



Place-based Food Initiatives from the UK

2024



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Fyne Futures, Isle of Bute, Scotland



Description

Fyne Futures is a registered charity and social enterprise on the Isle of Bute, an island on the west coast of Scotland with a population of just over 6,500 people. Established in 2004, Fyne Futures is committed to environmental sustainability, promoting good health, and employability skills. The organisation aims to 'Inspire, Educate and Empower' people to live sustainable rural lives. Programmes offered are community driven and include employability training, horticulture and gardening, and volunteering.

'Incredible Edible' gardens which bring people together through community allotments, are also supported by Fyne Futures. Through Bute Produce, Fyne Futures offers a Green Box scheme with seasonal fruit and vegetables delivered for £10, as well as preservative making and beekeeping. **'Bute Bike'** offers an electric bike hire scheme, and **'ReStyle'** offers furniture upcycling. Fyne Futures also advocates for change through policy focused work, calling for sustainable transitions and the development of a circular economy on the island.

“ We encourage people to come and learn how to grow local food sustainably and develop skills. This wee tiny island in Scotland can, and is working to be, part of the shift to becoming a more sustainable country. ”

– General Manager

Spotlight

Responding to the need of the local community for alternative education, employability training and more sustainable food options, Fyne Futures offers a range of activities supporting people and the environment. Fyne Futures delivers an horticulture training scheme for up to 45 people, aiming to enhance the skills and confidence of local people. Isolation is another challenge for the island, and as such volunteering opportunities help people to connect and learn about food growing and biodiversity. There is only one small supermarket on the island, with limited fresh produce, and as such the market garden Green Box scheme provides additional seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables for the local community. The Green Box scheme was particularly important during COVID-19, when the island experienced severe food shortages.

Activities

Employability programme including horticulture and gardening skills

Cooking classes

Community market garden

Volunteer programme to promote social cohesion

Electric bikes hire scheme

Food growing

Furniture restoration

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Grow fruit and vegetables through Bute Produce and Incredible Edible gardens
- Employ 3 full time staff at the Community garden
- Deliver employability skill programme to 45 people per year
- Worked with the [Royal Botanic Gardens](#) of Edinburgh to develop a Train the trainer model to help more people to develop horticulture skills



Sustainability and resilience

- Reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) through ReStyle, saving 42,352kg of furniture and upholstery items from going to landfill
- Promote and enable active travel through Bike Bute electric bike scheme
- Promote biodiversity through beekeeping and honey making on the community garden



Health and wellbeing

- Improve health and emotional wellbeing through the community garden, volunteering, and the employability programme
- Offer volunteer opportunities for 20 adults and young people each year



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Raise awareness of healthy, local food in local schools
- Advocate for local sustainable healthy foods policies
- Provide fresh, seasonal herbs, fruit and vegetables via the the Green Box Scheme, at £10 - £12.50 per week depending on family size
- Deliver cooking classes

Takeaways



Diversity in the work delivered and an established volunteer team are strengths of Fyne Futures, enabling them to be resilient and to respond to new challenges and opportunities.



Programmes are driven by the community itself via consultations, ensuring the activities respond to the community's needs (e.g. fresh food shortages, unemployment, isolation). This is a strategy for *scaling out* their impact beyond food provision.



The two key pillars of people and the environment are considered when developing and delivering every activity, and when making every decision. This ensures the organisation stays close to its mission and meets the needs of the community.

This research was conducted by the [University of Leeds](#) in collaboration with the [Consumer Data Research Centre](#), the [Food Foundation](#) and participating Food Hubs, funded by the Research England Policy Support Fund and supported by [Policy@Leeds](#). For more information visit the [project page](#), [Global Food and Environment Institute](#) or contact [Dr Effie Papargyropoulou](#) at E.Papargyropoulou@leeds.ac.uk.



Description

North Glasgow Community Food Initiative (NGCFI) is a community-led charitable organisation based in Glasgow. NGCFI works across several areas, including Milton, a suburban area that has had a history of crime, and Royston, an area with a high percentage of new residents, largely of Irish Catholic descent. NGCFI was launched in 2001 by students from **Student Action for Refugees (STAR)**. In 2002, the organisation was renamed to NGCFI and broadened its scope to include sales of fruit and vegetables, a delivery service, an allotment project, and cookery activities.

NGCFI now has three food hubs, working together to support local people access fresh, local food and develop skills and confidence. Activities include cooking courses, gardening sessions to enhance mental health and time spent outside, community cafes and meals, and a volunteering programme to support people develop confidence and employability skills. Across all the activities, over 3,000 people are supported each year by the NGCFI. The organisation also generates over £20,000 in revenue each year through their community cafe and events which they reinvest in community programmes and activities.

“Volunteering in the garden has made me love and appreciate the environment more. I learn new things, I have met new people, and have gained new knowledge about gardening.”

– Garden volunteer

Activities

Community gardening with food growing sessions for children, families, schools, and adults

Community fridge and food pantry to support access to affordable food

Community cafe serving meals and using surplus food when possible

Volunteering programme for local adults and young people

Cooking classes for all ages

Spotlight

Rather than employing a top-down approach to “change people’s behaviour” around healthy food, which the organisation noted has failed to deliver, a community engagement model is employed, whereby all activities and programmes are community led. To empower communities, NGCFI provides support and resources, enabling them to take a lead in improving their health and wellbeing. By working in collaboration with a range of other charitable organisations, local people can get involved in food growing, cooking classes, community meals and events, as well as access financial, wellbeing and housing support services. Unemployment is high in the community, and so the volunteering programme is important for developing employability skills and community cohesion.

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Provide a community fridge and pantry
- Advocate for policies to support people to access sustainable local foods
- Assist with access to financial or other support by signposting to other services
- Employ staff and offer volunteering opportunities



Sustainability and resilience

- Utilise food surplus to make meals and reduce food waste
- Reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) by using locally grown food and offering vegetarian and/or vegan meals
- Support biodiversity by growing fruit and vegetables, as well as plants and trees
- Improve soil quality by composting and using compost



Health and wellbeing

- Improve health through cooking classes offering healthy eating support
- Support emotional wellbeing through adult therapeutic gardening sessions
- Promote social connections through community meals, gardening groups and cooking clubs



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Provide access to land, facilities and infrastructure for food growing
- Support the purchase of healthy food through community fridges and food pantries
- Offer a diverse range of healthy local culturally appropriate foods
- Raise awareness for benefits of healthy local food

Takeaways



The community takes a central role in choosing, planning, and running activities supported by volunteers and a Food Hub Manager. This promotes community development, empowerment and cohesion.



By adopting a community engagement model, NGCFI aims to put resources at the disposal of people in communities, empowering them to take a lead in improving diet, health and well-being for themselves, their families, and their community.



Food is central to all the projects offered by NGCFI, from food growing, cooking, choosing, accessing, and eating. NGCFI works with partners and promotes their opportunities alongside their own to promote choice and accessibility, hence *scaling out* their impact.

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Description

Inn Churches is a charity based in Bradford, a city with high levels food and fuel poverty, and unemployment. Since launching 10 years ago, Inn Churches has been supporting people experiencing financial and/or social difficulties. The Inn Churches 'Storehouse' is a 'wholesale' food hub that collects and distributes food and meals to community groups, pay-as-you-feel mini markets and pop-up pantries. Inn Churches also set up the [FoodSavers network](#).

FoodSavers members pay a low weekly membership fee (typically £6) per week to access fresh and store cupboard food. Members also join the Bradford [Credit Union scheme](#) that supports saving and affordable borrowing. Inn Churches have a cooking hub offering daily cooking classes, including healthy eating and food safety. Inn Churches also work with over 100 other community groups and organisations across Bradford, offering over 850 volunteer opportunities.

“ FoodSavers is a network that aims to reduce dependency on foodbanks and free food provision. We do this by offering a combination of sustainable low-cost food markets with easy access to a Credit Union. ”

– CEO, Inn Churches

Spotlight

Responding to the financial and social difficulties experienced by the local community, Inn Churches developed a range of activities and support services to empower people to access affordable, healthy food whilst promoting dignity and choice. Working with Bradford Council and Feeding Bradford & Keighley to identify need, and by acting as a central store and redistribution point, The Storehouse ensures that food banks have access to enough food to support their communities. Through the Social Supermarket at twenty-two Shaw House, and the Food Savers network which brings together a diverse range of organisations across the region, the Bradford community has access to sustainable low-cost food markets and a Credit Union, helping to decrease dependency on free food provision and increase financial resilience.

Activities

FoodSavers Network of food pantries

Pay-as-you-feel mini markets

Weekly saving into a credit union

Food growing packs

The Storehouse 'wholesale' food hub

Cooking classes

Social supermarket at Shaw House

'Share your Spare' (an allotment food recovery programme)

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Contribute to food security by providing affordable food
- Advocate to local government as part of local campaigning for policies that support access to sustainable, affordable food
- Facilitate connections between other charitable organisations
- Assist with access to financial or other support for community members via a credit union



Sustainability and resilience

- Reduce food waste by using surplus food in the social supermarket
- Encourage allotment owners to donate fresh produce through 'Share your Spare' (an allotment food recovery scheme)
- Develop the FoodSavers network of social supermarkets to support more people to access food at affordable prices



Health and wellbeing

- Improve physical and mental health
- Offer volunteering opportunities
- Offer Neesie classes to support new mothers to become entrepreneurs



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Offer food growing packs and works with local allotments
- Access to fruit and vegetables through providing vouchers produced by the council
- Raise awareness for benefits of healthy local food through cooking classes and conversations in the food pantries

Takeaways



The Food Savers network employs a food pantry model that empowers members to make their own choices regarding food for them and their families.



Combining access to affordable food with a Credit Union saving scheme, helps to reduce dependency on food aid, whilst promoting dignity and financial resilience. This is a strategy for *scaling deep* by tackling root causes of food insecurity.



Cooking classes promote healthy eating, develop food literacy and cooking skills, and support community cohesion and knowledge sharing.

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Description

Environment and Management Solutions Ltd (EMS) is an incorporated charity in east Hull, an area with a young population, and high family food support needs. EMS launched in 2009, and works with partner organisations and the community to offer a range of projects to alleviate food and fuel poverty and promote environmental stewardship. These projects include environmental education at schools, home energy saving advice and signposting, and a community garden and allotments.

EMS also runs the **Hull Community Shop**, a food pantry offering nutritious and affordable food for residents. EMS staff utilise a local cooking facility to prepare nutritious ready meals for other local charities, and local people via the Community Shop. The ready meals feed over 10,800 people per year. Most of the produce available in the Community Shop and used to produce the ready meals is surplus food donated by local supermarkets and food manufacturers/processors.

“ On my 60th birthday, I spent the day cooking sausage and chips for children that would otherwise not eat. It should not be like that. But we are here to help for as long as we are needed. ”

– EMS staff member

Activities

Community allotment

‘Cooking on a Budget’ sessions

Edible gardens

‘**Freedom Food**’ Project (nutritious ready meals for up to four people)

Financial signposting and budgeting

Energy saving advice and support to access grants

‘Homes to Roost’ e.g. bird/bat boxes and bug hotels

The Hull Community Shop (HCS)

Biodiversity education in schools

Spotlight

The Hull Community Shop offers food at affordable prices to those that need it, with no referrals. The shop is open from 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday to everyone. Products available to purchase for a donation include fresh fruit and vegetables, chilled items such as meat and yoghurt and ambient items like pasta, rice and long-life tinned goods. Working in partnership with **The Preston Road Enterprises**, EMS make a range of nutritious ready meals using the Freedom Centre kitchen. The meals are purchased by local families, and/or are delivered to Community Fridges around Hull. Each meal costs £3, and feeds a family of four. Gardening sessions and cooking classes are offered to promote food literacy, build self-confidence, and enhance community cohesion. Volunteering and employment opportunities are also available through the various programmes.

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Affordable supermarket with surplus food and fresh, healthy options
- Healthy and nutritious ready meals (four person portions) produced from surplus food, sold at affordable prices, and distributed to other local organisations
- EMS employs three full time staff and three part time staff



Sustainability and resilience

- Food growing and gardening groups are offered on EMS run community allotments
- Allotments are developed on brown site land, helping to increase biodiversity
- Support people to access affordable food whilst also promoting financial resilience through the community shop



Health and wellbeing

- Healthy food including fruit and vegetables is available to buy for a donation from the community shop
- Cooking classes promote healthy eating and food literacy development
- Volunteering opportunities promote social connections and reduce social isolation



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- The affordable supermarkets offer a range of fresh fruit and vegetables
- The ready meals all include vegetables and use local produce whenever possible

Takeaways



By working with community groups and local businesses across Hull, Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, EMS can distribute food to more people, *scaling out* its impact.



Working closely with the local community, EMS offers activities that local people are interested in and/or need.



Surplus food is used across all meals and activities, helping to reduce food waste across the region whilst also enabling residents to purchase food at affordable prices.



By adopting an 'incorporated charity' legal status, EMS reduces its liability for its trustees, encouraging broader participation.

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Burngreave and Darnall food banks, Sheffield, England



Description

Burngreave is one of Sheffield's most culturally diverse areas, with a range of food support needs. It is also an area of high deprivation. **Burngreave food bank** opened in 2010 and joined the **Trussell Trust network**. In 2013, a **partner food bank** was opened in Darnall, a few miles away. Both food banks work out of churches and are open two days a week. Together they provide food for over 120 families each week and up to 10,996 emergency three-day food parcels every year. Both food banks also offer a limited supply of basic toiletries such as shower gel, toilet paper and toothpaste.

Whilst the food banks require referrals from frontline professionals, like doctors, social workers, and **Citizens Advice**, they have an open-door policy for asylum seekers and refugees who often struggle to access affordable food. Volunteering opportunities help to reduce social isolation. The food banks work closely with other community organisations, such as housing support and mental health services to ensure individuals and families are signposted to the most appropriate help.

“ We try not to create a dependency on food banks. We work with referrers, and together we support the individual or family to find the help they need to get out of crisis. ”

– Burngreave Foodbank Administrator

Spotlight

Burngreave and Darnall food banks increase access to support for people in financial crisis across Sheffield. They are important pillars of support for refugees and asylum seekers who have moved to the area after leaving their homes in countries such as the Caribbean, Pakistan, and Yemen. The food banks are supported by volunteers, some of whom are previous users of the food banks, who help to collect, sort, weigh and distribute food. The food banks also work with other local organisations to fight social isolation and stigma, improve access to financial and health services, and promote community cohesion. Demand for support continues to increase across Sheffield, but the food banks are hopeful that the need for emergency food banks will diminish.

Activities

Food banks offering three-day emergency food parcels up to three times in a 6-month period. Parcels include non-perishable food such as tinned beans and breakfast cereals

Limited supply of basic toiletries

Cafe space to facilitate conversation and connection

Citizen advice support, providing financial advice and signposting

Access to sim cards and fuel credits

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Provide, at least 120 food parcels with 3 days' worth of emergency food each week
- Work with Citizen Advice to signpost food bank users to appropriate financial support/advice
- Employ three part time staff, with an additional 30 volunteers supporting each week



Sustainability and resilience

- Reduce food waste by sharing surplus food through the food banks which are open four days per week across two sites



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Provide culturally appropriate foods when possible. The food hub also has a cupboard with alternative foods suitable for people with dietary needs
- Share recipe ideas with food bank users
- Store food safely and package parcels, in a large area in the food hub



Health and wellbeing

- Improve health by signposting people to additional support services
- Improve emotional wellbeing by offering a listening ear and supporting people to access food in times of crisis
- Promote opportunities to develop social connections and relationships through volunteering and cafe

Takeaways



Taking referrals from over 200 organisations across the city, the food banks help to ensure that those facing food insecurity can access food when facing crisis point.



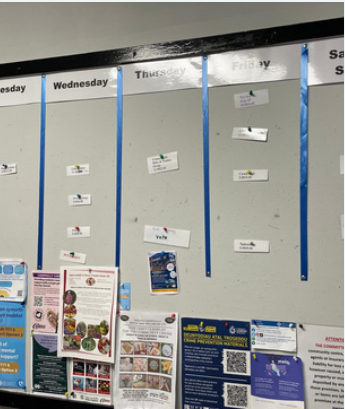
Providing Citizen Advice Bureau at every food bank session to signpost users to timely and appropriate financial advice and support, ensures recipients do not become dependent on food banks.



As part of the Trussell Trust, the food banks aim to *scale up* their impact via campaigns and advocacy work to change policy e.g. call for an Essentials Guarantee in Universal Credit to end need for food banks.

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Van Community Centre, Lansbury Park, Wales



Description

Lansbury Park is one of the most deprived communities in Wales, with high unemployment and long-term ill health. The [Van Community Centre](#) is a community run space, owned by the local council, but managed by a small team of volunteers, who recently took over following closure of the space during COVID-19. The centre offers activities, including a baby and toddlers' group with a meal for £1 per child and a community meal with games for £2 per person. The community meal is prepared by volunteers in the community centre kitchen, and the ingredients are purchased using funds from the previous meal.

All meals include vegetables, helping to promote access to healthy food. Children's parties are run by the volunteers at Christmas and Easter, with food and games available for free. The centre is connected with other local organisations, helping residents access financial, health and wellbeing services, clothing and uniform exchanges, and a toy and book bank. The centre is developing additional community activities including gardening groups, a youth club, cooking sessions and exercise sessions such as Zumba. The centre does not yet receive any external funding, and instead relies on volunteer time and resources.

“ We aim to make people feel welcome. We give a listening ear and provide food and support for those that need it. We are growing as a centre and aim to become a central pillar in the Lansbury Park community. ”

– Van Committee lead

Activities

Weekly community meal and games

Community space for hire

Baby and toddler group

Children's events and activities

Signposting to additional services

Signposting to a uniform and clothing exchange

Spotlight

Located at the heart of Lansbury Park, and run and managed by a passionate team of local volunteers, the Van Community Centre understands and can respond to the needs of residents. Through a range of activities, the centre supports community cohesion and promotes wellbeing. Weekly meals are available for £2 and are prepared by volunteers. These meals help improve access to healthy, affordable food and reduce isolation. By working with other local organisations, the community centre helps local people to access financial, health and wellbeing support when needed. Local people are involved in the running of the centre and are given opportunities to share their ideas for new activities and support, helping to ensure that the support available is suitable and needed.

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Community meals are offered weekly for £2 per person
- Children's events are offered seasonally, with food available for free or at an affordable rate whenever possible



Sustainability and resilience

- Volunteering opportunities are available for local people
- Gardening activities are being developed



Health and wellbeing

- Community members are signposted to other support services
- Financial and health advice are available at community meals
- Provide a listening ear to support mental health and wellbeing



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Fresh fruit and vegetables are included in all community meals
- Volunteers help to prepare meals, promoting food literacy and cooking skill development

Takeaways



The Van Community Centre is run by local people for local people, helping to promote community cohesion and offering community activities that are most needed by residents.



By working in partnership with other organisations, the centre can offer additional services, despite having limited resources and no external funding.



Although the volunteers can plan meals ahead, relying on people attending meals and paying the £2 fee to be able to buy ingredients for community meals is precarious, and does not make use of available more affordable surplus food.

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Description

The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS) was established in 2017 as a community benefit organisation and cooperative from **Birmingham City Council's** Wellbeing Service. TAWS now has over 143 members, including 17 staff. Working across Birmingham, but focussing on communities where inequalities are highest, TAWS aims to empower local people to live active, healthy connected lives. Activities include cooking classes, gardening sessions, community cafes and physical activity promotion through programmes such as the **Big Bike Project**. TAWS recently set up a food redistribution hub at the Birmingham Wholesale Market.

This hub rescues surplus food from traders and local organisations and aims to redistribute it across the city. TAWS activities are supported by volunteers, who donated over 6,326 hours (equivalent to £93,435) in 2022/23. TAWS works with other organisations to achieve widespread, long-lasting, system change. TAWS also works with other local authorities to share their learning and improve access to health and wellbeing services more widely. As a charitable organisation, TAWS is supported by a range of grant funds. It also receives core funding from Birmingham City Council.

“ We work collaboratively to create stronger and more resilient communities and to support communities to identify, mitigate and remove the barriers that prevent them from living active and connected lives. ”

– Head of Food at TAWS

Spotlight

As a charity with a large staff team and good backing from the local authority, TAWS can work with other organisations across Birmingham to support the community. This collaborative approach promotes local development, increases community cohesion, and improves access to services for people across the highly diverse city region. With a large membership base, TAWS can work closely with communities, helping to achieve sustainable social, economic, and environmental change. This community focussed approach also means activities are directed where inequalities are at their highest, helping to ensure energy and resources are used where they are most needed. Whilst TAWS services and programmes are designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities, they are open to all, helping to reduce stigma and promote community connections.

Activities

Cooking classes

Cycling and walking initiatives

Community cafes and meals

Community composting space

Surplus food storage and redistribution

Composting workshops

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Support people to access affordable, nutritious food by running community cafes, open four days per week, across Birmingham
- Develop community meal partnerships with businesses to generate revenue and support community cohesion
- Run the Share Shacks programme to encourage a sharing economy



Sustainability and resilience

- Map what is being done with surplus food across Birmingham
- Part of the food justice network, working with other organisations to share surplus food and resources
- Run 'Project Brum', offering paid opportunities to develop employability skills
- Utilise food surplus to make meals for the community cafes



Health and wellbeing

- Offer free physical activity opportunities in local spaces
- Deliver activities for families such as street closures and park festivals
- Run weekly gardening drop-in sessions from the community garden
- Promote Green social prescribing (GSP) to enable more people to spend time outside



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Utilise surplus food to cook and prepare meals for events in the community
- Offer cooking classes and community Cook Along's to support more people to cook fresh food at home
- Grow and connect spaces to support communities to take ownership and increase knowledge

Takeaways



By functioning as a cooperative, with a membership base over 140 people, TAWS is well embedded within the community, ensuring activities meet local needs.



As a key member of the wider food justice network in Birmingham, TAWS can advocate for and achieve real and sustainable system change at environmental, economic, and social levels, helping to promote community development and promote wellbeing in Birmingham.



As large and well-established charity, TAWS has taken on the role of a broker. This enables them to support smaller charitable organisations to reach communities and carry out diverse projects, scaling out their impact.

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The Warehouse, Newtownards, Northern Ireland



Description

The Warehouse is in Newtownards, where unemployment is high, and with many families needing help to access food. The Warehouse is a charitable organisation supported by grant funding. It is also part of **North Down Community Works**, a Newtownards based social enterprise focussed on helping people experiencing crisis, which provides sustainable income, and access to specialist support. With 6 staff, and over 60 volunteers, The Warehouse offers a range of activities such as a no-referral community fridge and freezer, craft clubs, **clothing exchanges** and children's groups.

The **Well Fed** social supermarket and mobile supermarket provide families most in need with access to affordable food, equal to the value of a £50-£100 supermarket shop, as well as financial and social support. To bring people together and reduce food waste, a free community lunch is offered three times per week, whilst a cooked breakfast is available for free on a Friday. Together the meals feed over 700 people. Surplus food is used whenever possible, with donations from local businesses and FareShare. Additional surplus food is used to make frozen meals which are available for those most in need.

“ We offer a safe, welcoming, neutral space. People come here for the food, but also for the company. ”

– Manager at The Warehouse

Spotlight

The Warehouse has been running for over 25 years, and is staffed and supported by local people, meaning that it is well trusted, and well positioned to meet the needs of the local community. The space is welcoming and safe for people from a range of different communities, helping to promote community cohesion. By using surplus food, The Warehouse keeps costs down, whilst promoting access to affordable, healthy food, and reducing food waste. The Well Fed social supermarket helps families find solutions to their problems, whilst not becoming dependent on charitable support. The Warehouse seeks to be a community space for everyone, not just those that are in financial or social need. As such, everyone is welcome to attend and engage with all the sessions available. The Warehouse promotes circular economy principles throughout all its work, encouraging sharing and swapping.

Activities

Community breakfast and lunches

'Wear N Share' clothing, toy, and book exchange

Drop in tea, coffee, and snacks

Adult arts and crafts sessions

Community fridge, freezer, and cupboard

Mental health and financial signposting

Social supermarket 'Well Fed'

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Support access to affordable, healthy food through the community fridge, freezer and cupboard, all open 4 days per week
- Operate the Well Fed social supermarket twice a week with wrap around financial, health and wellbeing support
- Offer community meals 4 days a week, feeding over 700 people



Sustainability and resilience

- Open the Wear 'N' Share community exchange shop four days per week, which is free to use
- Share excess clothing donations with local organisations to make blankets for the local hospital
- Offer upcycling and sewing sessions to reduce waste



Health and wellbeing

- Provide mental health signposting and support
- Promote community cohesion and connection by offering knitting, craft, sewing and joinery clubs for adults
- Offer signposting to a range of services such as debt advice, benefits and housing, parenting, and children



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Offer community garden and growing sessions
- The Well Fed social supermarket offers fresh fruit and vegetables
- Offer fruit and vegetables via the community fridge, freezer, and cupboard
- Developing a relationship with a local cooperative organic farm to provide fruit and vegetable boxes

Takeaways



No referrals are needed to utilise the community fridge, freezer, or cupboard, helping to minimise stigma, and keep the focus on reducing food waste rather than on food charity.



Developing a circular local economy is an important part of the work of The Warehouse, from clothing and toys to food and activities, as much as possible is purchased from and donated to local people or organisations.



As part of North Down Community Works, a Newtownards based social enterprise focussed on helping people who may be experiencing crisis, the Warehouse has a sustainable income, whilst also having access to social support when needed.

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Pulp Friction, Bestwood, Nottingham, England



Description

Pulp Friction is a Community Interest Company (CIC) in Bestwood, Nottingham, an area with a young population and high family food support needs. Pulp Friction supports people with learning disabilities and/or autism living in the area to develop skills and gain confidence. Pulp Friction started in 2009 following the success of a smoothie bike trial, and a grant from the **Youth Opportunities Fund**. Pulp Friction has since expanded, now offering a day service for over 38 members, but food remains central to achieving the organisation's mission with a range of food related activities and programmes available.

Members take part in gardening and cooking activities and are supported to gain hospitality skills and a food hygiene qualification that they can put into practice through community catering which utilises surplus food. Catering includes a lunch club at a local church for 40 people each week, a travelling kitchen for festivals and **events**, a community café open to everyone at the Pulp Friction community centre, and breakfast and lunch catering at the local **police and firefighter headquarters**, with over 1,300 people being fed every day. Pulp Friction also manages a community garden, and a **"dig-in"** allotment, a composting scheme, and a wormery.

“ Food brings everyone together and is a great leveller. When people from the community see members of Pulp Friction preparing, cooking, and serving food, it helps them to see that everyone has something to contribute.”

– CEO of Pulp Friction

Activities

Community composting space and wormery

Smoothie and ice cream bike at events and festivals

Community cafe

Food literacy and cooking skills development

Community meal in collaboration with the local church

Health and wellbeing support

Catering activities at local businesses

Spotlight

By offering a range of cooking, gardening and creativity programmes, the members of Pulp Friction, all of whom have learning disabilities and/or autism, are supported to gain the skills needed to volunteer and/or work in hospitality and related fields, helping to break down barriers, reduce stigma and promote social cohesion. Pulp Friction utilises surplus food, donated by FareShare and local retailers, to produce all meals served in the community cafe, at events, and at the police and firefighter headquarters, helping to reduce food waste and ensure meals are affordable. To promote biodiversity and contribute to environmental ambitions, Pulp Friction also looks after a community garden, growing a range of produce that is used in meals and/or shared with the local community. Members took part in the Chelsea Flower Show 2024 to showcase their horticulture and food growing skills.

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Support people to access affordable, nutritious food by running community cafes and providing local catering services
- Develop catering partnerships with local businesses to generate revenue and support community cohesion
- Employ 12 members of staff, some of whom are also members of Pulp Friction



Sustainability and resilience

- Utilise food surplus to prepare meals for the community café, catering events, and community lunches
- Run a community garden, growing fresh fruit, vegetables, and other edible plants
- Developed a composting programme and wormery to reduce food from entering landfill



Health and wellbeing

- Run weekly gardening sessions from the community garden to support people to develop confidence and reduce isolation
- Offer cooking sessions to promote cooking skills and improve health and wellbeing literacy
- Over 30 volunteers are involved in preparing meals and organising events



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- Utilise surplus food to cook and prepare meals, ensuring costs are kept to a minimum
- Share surplus food with the community after events and meals

Takeaways



Members of Pulp Friction are provided with opportunities to train and work in hospitality, helping them to feel empowered, whilst also reducing unemployment and enhancing community connection.



Catering for events, and organisations such as the police and fire brigade, generates regular and sustainable revenue, helping Pulp Friction to plan, whilst also providing members with employment and skill development opportunities.



By offering a stable and supportive environment and being aware of abilities and transferable skills, Pulp Friction helps everyone to feel valued, promoting self-confidence and community development.

This research was conducted by the [University of Leeds](#) in collaboration with the [Consumer Data Research Centre](#), the [Food Foundation](#) and participating Food Hubs, funded by the Research England Policy Support Fund and supported by [Policy@Leeds](#). For more information visit the [project page](#), [Global Food and Environment Institute](#) or contact [Dr Effie Papargyropoulou](#) at E.Papargyropoulou@leeds.ac.uk.



Description

Edlington Community Organisation (ECO) launched in Edlington in 1990 in response to the closure of the **Yorkshire Main Colliery** coal mine and the resultant increase in unemployment amongst the towns 8,000 residents. ECO uses a family centric, friendly approach delivering activities such as after school and holiday clubs, no referral food share (food bank), community cupboard (£5 per week, per family for fridge and freezer items) and community market (£3 per week, per family, for dry and store cupboard items), as well as wellbeing and financial signposting.

ECO is housed in the Yorkshire Main Community Centre, which was built to support the mining community, but offers a central location for ECO, enabling it to be open and welcoming for all. ECO is supported by volunteers, and a small team of employees all from the local community. Together the team ensures that ECO has the funding and support needed to continue helping the local community. ECO has achieved over 1 million pounds in funding and contracts, which have enabled it to provide a range of community services for over 30 years.

“ We are lifesaving. The amount of people that we engage with, and the number of bellies we fill is huge. ”

– Manager of ECO

Activities

Food bank, open 5 days per week

Breakfast club

Community cupboard, open 4 days per week

After school and holiday club provision

Community market, open 1 day per week

Wellbeing and health signposting

Adult social groups

Community events

Spotlight

ECO is located at the heart of the Edlington community and works closely with residents and other charities to provide support and activities for people of all ages, ensuring that the services available meet the needs of local people. As all the activities and services are run by volunteers and staff members who are also from the community, ECO is well trusted, and is working to promote community cohesion and connectivity. Food is central to the work of ECO as it helps to bring people in and bring people together, and so is offered alongside all activities either for free, or for low cost. ECO offers a no-referral food bank, which reduces stigma and shame for those most in need but encourages families to move on to the community cupboard, which provides fridge and freezer items for £5/week, and/or the community market which offers dry and store cupboard food for £3/week. Together these offers help to improve the affordability of food whilst also reducing food waste.

Impacts



Food security and economy

- Community cupboard (pantry), 4 days per week
- Community food market, weekly.
- Emergency food support via a food bank, 5 days per week
- Cooking sessions offered every month
- For those with limited cooking equipment, free slow cookers are provided



Sustainability and resilience

- Junior Citizens Programme is offered every week and provides community focused activities for young people such as monthly litter picks
- Gardening sessions are offered for children regularly
- Whenever possible, food surplus is used in the community market, community pantry and served at community activities



Health and wellbeing

- Wellbeing advisors available at community events
- Children's wellbeing activities such as 'chill and chat' help children wind down and have people to talk to
- Activities for adults are available every day, including a walk and talk session, craft clubs, and a community choir
- In partnership with the hygiene bank, ECO offers free sanitary items



Access and demand for healthy, local food

- The community market is open weekly, and costs £3 per household
- The community cupboard, open 4 days per week, currently feeds over 400 people per week and is making a significant impact on "feeding bellies and not bins"

Takeaways



ECO is a central pillar of the local community, working closely with community members to develop and deliver activities.



ECO believes that food brings people together and breaks down barriers, and as such it is offered for free or at low cost at every session and is available every day.



As ECO is managed by a volunteer board of trustees, who either represent a community group or are a local resident, it ensures that the activities and support available, reflect the local community.



ECO rents the community space from another charitable organisation. Whilst this keeps rent costs low and ensures ECO is centrally located, it is a precarious position to be in, and requires costly upkeep.

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