**Healthier and Resilient Food Systems - Case Study**

The YH Healthier and Resilient Food Systems Network is creating a repository of case studies from different local authorities and organisations to showcase how they have approached development of a local sustainable food system, or any single aspect of one, including tackling food insecurity. In creating and promoting the repository, we want to give local authorities and wider stakeholders the opportunity to learn from each other by sharing good practice and lessons learned in relation to developing a sustainable food system.

Please use the case study template below and return to Nicola.smith@dhsc.gov.uk

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| **Your Details** |
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| **Case Study** **The Halifax Academy Community Food & Grow** was established as part of the CFN work to address the following two key issues:* [Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement](https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/resources/local_good_food_movement/)
* [Tackling food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food](https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/resources/healthy_food_for_all/)

It is a platform for delivery and engagement which forms part of our Good Food Movement action plan which also includes policy influence and network facilitation, through the Calderdale Food Charter and CFN presence and partnership work with local government, agencies, stakeholders and community food groups. |
| **Background/Context**What was the current situation? What is the problem/issue? What is the reason for the change? |
| Park Ward is one of the most socio-economically deprived areas in Calderdale. Families face challenges with finances, accommodation, mental health and accessing services. CFN and THA are working responsively, since October 2020, addressing communities’ critical needs felt directly from the pandemic – majority BAME families employed in sectors most affected by job loss/risk of infection, including taxi drivers, those on 0 hours contracts, working in security, care, restaurants, delivery & mail order. A large number of people found themselves needing support for the first time and are unfamiliar and uncomfortable ‘asking’ for help and accessing emergency support, ie, social services, foodbanks, etc. The gap between rich and poor is strongly felt, particularly in relation to food and wellbeing, and is ostracizing the children and young people, alongside their families and tight knit community further. See <https://dataworks.calderdale.gov.uk/dataset/park-ward> for more data on the indices of deprivation for Park Ward.  |
| **Solution: how does it work? What was involved?**Please explain what changes you have implemented, core activities and who is involved.  |
| Partnership work between Calderdale Food Network (CFN) and the Halifax Academy identified a collaborative opportunity to develop this project in response to the challenges being faced by the school families and the wider community.Funding was received from Sustainable Food Places, through their Resilience Grant and CFN undertook the management, planning and delivery of the project as well as facilitating communication and connections between the collaborating organisations, whilst their delivery partner, the Halifax Academy were responsible for the day-to-day delivery and communication of the project and for the provision of resources and workshop facilitators.The primary aim was to establish a collaborative working model to increase access to healthy food for the local community (Park Ward) through the delivery of the following initiatives:* Community Kitchen – working with St. Augustine’s and The Outback to provide healthy hot take-away food, 3 days per week, using produce from Pennine Cropshare, Fareshare, ReThink and The Real Junk Food Project
* Voucher scheme pilot to support access to local affordable fresh produce.
* Cooking & Growing Workshops – working with members of the local community in friendly, supportive workshops in the grounds of Halifax Academy, supported by local community growing projects.

The project brings together a broad range of groups and organisations in the region, to work together to share knowledge skills and resources, empowering participants to make positive life-long changes to their wellbeing, through food;Led and shaped by participants, with a strong emphasis on peer-to-peer learning & embracing the diverse values, cultures and traditions of the community, the key delivery elements are as follows:* *Working with local system of providing food support; linking with existing providers and building on to the local offer.*
* *Ensuring support is provided through sign posting and building choice - resilience rather than reliance.*
* *Creating additional/wrap around opportunities that are school and community wide - not only for the duration of this funding.*
* *Seed to plate model.*
* *Local partnerships and strength*
* *Building sustainable and small goals that fit into daily life.*
* *Whole school support- not just targeting one group, but building into school and community ethos.*
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| **What has been the impact of this work?** Please summarise any outcomes/outputs or the intended objective of this work. |
| As a 1000+ strong community focused school, primary to secondary, THA engages with children, from the age of 4 up to 16 and their families. This privileged position enables a strong understanding of the issues faced by the local community and a close connection, as relationships are built with whole families who benefit directly from this project. It positively impacts pupils directly, and their families who are accessing cooking and growing courses either through direct involvement or through contributing recipes/supporting their child in cooking or through social media/ school communications. In addition, the collaborative structure of the project enables the above groups and organisations and their communities to benefit.Outputs & Outcomes:*The project has been successful in achieving a successful collaborative working model which has delivered the following:** Weekly cooking workshops with pupils, using local seasonal and surplus food to create recipes which are taken home and shared
* Community Kitchen (3 days per week) hosted by Halifax Academy, The Outback and St. Augustine’s, with volunteers supporting the preparation and making of up to 150 meals on a weekly basis. Surplus food from Re-Think as well as vegetables from The Outback are used to produce meat free meals which are available to all primary school families.
* Cooking and Growing workshops with Year 11 students to learn gardening skills and develop links with the community. The group meet weekly to develop an area of the garden as edible plots. They have visited The Outback and cooked a range of dishes together from the seasonal and surplus ingredients available.
* The Giving Project with Year 9 students where basic cooking skills are taught on a weekly basis and food is shared and discussed in the context of community and giving.
* Regular opportunities for pupils and community members to come together and form relationships and develop peer support groups, including; ESOL/IT Classes, visits to The Outback, coffee mornings
* ‘Meet The Street’ and ‘Uniform Reuse and Recycle Point’.
* Over 2,500 meals served to the community - all surplus /veggie /vegan
* Polytunnel and edible growing sites established installed with pupils ongoing involvement.
* Fruit and veg pilot voucher scheme with local retailers and market traders, supported by PH funding.
* Walking Busgroup for parents and carers – visiting markets, growing sites, community kitchens
* Creating a fuel questionnaire to map needs currently then re-visit at the end of the year with Calderdale Citizen's Advice & partnership with New Ground Together Fuel fund.
* Building community links and working with local businesses such as McVities to establish new allotments to facilitate growing throughout Park Ward ‘Bite Back’ Champions group – looking at how we use food throughout school & talking about food-use and cooking after school
* Bid for creating our own *community fridge* submitted
* Breakfast club and coffee mornings
* *Ready Steady Cook* classes with pupils and a ‘cook-off’ at the end of term
* Summer holiday scheme linking with The Outback, Summerfield Care Home and Spring Hall Health Centre

Next Steps:*‘Our overarching aim is to work with our pupils and community, ensuring sustainability is at the centre of learning, reflected in the home, and to embed a committed individual environmental approach.**We are creating a strategy which will under pin this ethos – Cultivate, Cook, Create.**This will be a live working document which will enable change in small meaningful ways, through food growing and carbon reduction, throughout our classrooms, growing spaces and community.’*Fiona Black (Communities & Partnerships Officer - Halifax Academy)We will use this project as a model for other schools and their surrounding communities, by sharing the narrative and seeking collaborative working partners. |
| **What has helped this work to be successful?** Please highlight any success factors relevant to an organisation looking to implement something similar.  |
| The key to the success of this project is the collaborative working model which enables and encourages a holistic community approach, drawing on the existing work and resources in the region and tapping into wider connections to ensure the sustainability of the project.Assets and Resources:* Halifax Academy school and its kitchen and garden facilities
* **Halifax Academy School staff and community**
* Local community kitchens and gardens, including The Outback, St Augustine’s, the Community Fridge
* Pennine Cropshare vegetable boxes (and staff) and ReThink Food

Funding has come from Sustainable Food Places and *Never Hungry Again* (a local funding resource for addressing food related inequalities for children) |
| **Were there any challenges? If yes, how were these mitigated?** Please highlight any challenges and ways to overcome, minimise these or avoid from the outset. |
| The primary challenge was getting the project off the ground with the ongoing Covid restrictions and barriers to communication. This led to a later start than originally planned and a scaled down version of some of the original outputs. However, we started small – doing what we could in the circumstances – and once the ball was rolling each output inspired the next and more collaborative opportunities were identified, along with resources, both funding and food and growing supplies.*“There's so much happening, it's just wonderful! “* *Fiona Black – lead delivery partner Halifax Academy)* |
| **Any other advice or information?** Is there anything else you would like to share that others might learn from? |
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