 Weaknesses of the local authority**

The SWOT and the case study revealed a number of weaknesses with regard to how local authorities implement programmes unevenly. While not all authorities exhibit these weaknesses all the time, what emerged that weaknesses are linked to how priorities may be set within the local authority, how they may understand the problems to be addressed, how programmes are sometimes designed and delivered, how the organisation of the local authority is structured, and how local authority employees may respond to contextual pressures. In general, there is a wide variation within and across local authorities that has implications for how community organisations and local populations have a voice in the decision-making structures and for how programmes are conceived that can result in feelings of resentment and exclusion by those communities and the organizations that are working within them.

Priorities are frequently framed by government mandates and targets that can make it difficult for local authorities to hear and empathise with some communities. There can be a lack of understanding of local values and needs as local authority staff who are responsible for delivering programmes may not live in the communities within which food insecurity is a particular issue.

This can result in top-down implementation of projects, which has the potential reduces input from those who are experiencing the programmes and problems that are put into place.



*I cook at least 5 meals a day for my family, after I walk around the shops looking for the bargains, because I do not have a car, so I have to buy locally. I cook for my grandchildren because i pick them up after school and feed them a cooked meal before they go home with their mum. I eat sometimes with my husband and sometimes with the children depending on his work schedule. ...I then cook for adult son and his girlfriend when they get home later. I do this because if I didn't they would eat a takeaway and what I can cook for them is better.*

*~Community resident*

With specific reference to food, the research found that the ways in which some local authorities frame food priorities are within a language of financial costs and health benefits to extend life expectancy. Sometimes this is framed with an emphasis on reducing inequalities between groups and between sub-areas within the local authority and at other times with the impact of further supporting an already wealthy global supermarket system. However there are examples where this is not the case.

Achievement of outcomes are quantifiable and defined by such things as declines in rates of diet-related illnesses of which obesity is one. Programmes are then developed and implemented in ways that aim at achieving

these aims, often on small budgets and in response to what is happening in other places, and carried out by local authority staff. May choose the quick win by creating policy that does not step back and consider a wider picture. An example may be the planning regulation around takeaway food or the sponsorship of a food bank to address local hunger. While such projects can achieve measurable aims, they do not address the root causes of the problems in the longer term and can even potentially make matters worse by undermining local livelihood strategies for certain already marginal groups for example.

The research also finds that the language of these interventions, because of the ways that they are framed do not always speak directly to those that they target. The research found that when making household purchases, householders were making food-buying decisions relationally. For example households were making ordinary, everyday food purchasing decisions (as opposed to treat type food purchases) within the context of a number of questions:

- What can I buy that my family will eat and feel full from?
- What can I afford?
- What is available here in the place(s) where I am shopping?
- What can I make within the time that I have without impinging upon the other things that I must accomplish?
- What food is better for us compared to other things that might similarly be available?

Moreover for the participants in this research, these questions must be answered first. It is only when these questions are easily and satisfactorily answered that other questions might be

considered such as what is the animal welfare associated with this food or what is the environmental or economic consequence of me making this purchase. As such there arises a disconnection between not just how households understand “good food” and how the local authority understands “good food”, but also the potential for a disconnection between low-income households and organisations (commercial and non-commercial) who seek to promote more environmentally and animal friendly understanding. Without understanding how these households conceptualise and value “good food” very little of the effort put into the interventions that use targeted education, behavioral change intervention or nudging will be effective.

## Good Food Disconnection

<p><b>Local Government priorities (costs):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Food safety</li> <li>-Public health—nutrition (absolute)</li> <li>-Economic development</li> </ul> <p><i>Good food is food that is acknowledged as such by nutritional science, safe, and can be secured through the commercial (supermarket) system.</i></p>	<p><b>Household/individual priorities (care):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Enough food</li> <li>-Thrift (Miller 1998)</li> <li>-Pleasure/status (Blake et al 2010; Mellor et al 2010)</li> <li>-Healthy food (relative)</li> <li>-Environmental/ external social impact (middle class; e.g., Blake et al 2010)</li> </ul>
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Both LA officers and third-sector organisations who participated in the SWOT activity felt that programme delivery was also not developed within the context of a strategic set of goals that are shared by the whole local authority organisation. It was felt by participants that programme delivery is frequently in-house and will proceed if it is championed by a single worker. In a context of continuous change, if that champion leaves the LA or is redeployed to another area, the project is dropped or scaled back significantly. New programmes are then developed based on a new set of interests or perceived needs and urgency.

Sometimes there will be an opportunity for those participating (the clients is the term most frequently used although some organisations did refer their constituencies sometimes as community members or guests) in the programmes to feedback on their experiences or any changes that they (the client) implement in their own lives as a result of their participation. Often participants (clients) are not consulted before programmes are designed. As a result potential participants do not help frame the problems and shape the programmes. Not only does this have the potential to limit buy-in and participation from those who are living in communities that are “hard to reach”. This point was countered by one procurement officer who said that while “not all commissioners are really good at ‘patient and public involvement’, but there is significant and

growing good practice and the idea of ‘top down commissioning’ is probably fairly old fashioned.” So there is recognition that good practice is to involve those who will participate in the programmes from inception.

Involvement by clients takes time and overstretched workers who become stressed and disillusioned may contribute to reluctance to pursue new activities, foster relationships with organisations outside of the authority, reduces innovation, and disrupts continuity of existing projects and ongoing work. A number of examples of staff taking periods of sick leave because of these feelings and leaving the authority all together were reported across a number of authorities.

While there is recognition by third-sector organisations that Local Authorities are overstretched and have very limited resources, there is also a feeling that many programme officers within local authorities view inability to provide programmes as a failure of the authority. As such, officers become embarrassed or unwilling to accept the support that can be provided by third-sector organisations.

Rigid decision-making structures and complicated procedures for accessing local authority resources were also reported as being a potential problem by community organisations at the FoodSWAT. Some argued that for the time cost associated with accessing this support far outweighed the return on investment from receiving the resources. Others also pointed out that there was also often no guarantee that even after the effort was made that there would be resources forthcoming. This point was countered by one local authority procurement officer who argued that this point may arise from a lack of understanding on the part of community organisations, who “sometimes don’t like it that there has been a change from a grants based approach to a competitive tendering/best value, performance related, targets and data driven, payment by results approach.” The procurement officer went on to say that “the landscape has changed nationally, particularly under the Blair-Brown administrations. Those who may have been around longer may have found it hard to transition from being able to decide how funds are spent to this data and intelligence led steer from the commissioner, which can feel “top-down”.

Many SWOT participants also felt that Local Authorities perceive that support that is needed or wanted from third-sector organisations is financial, when often support can mean other things such as advice, expertise in a policy area, communication, network coordination, or legitimacy in wider political arenas.

There is a perception from LA officers and third-sector organisations that LA’s are in constant flux and experience continuous change in both staff and management structures such that there is little institutional memory of programmes within the authority. Action groups can be punctuated by frequent and sometimes long periods of relearning as new authority staff are put into place, which disrupts the momentum of these groups and limits their effectiveness.

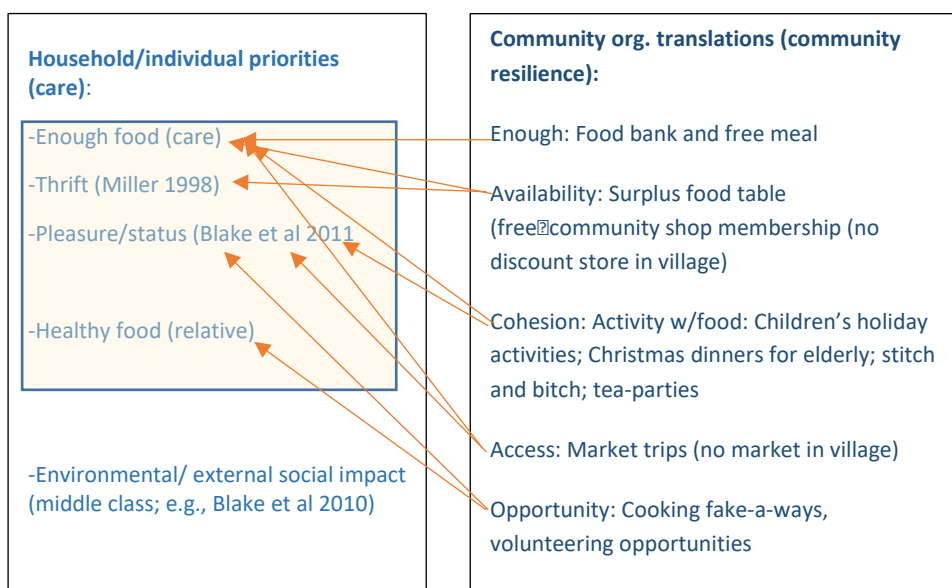
### **3.3 Strengths of third-sector organisations**

The Food SWOT also revealed a number of potential strengths, although not all organisations have these strengths. One of the disadvantages of relying more generally on the third-sector to provide services is that there is not always a consistency across delivery. However, when working well with their communities third-sector organisations bring a wealth of non-financial assets to communities

such as:

- Third-sector organisations are likely to build on historical, common connections within communities because people who work in these organisations are from these communities, and as such can reach very hard to reach groups.
- Community organisation volunteers may exhibit behaviours that are not authoritative or judgmental and thereby encourage community members to access services that they may otherwise feel reluctant to take-up.
- The people working and volunteering in these organisations are able to mobilise their own social networks to recruit volunteers, advertise their activity, and identify needs within the community that may not be readily apparent but that are relevant to the communities within and with which they are working.
- Third-sector organisations can be more flexible and can react more quickly than local authorities because their management structures are more agile, though the funding process can slow this agility down somewhat.
- Their sector organisations are likely to be reflexive of their own practices because of their lean management structures, need to coordinate a diverse group of volunteer labour and the limitations of their funding.
- Third-sector organisations are able to overcome community reluctance to engage with “officials” and thereby more able to reach hard to reach communities.
- Third-sector organisations are often able to easily translate household understandings of need into community activity (see box below).

### HOW THIRD-SECTOR ORGANISATIONS WITHIN THIS CASE –STUDY TRANSLATED DOMESTIC PRIORITIES INTO COMMUNITY ACTIVITY





### 3.4 Weaknesses of third-sector organisations

Weaknesses that were identified through the FoodSWOT are as follows:

- Supporting the work of volunteers requires organisation and management that is consistent and reliable including reliable across all the opening hours of the organisation to ensure continuity. Often these organisations adopt a grant-driven, task-and-deliver funding model creates insecurity within these organisations around this staffing. When cuts have to be made in staffing this also cuts the capacity of the organisation to find additional funding, which can result in a downward spiral toward closure. (see also discussion in Appendix D)
- The need to deliver projects, manage volunteers, advertise activity to participants means that key employees can become overstretched and may result in employee burn-out. The fact that many workers also feel there is not barrier between work and home can exacerbate this problem. Family homes can become storage facilities for the organisation and because key staff are, in the words of one third-sector worker, “chasing funding for their own salaries, they have no option but to let their work overflow into their personal space.” It can also mean that key workers are not able to pursue new projects, possibilities or training because of a lack of time resource which is a by-product of a lack of funding available for core activity.
- The third-sector more generally is diffuse and very much organised around individual organisations rather than as a collaborating network that can act as a shared resource for all community organisations.
- Volunteers may themselves be difficult to manage or require continuous oversight and because they are volunteers organisations cannot let them go. Issues that arise with volunteers include a lack of professionalism, limited ability to see the bigger picture, and timekeeping/punctuality, perhaps due to other more pressing demands on their lives. Volunteers may also lack some educational skills such as reading or maths skills or management skills that would enable them to work independently running projects.

## 4. Moving toward productive partnerships between the third-sector and local authorities to support community resilience

### 4.1 Weaknesses that may limit outcomes or impact from collaborative effort

Practices, behaviors, norms and institutions can limit the effectiveness of Local Authority collaborations with third-sector organisations. The following list is derived from the SWOT activity and observations in the case study context:

- Task and deliver funding models, narrow funding criteria, and funding cutbacks can lead to programme repetition and overlap, abandonment of programmes, increased competition,

lack of collaboration between organisations and between organisations and local authorities, and sustainment of organisation rather than problem-solving.

- A lack of trust may arise from:
  - Lack of understanding of local community values and needs.
  - Lack of reflection regarding existing beliefs and a tendency to seek evidence that confirms those existing beliefs and biases.
  - Top-down approaches that do not acknowledge the understanding or experiences of those who are living in and delivering services to communities.
  - Burnout of service providers that arise from over heavy workloads and constant exposure to negative behaviours within communities and at the same time under-exposure of positive practices that may be going on.
  - Appropriation of benefit from programmes by local authority workers, without due credit for the activity being conducted by third-sector organisations that help to achieve those claimed outcomes.
- Low public awareness and misrepresentation of the problems that give rise to food insecurity or are related to diet-related public health hinder community buy-in.
- Lack of awareness or of the programmes that are available to combat these problems means there is low take-up.
- Although very important as a safety net or first rung on the ladder, an oversupply of activity that focuses only on supporting coping (e.g. only providing emergency food parcels) without additional ancillary activity that supports individual, organisational, and community adaptive and transformational resilience can lead to dependence by individuals/households on the organisation and individualization or hollowing out of communities.

## 4.2 Turning weaknesses into opportunities for strong food collaborations

Currently, a gap exists with regard to the landscape of organisations seeking to support the needs of individuals at the community, local authority, regional and national scale. While there have been calls for better data collection regarding who is in food poverty in England<sup>13</sup>, further data collection on third-sector activity is also needed. This would be most effective if it included the following:

- A list of active organisations who support those experiencing food poverty. There is currently comprehensive list that captures the breadth of food-focused third-sector organisations within local authorities and across regions. Because of this, it is difficult for local authorities to move beyond “the usual suspects” when compiling task groups to support initiatives such as food strategies or food plans. While some, but not all, local authorities do have lists of different third-sector organisations working in their neighbourhoods and communities, often these lists are out of date or offer incomplete coverage, and lack detail. Keeping and updating these lists, working to make the lists more readily available, and taking an overview of what is happening where would not only facilitate networking across organisations but also help build a profile of what is happening at the local authority level. Such action would also enable the support of more readily identifiable contexts of need.
- A standardised dataset that captures the activity of third-sector organisations. There is no

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<sup>13</sup> In Northern Ireland, the FSA has developed work to identify food poverty among residents in Northern Ireland (FSA 2016).

standardisation of information on third-sector organisation activity within local authorities. This data that would enable information from different organisations to be added together and shared across geographies, but also across different departments within the Local Authority. What is needed is a database of different organisations, their model of operations, the spending on food related third-sector activity, including data that reports according to the focus of the activity and includes income and expenditure, employment and number of persons supported. The sustainable food cities network as well as other facilitative organisations such as FareShare which supports more than four and a half thousand groups and charities in the UK, but also for example funding organisations such as Oxfam, Poverty Action, and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation all have the potential to support this type of information gathering. Such a data collaboration would also need to be managed and coordinated more centrally perhaps through a consortium of local authorities. Collaboration could be facilitated via a regional scale data sharing effort facilitated by the local authorities, much in the same way that schools and social care aggregated data is shared across local authorities in order to build up a regional and then national profiles. Aggregated data profiles that focus on third-sector, community-based food support would also enable different local authorities to determine how they compare to other demographically similar locations and enable analysis that could identify gaps and replication of services in different locations. Of course, unlike schools data, where there is a statutory obligation to collect information and a systemic way for doing so, there is no such obligation with regard to the collection of data around food-focused service delivery and interventions by third-sector organisations. Such activity is not within the remit of the Food Standards Agency in England and their current social science priorities, which place an emphasis on food safety, both in homes and in retail.

- Analysis Third-sector organisations find it very difficult to demonstrate the impact of their efforts to both funding agencies but also as a sector more generally. The development of the third-sector data set, when analysed sensitively against other data such as school improvement data, changes in children's overweight data, changes in deprivation scores or through mixed method approaches that identify residual over and under performers and investigate these qualitatively would enable a fuller picture to emerge around the impact of these organisations for addressing the issues associated with food poverty.
- Small third-sector organisations are often innovative, but because of their community focus can find it difficult to enable or justify the effort needed to roll-out their successes to other communities. Local authorities are positioned to support this diffusion of successful activity to other communities within their remit and to communicate these innovative programmes to other local authorities who can feed the ideas down into their communities. In order for the diffusion of innovative ideas to be successful, however, there must be understanding that programmes that work in one community may not be effective in other communities. For example, a religious setting may be an effective location for a food hub or community grocery store in one village or neighbourhood, but may not be suitable in another because of the practices and values of residents in those neighbourhoods and communities. Enabling community-based organisations to configure good practice to community values and needs is a key part of the diffusion process.

### 4.3 Building strengths through strong community-authority partnerships

The research case study and the SWOT activity revealed the following organisational practices that can strengthen the effectiveness of community-authority partnerships :

**Local Authorities value the time and knowledge of locally based community organisations and enable them to participate in finding solutions.** This can mean being aware of what organisations are doing in their communities and inviting their opinion when developing goals, identifying achievable outcomes, constructing programmes for residents and recommending regulations that shape the context of places. Given that grants are often specific to a particular project, local authorities could also consider remunerating organisations for the time representatives from those organisation spend attending working group or planning meetings with the council that are not directly related to the projects for which they have been funded. Remuneration could be via direct payments for time or via an in-kind transfer such as paying for memberships in schemes such as FareShare food deliveries or the Trussell Trust, providing training or labour support, including the organisations in bulk purchasing deals with suppliers, and so forth.

**Local Authorities act in a facilitative role to enable community organisations to become more self-sufficient and support the long-term sustainability of those organisations and also even out the geographical distribution of services.**

Third-sector organisation often say there is no centralised knowledge hub that offers key services from which third-sector organisations might learn about grant opportunities, the best-practice work of other organisations, organisations with whom they might collaborate (both in terms of large scale organisations and smaller more local organisations), or information about how to manage the business aspects of running a community group that are beyond the services that they provide (e.g. budgeting, grant writing, social media and other forms of information dissemination, dealing with difficult people as both customers and volunteers, employment issues such as how to manage statutory leave, contract negotiation, and so forth). There are also limited avenues for communicating local third-sector activity and impact beyond the places where it is occurring and this would be an important role for the Local Authority to fill or to facilitate. It is important however, these services offered are complementary services that meet a need as opposed to replicate frontline services to residents already being delivered by the third-sector.

To avoid this pitfall and support the third-sector this may mean a change in the culture of local authority and an alteration of practices such that local authorities act as:

- *A training broker* by offering training around key areas such as nutrition, good practice in service delivery, development of the skills of volunteers and grant development. This training could be in the form of authority provided training workshops, through short secondment placements where experienced LA officers spend time working directly with organisations, or via bursaries that enable representatives from locally based organisations to attend third party training activities.
- *A network agent* by connecting up different organisations and diverse communities so that good practice may be shared, services can be linked rather than replicated and resources may be found. In addition to providing opportunities for organisation-to-organisation network development and information transfer (see for example the Third-sector Café in Sheffield <http://www.thirdsectorcafe.co.uk/home>). Likewise, virtual networks can be

established that map out the activities of service providers and which may be made available to potential users (for example via The Sustainable Food Cities network <http://sustainablefoodcities.org/>). Network enhancement may also involve providing avenues through which positive outcome and innovative effort can be recognised and acknowledged, for example via community awards nights.

- *A critical friend or mentor for community organisations* through providing outlets that enable those organisations to reflect on progress, to identify areas for further development or provide feedback on initiatives.
- *A provider of data infrastructure and analysis* by offering a mechanism for organisations to share data with the LA in a way that does not add an additional burden. This can be achieved via developing easy to use web-based data platform that community organisations can input into and explain the benefits to those organisations or for their communities. Local authority analysts can then provide more sophisticated analysis and interpretation of aggregated quantitative data against national and regional level indicators and trends and create qualitative case studies in order to establish an institutional memory of successful intervention. This may mean situating community profile information into a larger regional and national context. It may also involve participating in data sharing local authority networks.
- *An information outlet* that communicates clearly to organisations the national and local scale policy shifts that may impact on the activities of those organisations while at the same time joins with larger scale organisations and other local authorities to influence national level campaigns and policy development in the areas of food poverty reduction and improvement of public health outcomes.
- *A research collaborator* that works with the university research sector to facilitate evaluation and to support the development and demonstration of the collective impact of work being done within and between community and local authority actors. There are many avenues for these collaborations to develop, such as sharing data with researchers, partnering in research grant applications, offering secondments for researchers to work for short periods within specific departments or on specific projects, or commissioning research support. These different collaborations range in terms of cost and duration and as such must be considered carefully prior to development.
- *A Knowledge Hub* that supports the dissemination of collaborative and/or relevant research reports back to the organisations within their local areas and to other local authorities via professional networks. This may mean developing additional areas on websites that are directed toward audiences beyond public service users.
- *An overseer* that identifies areas where services are being replicated (e.g., support swamps) or are underserved and then directs potential third-sector organisations into underserved communities or helps reshape third-sector activity to offer complementary services within communities where some services may already exist.
- *A facilitator* that provides infrastructures that can be shared across different third-sector organisations, such as providing buildings that function as community food hubs, community or warehouse space, marketplaces, or community shops where none exist, but that could be used by residents and third-sector organisations.
- *A listener* to those who are by experience experts in terms of what it is like to live in chronic

food insecurity. By listening and then passing on this information, either to central government or back to third-sector organisations will enable real change in terms of both empowering communities, but also in terms of rebalancing the national understanding of the issues.

**Local Authorities work to establish mechanisms that enable trust to exist between community organisations and local authority departments.** This may involve:

- working with community organisations to understand the values and needs of local residents;
- ensuring that LA service providers act in ways that are in tune with the values and needs of



*(This hub organisation funded by the council) was to be our go to organisation for support on all issues related to the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. Although on the outside this seemed a great idea, as a small community organisation we felt that we were being left out of the loop in terms of funding being distributed as the (hub organisation) would get the heads up before anyone else and obtain funding for their own benefit, particularly when funding became hard to come by, resulting in an office in the town centre having numerous highly paid staff delivering services that grass roots groups were already delivering at a fraction of the cost.*

local residents, which may involve training service providers to recognise when they are acting in an oppositional or hierarchical manner or are basing decisions based on bias rather than evidence;

- sharing the credit with community members and organisations for creating change and resilience within communities;
- restructuring contract processes such that contracts enable service delivery and share responsibility rather than hinder the effort—(or alternatively, make more transparent the criteria upon which decisions are made and the structures within which that decision-making occurs.

~Local community organisation representative

#### **4.4 Avoiding the translation of opportunities and threats into weaknesses that endanger successful collaboration**

Often aspects of an environment may be viewed as both a threat and an opportunity. The proliferation of 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations focusing on food-related activity is an example. Clearly, the mobilisation of an interested and committed public is a good thing. The time involved in developing relationships, the fact that 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations do not make themselves known to local authorities and often would not know how to make themselves known to the right people, the need by local authorities to prioritise effort and expenditure as a result of shrinking budgets, reduced staff time, and increased responsibility, the precarious nature of 3<sup>rd</sup> sector activity that is

funded on by grants on a task-and-deliver basis can make this a wasted opportunity.

A wasted opportunity can become a threat when organisations feel that the work they are doing is of low priority or not known, acknowledged or valued by the LA. Example.

This can manifest as hostility by community members toward the local authority because the presumption is that “they (the local authority) don’t care about us (the community or organisation)” or “they (the local authority) don’t care about what is important to us (the issue)” or “they always just call on the same people for their tasks groups, it is a bit cliquey.” All of this can make collaboration when it is called for or attempted more difficult.

## **5 Background to the research and research methodology**

### **5.1 Background to the research**

The findings and recommendations presented in this report are the result of research carried out in with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council public health team and was funded by the ESRC via an impact acceleration grant. The research partnership emerged from a University of Sheffield ESRC Festival of Social Sciences event supported by the South Yorkshire Local Authority Network titled Decent Helpings: Setting a local and regional agenda for food justice (see <https://geofoodie.org/decenthelpings/>). Through collaborative work with approximately 65 attendees the following three themes were collectively identified as needing further investigation: A) regulation and legislation, B) how to support communities, and C) learning and sharing. This research is the next phase in this ongoing network collaboration.

### **5.2 Methodology**

The research approach taken is derived from a desire to identify and bring together into conversation different actors involved in community food poverty and to mobilise the situated expertise, knowledge and capacities of those individuals in order to enable useful change to happen. To achieve the aim of co-producing research at different scales different research methods were utilized at different stages of each phase of the research process. The first phase of the research involved a four-month case-study investigation in one area of Doncaster that was identified as being a potential site of resilience. The second phase of the research focused on one specific finding that arose from phase 1 of the research, namely a recognised need for further understanding how local authorities might more effectively work with third-sector organisations to achieve their common goals around addressing food poverty. To understand what might be the barriers to and possibilities for enhancing these collaborations an interactive workshop, which we called a Food SWOT was held. Further descriptions of each phase are described below.

#### **5.2.1 Phase 1: Doncaster and Edlington case study**

The determination of potential communities that might be demonstrating resilience was based on a statistical mapping of residual scores derived from the comparison of deprivation predicted rates of childhood overweight against actual rates of childhood overweight by communities in Doncaster (see Appendix C for a further discussion of this analysis and some recommendations with regard to how local authorities might approach). Data for children’s rates of overweight were chosen to identify potential community resilience within the context of this research as it was the most

reliable data available for each community that pertained to the issue of potential public health need as identified by the partner authority. Doncaster Local Authority provided the data set for this part of the research, which included geographically aggregated data at the community level that included index of multiple deprivation scores, other possible predictive variables and the dependent child overweight variable. The children's overweight variable was made up of three consecutive years (2011-13) of reported data from reception (ages 4-5) and year 6 children (aged 10-11). All data were aggregated to community level by the local authority according to their standard data reporting practices. The rationale for using this particular data as the way to identify resilience is based on the theoretical proposition that where communities are performing in ways that are significantly different to what would be statistically expected something positive may be occurring within those communities at the community level to support this difference.

From this analysis, four communities which demonstrated high levels of deprivation and also significantly lower rates of children who were overweight and obese emerge from the Doncaster data as potential case studies. These are Doncaster town centre, Hyde Park, Bentley and Edlington. Each area was discussed with the partners at the public health team in Doncaster and Edlington was identified as the most suitable location within which to conduct the research for two reasons. Firstly, Edlington is a community that is geographically self-contained as the community is surrounded by countryside. As such identifying what residents have easy access to with regard to food and other community services would be relatively easy to identify. Secondly, the NHS Public Health team in Doncaster conducted a community conference within Edlington to assess what issues there were in the community as well as what was working well for the community in 2009, which would enable a starting point for this research. More information about Edlington is presented in Appendix D.

With the help of a research assistant funded by the research grant, Georgina Gowans, some research activities took place over a three-month period. These included observation within the better families team located in the Martin Wells centre. Repeat interviews were conducted with managers working in Edlington's two active community organisations: Edlington Community Organisation (ECO) and Hilltop Centre. These organisations are described more fully in Appendix D. Participant observation was also conducted over two months on the day when ECO runs a food bank, where participation involved cooking food for a shared meal for those coming to the centre and distribution of food bank parcels. To focus groups with community members recruited for us by ECO also were conducted. Despite efforts to recruit men, eight women participated in the two focus group workshops.

### **5.2.2 Phase 2: Food SWOT**

Workshop attendees included large and small third-sector organisations mostly working in cities in the North of England (Newcastle, Sheffield, Hull, Manchester, Stockport, Leeds, Liverpool, York) although some representatives from national scale organisations were also present as were representatives from a few organisations working in the south of England. Also in attendance were participants from a number of local authorities (elected and as regular employees) and academics. Fifty people attended the event although not all could stay for the whole day; 35 people participated in the activity. SWOT analysis was used as a framework for coordinating discussions among participants and then analysed. Appendix B of this report provides a further description of



the methodology for conducting the FoodSWOT that was developed for this workshop. Appendix C is a table that lists the points identified by the participants under each of the SWOT headings. An initial summary of the SWOT was circulated to key actors including Local Authority personnel in four authorities (Sheffield, Doncaster, Manchester, and Hull) and a number of third-sector organisations who are concerned with supporting communities around issues of food insecurity, including those involved in the case study, some from the workshop, as well as others not in attendance on the workshop day. Their feedback has been incorporated into this account.

## Acknowledgements

While I am the author of this work and take full responsibility for its content and any omissions or errors, the work would not have been possible without the help and input of a large number of people. I am thankful for the support and critical contributions that they have offered. Those who have indicated a willingness to be acknowledged by name include:

Lucy Antal, Liverpool Food People  
Jon Ashbridge, Hull City Council  
Katie Badger, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council  
Ingun Borg, University of Sheffield  
Leslie Cooper, Edlington Community Organisation  
Luke Craven, University of Sidney  
Doncaster Metropolitan Council Public Health  
Leila Eddakille, Hilltop Centre  
Hannah Fenton, Good Food Oxford  
Georgiana Gowans  
Pamela Graham, Northumbria University  
Anna Hawkins, University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University  
Suzanne Hocknell, University of Exeter  
John LeCorney, Heeley City Farm  
Isobel Nicholson, Fareshare  
Christian Reynolds, University of Sheffield and N8 AgriFood Project  
Samantha Siddall, Edlington Community Organisation  
Rupert Suckling and the Doncaster Public Health team, Doncaster Local Authority  
Ryan Wileman, The Salvation Army and S20 Food Bank  
Lucy Rose Wright, University of Hull

I would like to also acknowledge a number of unnamed participants. These include those who offered insights and experiences to the SWOT workshop but who did not give permission to be named; the women in Edlington who work, support, and participate in the activities of Edlington Community Organisation who were willing to spend time telling us about their lives; community organisation workers who invited me to participate and contribute to their activities; and a number of Doncaster Council employees who spoke openly and candidly about their experiences with the community we were investigating.

## Appendix A: SWOT Methodology



Developed by Megan Blake, University of Sheffield for the Feeding Affordances and Decent Helpings workshop on 13/9/2016. This workshop is funded through ESRC IAA grant number R/145185.

### Set-up:

- 4 tables
- 4 pieces of large size paper
- Marker pens in 4 colours
- Blue-tac
- OHP slides with the main question and definitions of the SWOT elements; Questions to consider in final summary discussion.

### Aim of the workshop:

To answer the question: How can organisations, local authorities, and others effectively come together to reduce food insecurity and improve diet-related public health in communities.

### What participants will do:

This question will be explored through four lenses using a SWOT approach described below.

- There will be 4 tables, with each table taking a SWOT element. Each table will have space for 8-12 participants plus the table rapporteur (described below).
- Participants will start with whichever table they choose, provided there is space.
- The rapporteur will produce a factor map of the discussion, which will be focused on the factors relevant to the table's SWOT element.
- After half an hour, participants will be asked to choose a *new* SWOT element to discuss. Participants in this discussion they add factors to the factor map begun by previous participants.
- The process will be repeated two more times to enable participants to feed into each of the 4 different elements of the SWOT.
- Once everyone has contributed to each SWOT element (and coffee has been drunk), the rapporteurs will feed back the finished factor maps to the entire group and these will be posted on the walls.
- In the final discussion, groups will discuss how what was revealed by the SWOT might be taken forward by local authorities, third-sector organisations, and/or researchers. A group representative (not necessarily the rapporteur) will feed this back to the whole group.

**Total time needed:** 3 Hours

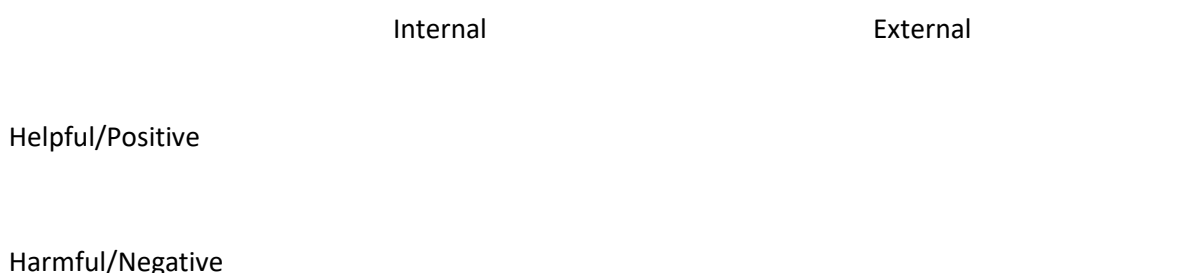
### What is the SWOT approach?

The SWOT analysis is a method for identifying factors that support effective strategy, typically for an organisation or department within an organisation. In this case, the SWOT analysis has been

modified into a workshop format in order to:

- stimulate a productive discussion between different groups seeking to understand and resolve similar problems;
- identify ways that local authorities and third-sector organisations can better understand each other and what they have to offer;
- encourage innovation and productive change within local authorities and third-sector organisations to better position them to take advantage of contextual opportunities and build resilience in the face of economic, social, political, and environmental threats;
- facilitate the building of effective networks comprised of third-sector organisations, local authorities, and academics in order to reduce food poverty and diet-related diseases in communities.

For the purposes of this exercise the following diagram definitions will apply (based on Sarsby, 2012):



**Internal**—those factors that directly describe or characterise local authorities, third-sector organisations or the *relationships* between local authorities and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations. Internal Factors are those elements that can be controlled by the different agents in this relationship.

**External**—those factors that act upon local authorities, community organisations and the relationships between them for which none of these agents has control.

**Helpful**—Factors that assist the success of achieving the goal. In this exercise, these are factors that support the working together of local authorities and community groups in order to improve food security and diet-related public health.

**Harmful**—Factors that impede or block success. In this exercises, these are factors that limit or impede the working together of local authorities and community groups or threaten food security and/or threaten diet-related public health.

Strengths are factors that are internal and helpful toward achieving a particular end (in this case a joined up local authority-third-sector network that is working together to reduce food insecurity and to reduce diet-related health problems). Weaknesses are those factors that are internal and unhelpful. Opportunities are those factors that are external and helpful toward achieving the aim. Threats are those factors that are external and unhelpful.

Some examples:

- A strength factor might be the presence of engaged community organisations within a community. Local politicians who are interested in pushing forward a healthy and affordable food agenda.

- A weakness might be a lack of knowledge about the third-sector organisation by the local authority; another weakness might be the lack of trust between different actors or lack of understanding of the values of community members.
- An opportunity may be increased funding for a specific area, a new national level programme (e.g. school lunches, obesity plan), a new social trend, technological innovations, legislation, etc.
- A threat may be budget reductions or long-term insecurity as a result of the task and deliver funding model, food producers who push low-quality food, economic decline or job loss, etc.

The key question that distinguishes between the internal and external is the answer to the following: ***Are any of the agents involved the workshop in control or have the potential to be in control of the factor?*** If the answer is yes, then the factor is internal, if the answer is no then it is external.

### **Table Rapporteur:**

Each table will have a rapporteur who will help direct the discussion, take notes and feedback at the end of the initial session.

- Group discussions:
  - Have everyone to go around and say their name and what organisation they belong to. This should be quick.
  - Remind participants which SWOT group they are in and what the focus is. There will be an OHP slide projected during the discussion that will define each element as a helpful reminder.
  - For the first round no initial summary is needed prior to the discussion starting, but for second and subsequent discussions you should quickly highlight the different factors that have been already written on the paper. Try to encourage participants to add to the existing lists, but to also consider other factors that may not fit with an existing group.
  - Invite participants to suggest factors while you take notes. Notes will be added to by each subsequent group so write big enough, but also try to different types of factors distinct from each other.
  - As you write try to get the participants to agree on the wording. Ask participants who are not saying much if they agree or think there is anything missing.
  - When taking notes avoid making links as per a mind map at first; just use the page to free associate the factors by putting similar factors together in the same area on the page. Eventually, themes for the factors will emerge and groups of factors can be linked together via more general theme titles. These more general theme titles can be added in after all the discussions have finished and will help for the feedback session. Time for this will be available in the coffee period.
  - Rapporteurs will feed back the results of their element discussions to the whole group. Aim for a short, 5 minute, presentation. You should highlight the main themes and offer examples of factors (rather than read out all the factors) that represent that theme. The Factor maps will be posted on the wall for people to look at more closely if they would like.

Other things for the Rapporteur to consider when taking notes and prompting discussion:

- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats may, but need not be in existence or realised. For example, increased funding for summer hunger programmes. It does not exist now, but it could be considered an opportunity.
- If table participants are stuck for examples you can direct the conversation by getting them

to think in a blue skies manner. Likewise, you can prompt the participants to think of different scales (from local to national for example).

- Aim for a generalised discussion, so while there may be examples of SWOT factors that are rooted in particular places try to write down their example in a way that is a bit more abstracted. For example, we had a story of a woman who was frustrated by the advice she received from her community worker about feeding her child. She was told to only provide a cooked meal on the days her daughter did not eat a school lunch. Firstly she didn't understand what "cooked meal" was in this context. This is a specific example, but the weaknesses might be 1. Poor communication between caseworkers and family feeders and 2. Lack of understanding the importance of eating together by case workers.
- While the different factors should be expressed in general terms, they need to have detail. E.g. "presence of community organisations" is not enough of a strength factor. "Active community organisations that are well connected to the community" might be. Some factors could be linked to more than one SWOT element. For example, a community discount store may be a strength factor in terms of providing low-cost food in the community and thereby increasing access to food, but if the food that is sold is of poor quality then this undermines the nutritional health aspects. The opportunity might be new food stores opening in the town because they offer jobs and lower cost food and thereby increase food security. Prompt the discussion to uncover *why* the factor is a strength, weakness, opportunity or threat.

#### **Further use of the workshop structure:**

This activity would work well with different configurations of groups, such as:

- With participants located within a single local authority across divisions at the same level of seniority or at different levels of seniority. Undertaking the workshop across divisions with different remits within a single authority would enable a strategy that facilitates collaborative working to emerge as well as help identify the institutional barriers that are limiting collaboration. Working across levels of seniority and responsibility would also highlight areas where more training or support may be needed and potentially reveal opportunities to introduce efficiency in working practices.
- Between a division within a local authority and with representatives of third-sector organisations working in the communities within the authority. This configuration would enable an opportunity for greater discussion between the LA and third-sector organisations operating within the LA's communities. The approach would enable recognition of good practice as well as areas for concern and offer scope to develop a strategic platform from which to respond to external opportunities and threats.
- With community residents and hosted by a local authority or third-sector organisation. This configuration would enable residents within a community to understand what is on offer to them and also where there are limitations to what they might expect. This would also give residents an opportunity to voice their concerns and hopes in a structured and non-personal environment as the focus for each element is on determining more general, rather than person specific issues. Rapporteurs may need to be very well trained in order to help translate individual stories into these more general statements needed for the analysis.

The activity can also be modified to focus on a specific aspect of the issues surrounding food insecurity and/or diet-related public health.

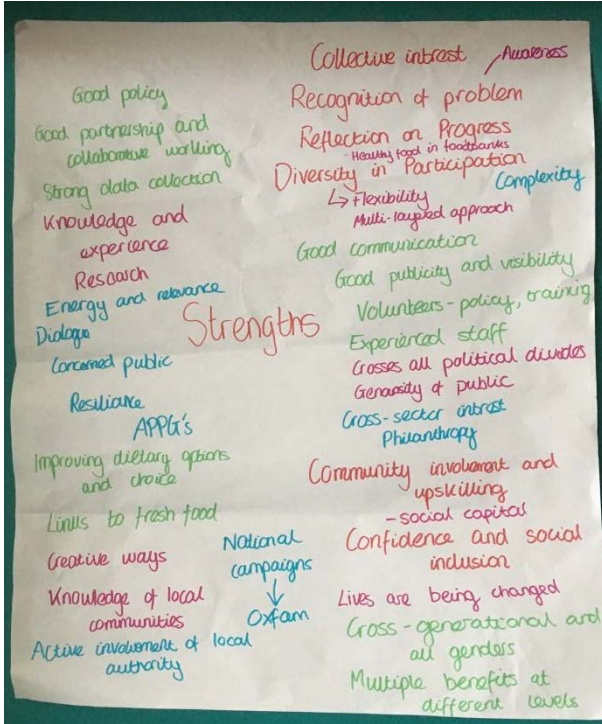
**After the workshop:**

The results of a SWOT analysis can be used to develop strategies for improvement within organisations and between organisations or suggest areas that could be developed further. After and initial evaluation and elaboration of the different elements of the SWOT, which is down by starting with the Threats, then focusing on Opportunities, then considering Weaknesses and finishing with Strengths, Sarsby (2014) suggests that the elements should be matched and converted. Matching is used to evaluate how the internal strengths and weaknesses stand up against a potential change in or realisation of the Opportunities and Threats. Conversion is when a threat is turned into an opportunity and a weakness into a strength. Going through this process leads to the identification of where growth can occur (when opportunities are matched to strengths), where external development can happen (when strengths are used to convert threat into an opportunity), and where internal development can be used to convert weaknesses into strengths. Finally matching up of weaknesses against threats will provide an opportunity for worst case scenario planning and offer avenues for strategic prioritisation of the ideas that emerge from the other combinations of factors. The final step is to develop or suggest actions to be followed that derive from the priorities that are set.

# Appendix B: Food SWOT Community input

Table 1: Results from table consolations

## Strengths



## Opportunities



## Weaknesses

## Threats



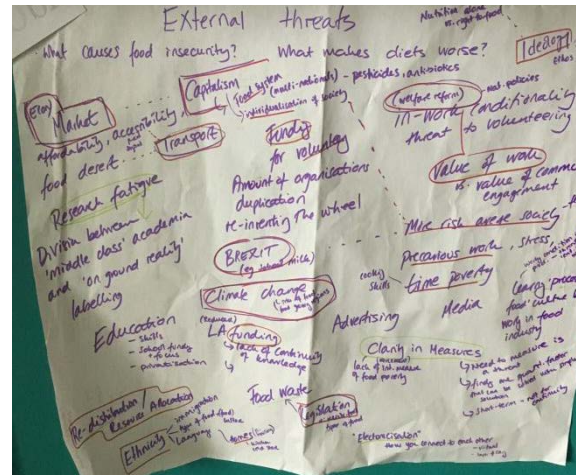


Table 2: SWOT summarised

<p><b>Strong community-authority partnerships have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good policy around improving dietary options</li> <li>Strong data collection</li> <li>Knowledge and experience of dietary options and choice</li> <li>Knowledge resident’s circumstances and the communities in which they live</li> <li>Understanding and access to relevant research</li> <li>Energy and relevance</li> <li>Collective interest</li> <li>Creativity in problem-solving</li> <li>Generosity of spirit in sharing information and collaborative working</li> <li>Well trained staff and volunteers</li> <li>Multi-scalar approaches: Potential to link into national campaigns Good partnerships and collaborative working between organisations and with local authorities—Diversity in participation across from people/groups from different political, socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds and from different sectors</li> <li>Opportunities for service users to be part of the solution</li> <li>Recognition of problems</li> <li>Reflection on progress</li> <li>Flexible approaches</li> <li>High visibility with public</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased public awareness of the issues and interest in food and public willingness or organise and apply pressure on government and industry.</li> <li>Policy shifts-e.g., sugar tax, quality standards, food waste redistribution, zero hours contracts</li> <li>Shifts in Supermarket’s behaviours interest in redistribution of surplus food</li> <li>Structural changes that offer opportunities to redistribute power in the food system:</li> <li>Brexit—offers an opportunity for a food system that is built on local/national resources and values</li> <li>Climate Change—Diversity in Farming</li> <li>Political change and shifts away from Crony Neoliberalism</li> <li>Impact agenda in Higher Education Research</li> <li>Communication and networks for shared knowledge about best practice</li> <li>New innovative approaches being developed: Cooking hubs, food cooperative buying clubs, Potential to piggyback on programmes aimed at other goals (e.g., High-speed rail), basic income as an option, Concerned public /Communities developing Food Plans</li> <li>Potential to find new routes to change—Male interest in healthy bodies and body image</li> </ul>
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<p>Availability of fresh food Low-cost access to food</p>	<p>Cultural values offer entry points into developing context specific food opportunities.</p> <p>Communities with access to transportation and food related resources.</p> <p>Communities where there is a strong sense of place and a collective sense of values.</p>
<p><b>Weaknesses that limit community-authority partnerships aimed at addressing food poverty on poor diet-related health outcomes:</b></p> <p>Programme repetition and overlap Competition for funding Lack of collaboration between organisations and between organisations and local authorities Lack of a lobbying voice in areas of decision-making Expectations of outcomes are overestimated Lack of a clear shared agenda Lack of a clear goal or endpoint-reactive rather than preventative approaches to solving problems Organisation sustainment rather than problem-solving Values and priorities are variable Over-reliance on and reproduction of stereotypes and perceptions of service users and of service providers LA out of touch with communities in terms of lived experience (positive and negative) Lack of infrastructure Lack of access to needed non-capital resources (e.g., fresh food) Contract agreements may be hindering delivery Programme implementation Data analysis lacks sophistication—insufficient understanding or to time to engage more sophisticated analysis Over-reliance on volunteers Limited training opportunities for volunteers Too many barriers to participation for volunteers Inconsistent/unclear definitions and criteria for engagement and/or management interpretation of rules is uneven Rules not always enforced/discretionary decision-making Agendas and policy based on opinion rather than supported by evidence—speaking on behalf of people Insufficient skills—people given responsibility without support Failure to follow guidelines in service delivery (e.g., out of hours child activities not adhering to dietary guidelines). Limited input/control/voice of service users and</p>	<p><b>Threats:</b></p> <p>Task-and-deliver funding model Short-term funding Eligibility criteria for funding is constraining Class/cultural divides between those making/implementing policy or designing services and those who are the objects of policy/services Educational attainment of poor population Privatisation of public goods/services Increasing pressures for diversity needed to address needs of different groups Increasing pressures for services Budget squeeze Staff cuts and increased workloads In-work conditionality a threat to volunteering Over emphasis on economic outcomes as a measure of contribution Increased food prices Risk adverse society Segmented/divided society Policy allowing precarious work Legislation around food waste limits redistribution Rise in the number of work poor and time poor Food industry unaccountable Food industry drives understanding of the food system Welfare reform producing a growth in number living in precarious circumstances National policy aimed at increasing and concentrating national wealth rather than a more widely distributed wealth Media reproduces negative stereotypes and promotes populist approaches Pandering to big business Limited national resources available National priorities not focused on poverty alleviation Disenfranchised population who is suspicious of government/middle class/expert knowledge Individualised society Transport networks/infrastructures are inefficient Geographical variations in food availability Research on produces research fatigue Research which does not translate into action on the ground or policy influence Policies based on the values of those in power</p>

<p>limited/no opportunities for input  Unclear understanding of the needs of communities  Top-down approaches that don't listen to those delivering/receiving the service  Not enough consultation with those who have a first-hand understanding of food poverty.  Low public awareness  Limited advertising of activity  Limited reach beyond a single activity/group  Cookie cutter approach to policy interventions/lack of contextual awareness of what will work here  We tried that before and it failed attitudes  Too focused on the immediate and or narrow issue and failure to see the bigger picture  Reluctance to hold those with power to account  Competition between groups organisations for recognition  Development of programmes/interventions that arise out of middle-class experiences and values  Judgemental attitudes towards those who have low incomes.  Data sharing is limited  Institutional memory of what works and what did not work is limited—reinvention of the wheel  Victorian approaches to service delivery and philanthropy.</p>	<p>Limited scope for joined up thinking across service providers (e.g. NHS, LA, Etc.) and across LA on food insecurity  National data capture too narrowly focused  Instability in Public sector funding  Time and resources are increasingly stretched  Lack of sufficient data needed to support clear policy outcomes  Communities with limited fresh food offerings, transportation and other infrastructures.  Communities with limited cohesion</p>
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## **Appendix C: IMD as a predictor of children's overweight status in Doncaster Communities where there were more than 75 children measured.**

Data for this analysis was provided in anonymised form from **Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council Public Health**, who was the collaborator on this research application.

The aim of this research is twofold. Firstly to consider the predictors of rates of children who are overweight and obese at the community level and to determine if there are contextual factors that contribute to these rates. Secondly, the research aimed to identify communities that were performing better than would be expected so that a qualitative case study could be undertaken to try to see what might be supporting their resilience.

The term resilience means the capacity to recover from difficulty and has been used in research on communities for some time in relation to their ability to recover from natural disasters (see Norris et al 2007). In this research the term seems apt, given that those who are overweight and obese are more likely to also experience diet-related illness (see, for example, Hawkes 2006) and there are links to poverty (see analysis below, but also Drewnowski and Spector, 2006, it should be noted that not all people who are classified as overweight or obese are in poor health (for example Julie Guthman's 2011 book, *Weighing In*, offers a good analysis).

In England, where this study was conducted, fiscal austerity that is rolling back the ability of local authorities to support communities, neoliberal economic policies that are increasing the divide between wealthy and poor, and draconian welfare reform can be characterised as a disaster for communities that are poor. The Trussell Trust Food Bank Network reports that there are thirteen million people living in poverty in the UK today, and a recent report by the Joseph Roundtree Foundation highlights that the face of poverty is changing in the UK such that families in poverty are increasingly living in precarious circumstances, but are also those who are working. Bernardo's cites research by the institute of fiscal studies that indicates that child poverty in the UK is expected to rise. Furthermore, poverty tends to concentrate in particular communities, such that we see a geography of rich and poor

where the north of England and parts of London have the highest concentrations of poverty (see this 2016 interactive map on The Guardian).

In families that are poor, strategies for coping include parents skipping meals to feed children, but also --and importantly--trading down on the quality and nutritional value of the food they buy. In short, low-quality food is less expensive, can be more filling, and can be stored for longer than food that is more healthy food. But low-quality food also tends to be higher in fat, salt, and sugar, which helps explain the confusing link between high rates of overweight and obesity and the food poverty (See Drewnoski and Spector for a scientific analysis (cited above); but also see comment by Peter Marsh at the Social Issues Research Centre). Although this is not perhaps a natural disaster, certainly the toxic combination of poverty, a hollowing out of support, and a food system that is more geared toward profits than it is toward providing healthy food can be considered disastrous for the communities that are experiencing such hardship the most.

Evidence shows, however, that there are communities that are bucking expectations. The analysis presented in this report provides one way of identifying potential community resilience through a statistical analysis that focuses on residuals. Such analysis, when coupled with a qualitative investigation, can reveal new and perhaps better ways of approaching the dual problems of obesity and food poverty in the short term at the scale of the local authority.

### **Results and analysis**

A standard regression analysis indicates that while the index of multiple deprivation (IMD) is a predictor of childhood obesity, it only predicts about 40% of the variance across Doncaster communities (See figure 1). The following graphs unpack this a bit more (figures 2 and 3).

*Figure C-1: Simple Linear Regression Statistic of IMD score as a predictor of percentage of overweight children*

### **Model Summary**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.643	.413	.401	.031

The independent variable is IMD\_score.

#### ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	.033	1	.033	33.811	.000
Residual	.046	48	.001		
Total	.079	49			

The independent variable is IMD\_score.

#### Coefficients

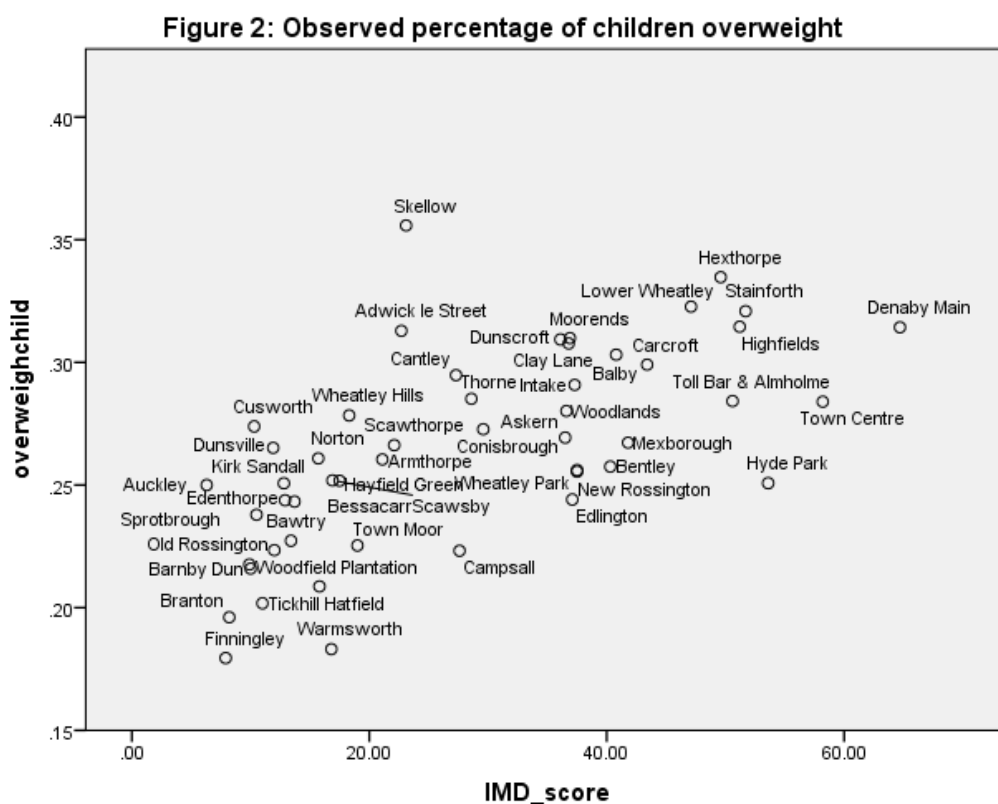
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
IMD_score	.002	.000	.643	5.815	.000
(Constant)	.219	.009		24.145	.000

The only other variables that have any predictive value are the education variables for adults (with L3 and L4 and with L4) and those predictions were similar to the IMD rates. This is not surprising given educational attainment is one of the variables considered when producing the IMD score. Two further variables provided by the council, percent non-white and percent of children with a fast-food takeaway within 1km, were not significant in their ability to predict levels of children who are overweight. Specifically, with regard to fast food access, the results of the regression are not significant in this analysis ( $R^2 = .044$ ,  $F=.092$ ,  $Sig=.763$ ). So the fact that Highfields, which has a rate of access at 16% is no more or less likely to present children that are overweight, than Stainforth, an area of similar

deprivation but which has 91% of children with access to fast food.

Figure C-2 is a scatter plot of communities **reported percentages** of children who are overweight. There is a positive relationship between children who live in poverty and overweight status as demonstrated by the linear regression statistics. One can see that Finningley, an area with a low deprivation score, is also the community with the lowest percentage of overweight children (18%), whilst Skellow, an area that is not one of the highest areas of deprivation has the highest percentage of overweight children (36%). At the other end of the plot, we can see Denaby Main is an area of high deprivation with a high percentage of overweight children (31%). Given that the locations on the right of the graph are more deprived, we would expect to see these communities to have higher percentages of children being classed as overweight compared to those communities on the left side of the graph.

Figure C-2: Observed percentage of children who are overweight by community and Index of Deprivation score



While it might be tempting to stop the analysis with this graph, two further graphs are useful to look at as they indicate how much of this obesity can be explained by the Index of Deprivation, remembering that the model explains just over 40% of the variation between communities.

The Figure C-3 provides the **predicted values** for each community based on their index of deprivation score. For example, we would expect approximately 33% of children living in Denaby Main, the most deprived area, to be overweight whereas approximately 23% of children in Auckley, the least deprived area, would be overweight. These can be contrasted with a plot of the residual values.

**Residual values** for each community ( the difference between expected value and real value) are presented in Figure C-4. Moving from left to right, the IMD score for each community increases. What this graph tells us is that those communities below the bottom line have a lower than predicted proportion of children who are classed as overweight, whilst those communities above the top line have higher than predicted percentages of overweight children. The further the community is from the standard error lines (top and bottom lines) the less effective IMD score is for predicting percentages of overweight children.

*Figure C-3: Predicted percentages of overweight children by community*



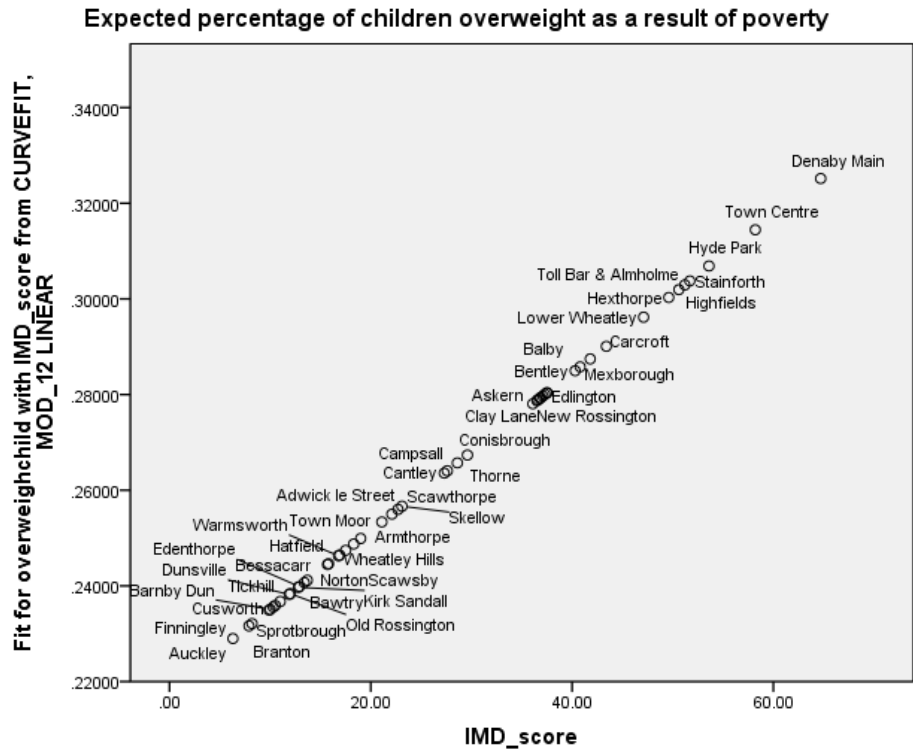
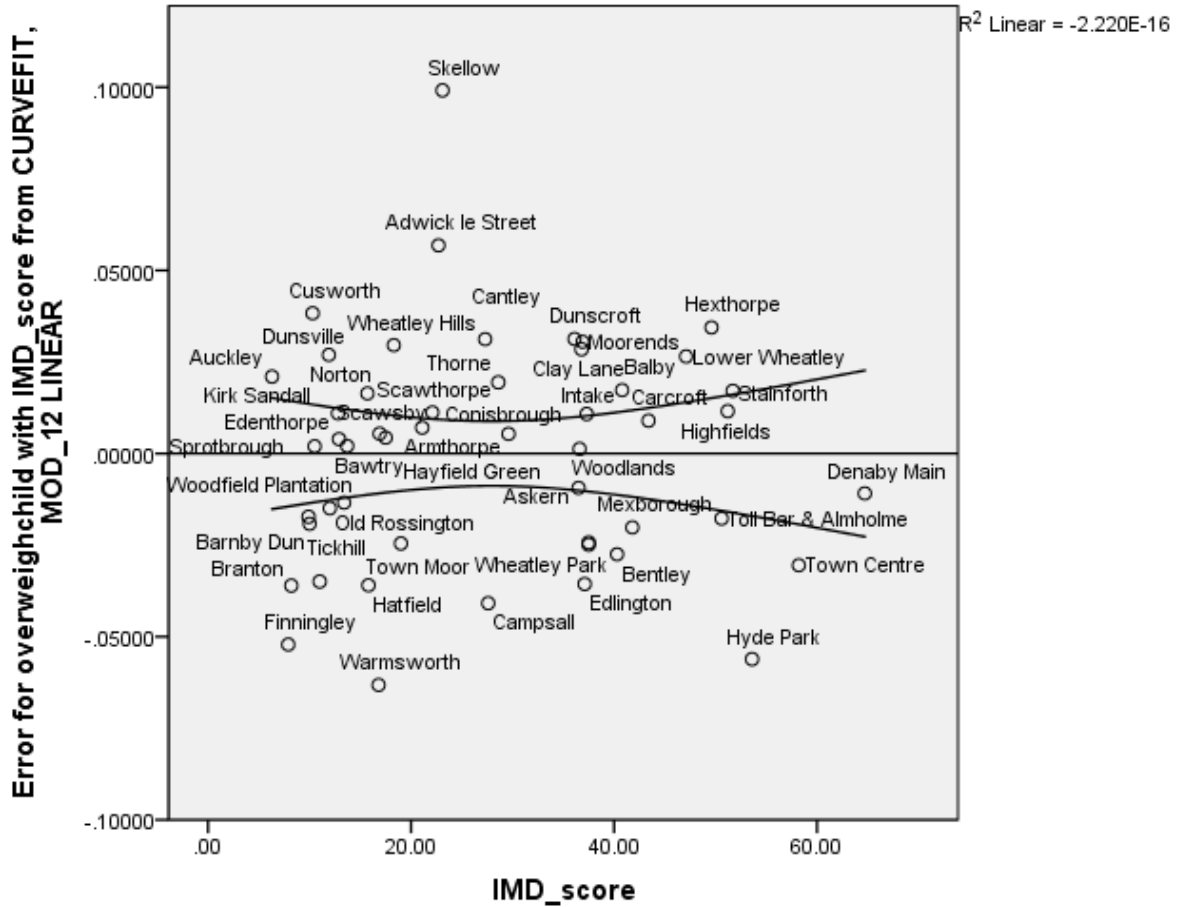


Figure C-4: Residual Plot of children who are overweight by Community

### Difference between expected and actual by Doncaster Community



These results are illustrated by looking at individual communities. While Denaby Main is below the expected value, it falls within the standard error trough and as a result conforms to the model (With 31% of children classed as overweight). Note also that both Highfields and Stainforth are also within the standard error range for the model. As such the IMD score is a very good predictor of overweight children for these communities.

Comparatively, Hyde Park (25% overweight) and Edlington (24% overweight) are areas with relatively high deprivation scores, but exhibit significantly lower than expected percentages of children who are presenting as overweight (respective predicted percentages of overweight children are approximately 31% and 28%). An examination of the top half of the graph shows that Aukley, which should have the lowest rates of overweight children has a value that is higher than would be expected (25%) based on deprivation levels alone. Skellow is a particularly interesting case as it has a value (36%) that is not well predicted by the model, and in fact, a significantly larger percentage of children are identified as

overweight than would be expected given its level of deprivation (the module predicts this value should be approximately 25 or 26%). Indeed, Skellow has rates of overweight children that are as higher than would be expected for the most deprived areas.

Looking again at fast food access as a predictor of residual values to see if perhaps access to fast food can help predict places that were performing better than expected shows that there was not a significant relationship ( $R^2=.095$ ,  $F=.439$ ,  $Sig=.511$ ). Indeed looking closely at individual communities also belies any predictive value of fast food access. As such, policies that seek to introduce fast food exclusion zones around schools may not prove to be an effective measure (this conclusion is also backed up in a number of research studies as reviewed by Williams et al 2014), while at the same time may add burden to those groups of people who are concentrated into this form of employment.

### **Conclusions and recommendations:**

Taken together we can argue that IMD\_score is a good predictor of percentage of children who are overweight . But it is important to pay attention to individual locations as poverty is not a good predictor in all cases.

Those communities with percentages of overweight children which are below the standard error lines are areas where some other intervening factor is helping children to avoid becoming overweight. Conversely, there is also some local factor that is driving a higher proportion of children into becoming overweight and this is not related to levels of deprivation in these places.

Interventions could proceed in a number of different ways.

- Firstly, interventions could target deprived areas, which would flatten out the graph in figure three. However, a note of caution, by linking of deprivation to obesity intervention further burdens those communities that are already targets of social welfare programmes and adds to the risk of programme fatigue for community members. This approach also further stigmatises the poor, while at the same time does not support those children and families in more well-off communities, many of which are clearly areas in need of intervention.

- Secondly, interventions can aim to reduce the overall rate of obesity in children. The model predicts that even the most well off areas as many as one-fifth of children will present as overweight and reducing this rate extends support across the spectrum of communities. The likely effect of such interventions would be to lower the predicted line. The danger with the approach is a one size fits all approach may not prove to be as effective in areas with working class culture and values if the programmes are perceived to be promoting middle-class values, cultures and aspirations and which do not take into account the specific circumstances of each community. Remember for example the attempts by Jamie Oliver to help healthy eating and the criticisms he received for being out of touch with the lives and experiences of low-income people.
- Thirdly, a targeted community approach could be introduced with programmes that may be the same in practice, but which are developed and presented in a language that reflects the values of each community. Acceptance and take-up may be higher if this were to be the case. The negative side of this is that such approaches are more complex to deliver and it may be harder to determine what works well in each community without a clear and full knowledge of each community. Existing community organisations could help with this.
- Fourthly, a modified or stepped approach could be employed with different information and programmes that are tailored to different clusters of communities and which draw on existing community-based organisations and their expertise. In lower income communities, programmes could build on values held working-class families and acknowledge existing skills held by primary shoppers in these communities. For example by focusing on image and thrift in communities like Edlington and environmental sustainability/animal welfare or food quality in more middle-class communities as a way to introduce healthy eating practices.

The follow-on research from this quantitative study suggests that community organisations play a very important role in supporting community resilience. The research found in Edlington that there were two very active community groups that offer services that are providing benefits advice, supporting access to health care, reducing the need for medical treatment in the elderly through targeted programmes, cooking classes that support

healthy eating, offering free meals and food parcels, redistributing surplus food using social media, and holding school holiday activity that include meals. However, despite this indicative case study, much more research is needed that documents the impact of community groups and how they support community resilience. Importantly these two organisations are community grown, rather than put in place by the local authority. This qualitative research should be replicated with similar research in other communities that are similarly showing resilience and also research in communities where the rates of obesity are higher than expected needs to be undertaken to understand if there is an absence of community-based support.

Finally, while these approaches are aimed at identifying and supporting resilience at a local authority level, the larger problem of poverty can be somewhat resolved by turning away from neoliberal policy that supports the expansion and concentration of capital into the hands of the few and a rolling back of austerity measures that punish the poor while they shield the wealthy.



## **Community Organisations**

Two key organisations were identified through the research. These are Edlington Community Organisation (ECO) and Hilltop Centre. These are profiled below.

### ***Case Study Organisation 1: Edlington Community Organisation (ECO)***

ECO was initiated in the late 1990s by community volunteers and became a company and charity in 2002. At the time of interview (7th March 2016), ECO had two full-time paid members of staff, with salaries supported by funding from various contracts (applied for on a competitive basis), ECO also relies on a large volunteer body (c.40 people) to support its day-to-day running, as well as the various projects / activities that need to be planned, organised and delivered.

Purpose / aim: “local regeneration and improving quality of life” (B1)

Services: - Employment and benefits support which involves signposting residents to relevant services

Projects:- Innovation One: Support for over ‘50s relating to bereavement, as well as drug, alcohol, and substance abuse (completed March 2016) - Having a Good Day: support for over ‘50s, reducing social isolation / hospital admissions (incl. slipper swops, Crafternoon Tea, Brew and Browse) - Cook and Eat classes: focus on healthy eating that build on existing local values and preferences that included fake-away meals and menus drawn from slimming world. - Food Share: an independent food bank, redistribution of surplus food and open lunch staffed by volunteers.

Events: Various events including school summer holiday activities, Term-time holiday activities for children, Easter and Christmas luncheon clubs.

From July ECO have been working through the FareShare’s Food Cloud to collaborate with the Tesco Express located in a nearby village. The FareShare FoodCloud is a scheme that enables Tesco stores to redistribute surplus food that is unsold at the end of the day to local charities, free of charge. FareShares argues that the scheme reduces waste and benefits local communities. And describes the programme as “a three-way partnership between FareShare, FoodCloud and Tesco, combining innovative technology with on-the-ground support, to make it a safe and easy way to redistribute food to people in need (FareShare, 2016)”.

### ***Case Study organisation 2: The Hilltop Centre***

The Hilltop Centre was started in 2002 and established as a charity by the Edlington Comprehensive School (now Sir Thomas Wharton Community College). The school withdrew when the charity became ‘self-sufficient’. Three (?) paid positions are currently funded through various contracts, and are supported by c.70 volunteers, with a number of these coming from the government’s Community Work Placements scheme.

Purpose / aim: Adult education, and the delivery of “a wide range of educational, training and skills development for all members of the community...” ([www.hilltopcentre.org.uk/](http://www.hilltopcentre.org.uk/))

Services:       - Various, relating to digital and social inclusion (based on strong links with the Tinder Foundation)  
                  - Pathfinder Centre for the NHS (Community Health Survey)  
                  - Work Club

Activities:      - Various, incl. Knit and Natter, Family History Club, Slimming World. See [www.hilltopcentre.org.uk/courses-and-activities-homepage/](http://www.hilltopcentre.org.uk/courses-and-activities-homepage/) for a full list

Projects:       - Grow It, Cook It, Eat it (community allotment)  
                  - Helping Hands Charity Shop

## **Research Findings**

Community organisations such as ECO and the Hilltop Centre provide grassroots (informal) support, often working to reinforce the delivery of DMBC's agenda (in both direct and indirect ways). They also act to sustain and regenerate communities, offering practical and emotional support across a broad section of the population in numerous ways, including through a range of food-related enterprises and local food (re)distribution (e.g. the Grow It, Cook It, Eat It scheme initiated by the Hilltop Centre; and the Cook and Eat Classes, as well as the Food Share project, managed by ECO). Such schemes can include not only an important educational / instructive component leading to the transfer of knowledge and the development of important life skills but may also extend beyond this to provide what amounts to tangible financial relief (assistance) at a number of scales (community, household and individual). The discussion below highlights areas where community organisations and residents feel need is increasing. The strengths of the community organisations are then discussed with further information regarding the strengths that community organisations bring toward addressing these needs. This is followed by a discussion of what the community organisations indicated they needed to further support their work.

## ***Community Need***

There is also recognition by community organisations and residents that the following needs are increasing in the community. These needs include:

- Increasing need to provide food related services to communities (e.g. food banks, healthy eating, budgeting, etc.)  
"There's definitely plenty of food about, but it's not accessible to everybody. No. Just looking at the Stronger Families, they'll be on, they might have a lot of debt, they might have a lot of bills, they've got quite a few children, lots of commitments, and then that family budget, that's on benefits, gets stretched so much that sometimes the only food that is available is fast-food. [...] So it is a very prevalent thing, that's why we're developing all these food projects" [C1]
- Increasing need to co-operation with other local organisations / businesses to exploit the potential for collaboration and support (financial e.g. fundraising, and other) and take a co-ordinated approach to local issues / events
- There is an urgent need to develop programmes that support residents through the transitions that are arising out of welfare reform and the implications of Universal Credit.



- There is a need to support specific groups but in different ways. Elderly people in the village have difficulty purchasing food from beyond the village and food costs are perceived to be higher in the local shops than in the larger chain stores (local shops do not sell the value branded goods for instance). Single people of working age are feeling the burden of welfare reform. Given that there is greater difficulty accessing the labour market if you are female, older, non-white/foreign, less educated, the compounding of these disadvantages only increases the difficulty. Stringent requirements to find suitable work that also fits with the life circumstances of community members is particularly challenging given the isolation of the village itself relative to the more built up areas of Doncaster.

### ***Strengths of community organisations in Edlington***

Community organisations in Edlington are uniquely placed to deliver services through their understanding the community in which they are situated as often those working within these organisations both as volunteers and as regular employees share local social and cultural values and have a deep understanding of the constraints that residents face. These organisations are able to also build on common, historical connections based on past successes.

In Edlington this means:

- Building on historical, common connections  
e.g. mining village [mining traditions / miners strikes / pit closure]); and a shared aim of overcoming negative representations (e.g. anti-social behaviour [Thompson & Dixon Estate, Royal Estate]; and the 'Edlington attacks']

"...everybody's proud of where they come from" [B1]

"It's the tradition that's attached with it [...] Even people younger than me, that their grandmas are about, or their parents are still here, that's still instilled into them, that it's a mining community and you need to be proud of where you come from, your roots" [B1]

- Tapping into local enthusiasm  
"Cos I think that's another thing about Edlington. There are some very passionate people in Edlington [...] And if you get a few of them together they've obviously got more power..." [B2]/  
Within this pool of volunteers, there is some diversity in terms of skill and knowledge, understanding of the community, and interests.

- Exhibiting behaviours that are not authoritative or judgemental  
"They [the people who come into the community organisation] see us as their councillors, like guidance, because we're quite like, we're not the council, we're not social services..."

"And that's why they do open up more to us I think, because we're not official, we're not social workers or..."

In practical terms, this has translated into:

- Delivering services that are relevant / important to the community—e.g., the slipper swap

which exchanges old slippers for new for the elderly. ECO realised that a large number of elderly people were falling and then ending up needing NHS resources. These falls were often the result of slippers which were worn or ill-fitting.

- Open to supporting a wide range of activities / projects: Both ECO and the Hilltop Centre
  - Ability to access a large cross-section of the community
  - Able to tap into a large network of volunteer support
  - Able to pilot innovative projects within their communities
- Understanding of local values.  
Examples include:
    - ‘Good value’ is of importance to many people in Edlington, demonstrated by strategies for shopping which tend to emphasise the importance of thrift. For many residents, the cost is the most critical consideration when shopping for food. Moreover, the women we talked to expressed considerable pride in their abilities to make few resources stretch far. Community groups are promoting allotments and also programmes that involve reclaiming surplus food to offer food to residents. Importantly, the message is not one of charity nor is it about sustainability, but of value.
    - A personal appearance seems to matter to many people in Edlington, who identify with specific ideas about weight control and body image. Weight loss / slimming appears to be more of a focus than healthy eating (which can be seen in negative terms). But this may still be a way in which ideas about nutrition / nutritious ways of eating and cooking could be introduced into the community For example by offering cooking lessons using free, online recipes from slimming world, to teach participants to make fake-away meals (meals that look like takeaway food, but which have a lower fat/salt/sugar content).
    - Pride and a reluctance to take handouts is a third value that was observed from our case study. People we spoke to were very reluctant to receive charity. Several of the people who received food parcels or who got food via the reclaiming surplus food activity also spend time volunteering as a way to pay for the help they received.

***Community organisations identified the following areas where further support is needed***

**Funding**

- Insecure funding means that they are sometimes unable to initiate or continue projects that they know would benefit the community.
  - One of the community groups is keen to start Breakfast / Lunch Clubs for children (especially in the school holidays when they don’t have access to free school meals). But they would need a new kitchen to do this and don’t have the necessary funds and it is difficult to find funding for capital improvement.
  - “And you get quite disheartened sometimes, because like Lesley’s project, it’s coming up to two years for Innovation one, and you can see all the achievements it’s done, and it’s created, but it’s highlighted new needs for other services as well, but at the end of this month that’s this project done and dusted in terms of budgets and funding, so you’re going to leave your community then at a loose end, because they’ve become so

reliant on that service, and yeah, we've got volunteers that can pick it up, we've been training them as well as we go along, but you still need that backbone of support" –ECO

- Whilst acknowledging the success of community organisations in applying for competitive funding (a process which is fundamental to their continuing existence), there is a need to offer increased support with both writing grant applications and exploring alternative sources of funding. This may include providing community organisations with financial resources so that they can access training. For example, the South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau [<http://www.syfab.org.uk/>] is a Sheffield based charity that "helps voluntary and community groups find the funding they need". But there is often a cost / per person charge for attending these sessions that can make them prohibitively expensive for community leaders to attend.
- Support is needed with regard to helping community organisations access alternative forms of funding. Crowdfunding sites do offer some useful online guides that provide a basic introduction to some of these alternative sources of funding. Examples are:
  - Crowdfunder (<http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/>)
  - The literacy trust ([http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0002/8788/Friends\\_with\\_Money\\_-\\_a\\_guide\\_to\\_fundraising\\_on\\_socialmedia\\_from\\_JustGiving.pdf](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0002/8788/Friends_with_Money_-_a_guide_to_fundraising_on_socialmedia_from_JustGiving.pdf))
  - Just Giving (<https://help.justgiving.com/hc/en-us/articles/201200042-Crowdfunding-hints-and-tips>)

There is still a need for training that is more in-depth and affordable as the in-depth training typically requires payment. Additionally, the freely available guides often relate to a specific scheme / platform rather than offering broader instruction.

## Volunteers

- Supporting the work of volunteers requires organisation and management that is consistent and reliable including reliable across all the opening hours of the organisation to ensure continuity. The task and deliver funding model creates insecurity within these organisations around this staffing. When cuts have to be made in staffing this also cuts the capacity of the organisation to find additional funding, which can result in a downward spiral toward closure. *For example: at the end of March, the completion of a major contract (Innovation One) with DMBC meant that one of the two full-time paid positions at ECO lost 20 hours / week. As a temporary measure, the trustees of ECO have agreed to cover this salary whilst alternative funding options continue to be explored. There is ongoing concern regarding the lack of security associated with salaries.*
- Volunteers may themselves be difficult to manage or require continuous oversight and because they are volunteers organisations cannot let them go. Issues that arise with volunteers include a lack of professionalism, limited ability to see the bigger picture, parochialism, and timekeeping/punctuality, perhaps due to other more pressing demands on their lives. Volunteers may also lack some educational skills such as reading or maths skills or management skills that would enable them to work independently running projects. Finally, there can be conflicts between volunteers in terms of priorities, but also these can be rooted in neighbour disputes or problems between families.

- The availability of volunteers is threatened by the switch to Universal Credit. While in wealthy communities there may be a pool of people willing and able to do this work for no pay, benefits reforms will mean that those who volunteer who are themselves poor or claiming benefits will be faced with stricter welfare conditions and may subsequently not have any or as much time to support community organisations through volunteering.
- The cost of volunteers can be quite expensive. For example, external (institutional) demands can include DBS checks, day-to-day expenses (e.g. food / travel), basic training requirements (e.g. health and safety, food hygiene, first aid etc.).

### **Balance and Focus**

- The need to deliver projects, manage volunteers, advertise activity to participants means that key employees can become overstretched and may result in employee burn-out. It can also mean that key workers are not able to pursue new projects, possibilities or training because of a lack of time resource which is a by-product of a lack of funding available for core activity.
- The third-sector network is diffuse and very much organised around individuals, rather than being a shared resource for all community organisations. There is no centralised knowledge hub from which third-sector organisations might learn about grant opportunities, the best-practice work of other organisations, organisations with whom they might collaborate (both in terms of large scale organisations and smaller more local organisations), or information about how to manage the business aspects of running a community group that are beyond the services that they provide (e.g. budgeting, grant writing, social media and other forms of information dissemination, dealing with difficult people as both customers and volunteers, employment issues such as how to manage statutory leave, contract negotiation,

## Appendix E: Recommendations from recent third-sector reports highlighting food poverty in the UK.

Acronym	Date		Report title, Author
FB	2014		Feeding Britain: A strategy for zero hunger in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the UK. Archbishop of Canterbury's Charitable Trust.
Fabian	2015		Hungry for Change, Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty, Fabian Commission
FEC	2014		Household food security in the UK: A review of food aid, Food Ethics Council and University of Warwick
COT	2014		Below the Breadline, Church Action on Poverty, Oxfam, Trussell Trust
EFRA	2015		Food Security: demand, consumption and waste, House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee
	<b>General Topic</b>	<b>Subtopic</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
EFRA	Agriculture		Exploit longer growing seasons for some fruit and veg products.
EFRA	Food surplus	funding	Need to ensure that WRAP is sufficiently funded and has adequate resources to maintain momentum.
Fabian	Food system	Poverty premium	Need to ensure that those ways in which food is made available within the food system does not disadvantage those who are on low incomes. E.g., by making food more expensive for them compared to other consumers (e.g. BOGOF means some who can afford to buy two pay less per unit compared to those who can just buy one).
FB	Gov	Benefits reform	Several recommendations were made that focus on the hardship that the benefits system is producing
COT	Gov	Benefits reform	Improve access to short-term benefit advances by increasing awareness, simplifying the claim process, improve data collection to identify support needs
COT	Gov	Benefits reform	Reform sanctions policy and practice
FB	Gov	Debt and bank charges	FCA monitors how lenders work with borrowers in order to offer protection against illegal lending..

FB	Gov	Energy prices	National standards for fair energy prices, switching, fixing tariffs, standing charges, and review of prepayment meters. Continuation of the warm home discount scheme and movement beyond minimum legislative criteria
COT	Gov	ESA	Ensure claimants are not left without income
Fabian	Gov	Farming	The 25 year plan for food and farming needs a broader remit to include also consumption and affordability, rather than the currently narrow focus on food production. 3 themes: Affordable British Food, Overcoming the food-skills gap, Addressing structural unsustainability of the British Food system including pay and working conditions.
Fabian	Gov	Food marketing and advertising	Better regulation regarding the selling of unhealthy food and beverages to children
EFRA	Gov	Food poverty	No official definition of food poverty--adopted a definition of fuel poverty possible.
FB	Gov	Free school meals	Children in families that are working poor should be prioritized in future free school meal programmes.
FB	Gov	Holiday hunger	Gov should cost the extension of free school meal provision during school holidays.
EFRA	Gov	Labels	labels are inconsistent, confusing and misleading. Need to include provenance, sustainability, and nutrition that is not misleading and clear.
FB	Gov	Local Authorities	Renegotiation of Barnett Formula should consider local needs element to funding settlement
FB	Gov	Pay	There were several recommendations in the report that pertain to pay. These are somewhat beyond the remit of our purposes so I have not summarized them here.
FB	Gov	Policy	Call for an Office for Living Standards within the Treasury to monitor pressures on low-income households and effective coordination and parliamentary debate on progress.
Fabian	Gov	Policy	New minister in charge of eliminating household food insecurity, who also works with other levels of government and civil society.
Fabian	Gov	Policy	Institute and implement the right to food: including setting indicators, benchmarks, targets and timelines as reasonable goals.
Fabian	Gov	Policy	Need to increase social security benefits in line with inflations
Fabian	Gov	Policy	Restore safety net for those on benefits
Fabian	Gov	Public Health	Greater protection of public health budgets and proper funding

Fabian	Gov	Sugar tax	pilot of a sugary drinks tax.
FB	Gov	Universal Credit	Types of accounts that are suitable for Universal Credit payments need to be broadened.
FB	Gov	water prices	Continuation and full roll out of social tariffs, continued monitoring of unmeasured tariff and clear advice as to which families would be better off. Could also involve bill capping of metered tariff.
FB	Hunger	long-term	3 days of Emergency food assistance is not enough
Fabian	Income	social support	several points about minimum income standards
FB	IT	Access	Access to mobile phones and internet; abolition of use of higher rate phone numbers by gov, financial services, and utilities.
FB	JC+	Job applications	Make telephones for making job applications more available, provide for transportation costs
COT	Job Centre +	Mental Health	Make sure Job Centre advisors have an awareness and an ability to respond to mental health issues
COT	Job Centre +	Service provision	Ensure that an effective and supportive service is provided for all clients
EFRA	Local Authorities	Food Deserts	Local Authorities should work with retailers to ensure that store development plans take into account needs of all in their communities.
EFRA	Local Authorities	Food Deserts	Councils should be pro-active in using planning to meet public health needs
Fabian	Local Authorities	Food plans	Local Authorities need to develop food plans that focus on food security for low income eaters
FB	Local Authorities	Free school meals	Auto-enroll eligible children into free school meals.
Fabian	Local Authorities	Interventions	move away from behavioral change and toward a consideration of how food practices are shaped by the environments within which people live
FB	Local Authorities	Kitchens	Collect information about cooking facilities in rental accommodation. Minimum standards that enable proper cooking
FB	Local Authorities	Local Food	Promote production and retail of locally grown food
EFRA	Local Authorities	Markets	Increase presence of local markets for smaller scale producers to sell food
FB	Local Authorities	social supermarkets	Social supermarkets that allow shopping for heavily discounted food that is sourced via surplus networks.
FB	Local Authorities	Troubled Families	School referrals to local troubled families programmes to help reduce children's hunger.

EFRA	Network	Consumer choice	Recommendations for more coordinated and focused actions by gov, food producers and suppliers, and third-sector to support consumer choices that enhance the ability of all to obtain sufficient safe, healthy, and affordable food.
EFRA	Network	Healthy diets	Need for greater integration between bodies with firm strategic leadership from the DoH, and that innovative local approaches are disseminated to LA, supermarkets and NHS bodies.
EFRA	Network	Local Food	Promote UK food to consumers
EFRA	Network	Surplus food	DEFRA should set up a task force to co-ordinate national work by charities, local authorities, retailers, food producers and manufacturers to establish an effective food redistribution network across the country. With a Food Security coordinator who makes sure food and waste policy inter-links.
Fabian	Network	trading-down	need to ensure that healthy food is affordable and desirable
FB	Policy development		Policy with input from Feeding Britain network that takes into account the complex needs of those at risk of facing long-term hunger.
EFRA	Policy development		Remain with consumer choice
FB	Research	supermarkets	Develop additional ways to enable fresh food to become viable in food donations
Fabian	Research	Data	No clear measurement of those who are currently food insecure
EFRA	Research	Data	Consumption Data do not adequately reflect practice. Focus on purchased food not necessarily eaten.
FEC	Research	Food insecurity	More is needed to understand the relationship between receipt of food aid and severity of insecurity, place of food aid w/in broader strategies households employ, outcomes of food aid.
Fabian	Research	Living costs analysis	Develop an new consumer price index that incorporates the prices of items and services purchased by low-income households to understand the real role of inflation in low income households
FEC	Research	Models of food aid	Little research on the effectiveness of different models of food aid or what might be best practice
FEC	Research	Monitoring	No clear and effective monitoring of household food insecurity
Fabian	Research	Poverty premium	Need further research and inquiry into the poverty premium and work with businesses to remove or reduce premiums for key living costs including food, utilities, household appliances, transport (and communication and banking)
FEC	Research	Provision of food aid	Need coordinated and systematic information about the UK food aid system and who, what, and how it serves



FB	Research		Pilot projects in each region to test best ways to achieve aims. Overseen by a board of trustees.
Fabian	Research		Need robust measures of the extent of food insecurity in the UK. Can be used to monitor and track trends in the nature and extent of household food insecurity and allow for a determination of the effectiveness of policy.
EFRA	Research		Recommend for further research into why more people are using foodbanks to provide and evidence base to inform and enhance policy responses. Calls for Gov. collection of objective and statistically robust data on scale of household food insecurity and monitor trends over time
FB	Schools	cooking/provisioning skills	re-introduction of cooking skills into schools. Include budgeting and parenting skills in the National Curriculum as part of the PSHE modules
Fabian	Schools	Public Health	increase schemes that promote healthy diets in schools
EFRA	Supermarkets	food placement	Locate better quality food in prime nudge locations
EFRA	Surplus food	Community Shop	Community shops to help redistribute overstock food
FB	Surplus food	Courtauld Commitment	Food Industry, LA and 3rd sector sign up to Courtauld commitment which puts redistribution above other forms of food waste reduction; commitment to reduce food waste.
FB	Surplus food	Gov	Financial incentives that move food into surplus redistribution and from landfill and Anaerobic Digestion.
FB	Surplus food	supermarkets	All supermarkets develop a strategy for collection arrangements that meet local needs
EFRA	Surplus food	Supermarkets	Need to make waste hierarchy more visible and more attractive to follow
FB	Surplus food	supermarkets, retailers, manufacturers	WRAP to set targets that double the proportion of surplus food they redistribute to food assistance providers.
EFRA	Surplus food	Supermarkets /producers	More cooperation with third-sector around seeking out avenues for redistribution
EFRA	Surplus food		Need to challenge ideas about what is waste--move to notions of surplus and also clearer understanding of risk
EFRA	Surplus food		Resolve issues with redistribution and timing
Fabian	Third-sector	Policy	Monitor the government's actions on the right to food. Calls for coordination and collective pressure and review of the 5 year periodic reviews presented to the UN committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights by the UK government under progress.
Fabian	Third-sector	transport	Establish social enterprises that address transport needs for those in more isolate locations

EFRA	utilities	Broadband	Points to online shopping as an option
FB	Voluntary sector	education	Eat well spend less, food hygiene, weekly planning, credit and shopping, supermarket psychology, Cooking session
FB	Voluntary sector	Food banks	Suggests a Food Bank Plus--offer ancillary advice and support; collaboration with Job Centres; can include other skills training programmes as well.
FB	Voluntary sector	Hardship payments	There were several recommendations for the DWP and JobCentre Plus with regard to enrollment, sanctions, etc.
FB	Voluntary sector	Healthy Start	Consider ways in which there is scope for providing food skills training in tandem with Healthy Start Vouchers
FB	Voluntary sector	Network	Creation of a national 'Feeding Britain' network to include: voluntary food providers, redistributors, food industry, 8 government departments to work in tandem with a national minimum wage and a fairer benefits system. (suggested funding via Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived match funded by charitable sources and local public health grants.
FB	Voluntary sector	network	Network of towns and cities that identify food needs and match resources available, independent of government, and that fosters collaboration between voluntary sector, Local Authorities, Schools, Food Retailers, and manufacturers.
FB	Voluntary sector	network	Regional approach to facilitate 1) surplus food distribution matching supply to demand; 2) Coordinate food waste prevention at all stages of the supply chain; 3) facilitate local partnerships; 4) function as centres of knowledge and excellence; 5) Foster co-location of services e.g. food banks, debt advice, addiction, benefits advice, coping strategies, 6) schemes designed to facilitate free school meal take-up.
FB	Voluntary sector	Research	Need a finer grained set of categories in referral categories in order to understand how the benefits system is contributing to food poverty and hunger.
Fabian		employment	Make the point that wages are stagnating and to rely on work as the best way to get out of poverty may be not sufficient. Calls for a better social security system.
Fabian		Food and Health	Decouple diet related health outcomes with low income
Fabian		Food availability	Ensure that there is affordable food, fuel, water in households that are of low income
Fabian		Food banks	Calls for foodbanks to become unnecessary by 2020. Should not accept that foodbanks are part of the solution
EFRA		Healthy diets	Need mechanisms to support healthy eating that is affordable

Fabian		Price increases	Protect low income households from price increases in the food system
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