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# Oxfordshire Food Strategy

March 2022



Part 1



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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



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# 1.

## Introduction

Building a healthy, fair and sustainable food system for Oxfordshire.



## Food is both the source of, and solution to, many of the problems we face today.



A vibrant and sustainable food system must be integral to our organisations, communities and culture in Oxfordshire so that we can tackle the challenges of health and wellbeing; climate change and biodiversity; fair incomes and employment.

Alongside environmental and health drivers, the stresses placed on our local communities and businesses through global events - COVID, Brexit, war in Ukraine, rising fuel, food and other living costs - have highlighted the fragility of our supply chains and the need to take action and re-evaluate the entire food system. This was recognised in the National Food Strategy in 2021, which also stressed the need for local areas to develop their own food strategies.

This local food strategy has been developed by a multi-stakeholder partnership including county and district councils, community groups, local food producers, retail and hospitality businesses and major institutions. It is a first step to draw together the many strands of work that are already happening across the county and to see them as a coherent whole. Part 1 of this strategy, presented here, identifies priority areas of action, links to existing initiatives and policy, and showcases some examples of excellence that we can learn from and build on. Part 2 will embed the strategy in existing programmes and plans, develop Food Action Plans for each District, initiate pilots and monitor and evaluate progress.

COP26 highlighted that 1.5 is still alive but we must act swiftly. Whilst much emphasis is placed on fossil fuels and

alternative energy sources, food systems currently account for 21-37% of total greenhouse gases and contribute to biodiversity loss (IPCC, 2019). Furthermore food poverty in Oxfordshire is real, and whilst COVID brought it to our attention it is not a new phenomenon: 9-14% of all households in Oxfordshire experience food insecurity, this equates to 62,000-96,000 people (Moretti et al 2021). Removing barriers and ensuring that everyone in Oxfordshire can access affordable, healthy food in ways that promote dignity, recognise diversity and celebrate our rich cultural heritage, are fundamental to this strategy. Alongside building vibrant, thriving communities, supporting our local food economy that provides local jobs that serve local communities' needs can be part of the solution. Oxfordshire's food economy accounts for 10% of jobs and in 2020 generated turnover of £2.2 billion or 10% of the local economy. We also know that "pound-for-pound money spent in the local food web supports three times the number of jobs as the equivalent spent in national grocery chains" (Willis, 2012).

The challenges to our environment along with diet related ill-health, food poverty and the cannot be addressed without redefining our food systems with a root and branch approach - from both a policy and a grassroots perspective. The time for action is now.



## Part 1: Developing Oxfordshire's Food Strategy

Understanding the strategic challenge of food in Oxfordshire in consultation with the Good Food Oxfordshire (GFO) network.



Defining the vision and strategic priorities, identifying the influencing factors and priority areas for action.



Building on what is already being done. How the strategy continues, evaluates and strengthens existing initiatives, and builds the foundations for new initiatives.



## Part 2: Implementing Oxfordshire's Food Strategy

Continue and strengthen existing programmes and campaigns



Embed actions to deliver these strategic priorities in existing policies and plans



Develop detailed Food Action Plans with each key stakeholder



Initiate foundation projects to build our knowledge base and inform detailed implementation plans for new initiatives



## Good Food Oxfordshire is a network of over 150 local organisations committed to a better food system for Oxfordshire.

Throughout this document we refer to "Good Food". What we mean by this is food that provides health and social benefits, contributes to thriving local economies and communities, enhances our natural resources and tackles climate change.

In other words: food that is good for people, good for community and good for the planet.



# 2.

## Oxfordshire's Food Challenge

Oxfordshire's food challenge was real, and it's got far worse.



## Oxfordshire's food challenge was real, and now it's far worse.

Fair access to good quality, sustainably produced food is poor across Oxfordshire, and has been made worse by pressures of the last few years.

Alongside environmental and health drivers, the stresses placed on our local communities and businesses through global events - COVID, Brexit, war in Ukraine, rising fuel, food and other living costs - have highlighted the need to take

action and re-evaluate the entire food system. This was recognised in the National Food Strategy in 2021 which also stressed the need for local areas to develop their own food strategies.



# The Local Picture

Localised, sustainable food systems provide an opportunity to improve food security for vulnerable groups, meet Oxfordshire's climate and sustainability targets and improve food supply resilience.



## Food Poverty

9-14% of Oxfordshire's residents experience food insecurity. This is **62,00–96,000 people** (Moretti et al 2021\*)

In 2022, **6% cost of living rises** mean households face an average hit of **£1,200 to their incomes** forcing more people into 'heat or eat' dilemmas (Harari et al. 2022)



Cost of living rises disproportionately impacts lower income households. Fewer 'value' ranges and **price increases of up to 350%** in basic items (Monroe, 2022)

## Health Crisis



**16.1% of children in Year 6 are obese**; children living in the most deprived areas are more than twice as likely to be obese than those living in least deprived areas.

Obesity rates in both Reception- aged and Year 6 children **increased by around 4.5% between 2019-20 and 2020-21**. Highest annual rise since the measurement programme began in 2006/7. (NCMP, 2021)

**56.3% of adults** in Oxfordshire are classified as overweight or obese\*\* (OCC & DDS, 2021)

People limited by health problems and disability are **5 x more likely** to experience food insecurity (Food Foundation, 2021)

## Climate Emergency

Food systems contribute **21-37% of greenhouse gas emissions** (IPCC, 2019)

Biodiversity of priority species **has fallen more than 70%** in the UK since 1970 (NFS, 2021)

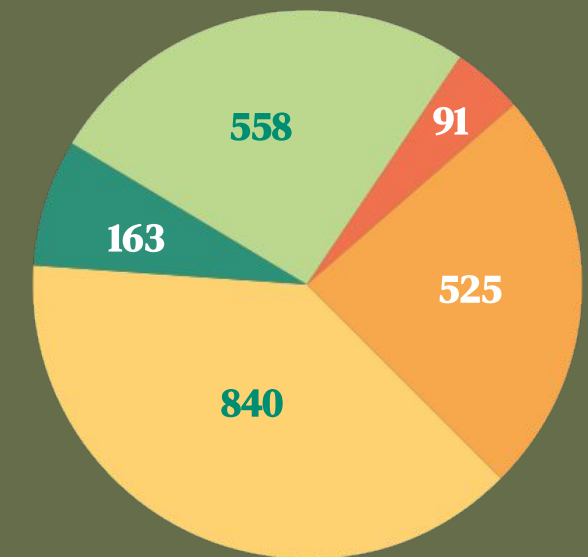


Research by GFO (2020) reported **the valuable contribution of small scale and community growing** to sustainable land management, food security, physical and mental health.

## Food Supply

**Oxfordshire's Food Economy** Turnover (£millions) by subsector (ONS, 2020)

- Agriculture
- Manufacture
- Wholesale
- Food Retail
- Services



In 2013, **51% of Oxford's food came from the UK, 33% came from the EU, and 15% was imported** from elsewhere in the world. Less than 1% was being sourced directly from a local source (Curtis, 2013).

**74% of Oxfordshire's land area is under agriculture**, mostly cereals, followed by livestock grazing

In 2020, Oxfordshire's local food economy contributed **£2.2 billion in turnover, supports 19,500 jobs and 2,970 enterprises** (ONS, 2022)



# Voices from Oxfordshire

We have listened to local people, groups and enterprises.



Through our Oxfordshire Community Insights Programme and through workshops, questionnaires and interviews with local residents, groups and businesses we have heard what matters to people about food and their current experiences.



## Snapshots and learnings



### Childhood Malnutrition: From Grassroots to Policy Action

Roundtable Event November 2021

**Key Learnings:**  
(Nagraj et al 2022)

"Taking a whole systems approach to address the double burden of both underweight and overweight childhood malnutrition, involves recognition of the important overlap between the food system, education system and health system"

"breaking down artificial silos between sectors"

"need to trust their [grassroots organisations'] ability to understand the needs and priorities of the community"

### Interviews / survey of growers and producers

"Turnover [of workers] is very high....we need skills and mentoring programmes for apprentice growers ...places to live affordably in rural areas."

"Food margins being driven down every year....we need to value doing good and sustainability."

"Every person in the food chain doubles the price."

"Local markets build strong relationships and loyal customers."

### School Food Surveys and Workshop

May 2021

and Workshop

March 2022

"We need to listen to children's voices -understanding why they sometimes avoid the food is powerful and can help with small changes."

Parents on school meals:"They try things they wouldn't at home then come back asking for it, it's fantastic."

"Too many chips according to my daughter."

"nobody needs meat every day, and for the price it can't be from sustainable and high welfare sources. It just destroys our planet and is irresponsible."

**Caterers** need to keep their businesses viable and struggle to balance children's preferences for unhealthy food with their ambitions to provide nutritious meals.

**Schools** have the ambition to improve school food but they lack the time, capacity and resources necessary to make a significant change.



## Key Events

September 2021  
**Good Food Procurement Webinar**  
20 attendees\*\* OSEP and GFO

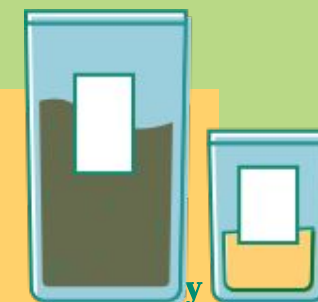
November 2021  
**Childhood Malnutrition Roundtable Event**  
33 attendees, representing community groups, schools, housing associations, councillors, council officers, academics and researchers\*

March 2022  
**Oxfordshire Schools Food Workshop**  
40+ attendees representing schools, councils, communities, caterers

April 2021 - ongoing  
**Healthy Weight Insights Programme**

To date...engaged 28 community partners Banbury Ruscote/Grimsbury, Blackbird Leys, Abingdon, Witney, Berinsfield. Conversations with children at target sites Listened to wider stakeholders at 3 workshops (146 people, 50 +organisations)

September 2021 - January 2022  
**GFO Research**  
11 locations, 100+ members of public interviewed 50+ individual stakeholder meetings held 75+ stakeholders engaged at 8 GFO events and network meetings



## Voices from Oxfordshire

### Chippy Larder

Visiting a local farm, engaging with growers and learning new skills, having your own chick and farm fresh eggs at an affordable price, makes the 'aspirational' accessible.

### Cherwell Collective

We need to return to a more symbiotic relationship between food systems and communities. By connecting people to their food, through growing and cooking, people learn the value of food and not just the price. This in turn helps to reduce food waste and improves health and wellbeing through a stronger sense of community and engagement with nature.

### Orange Bakery

"We love having a good relationship with our mill, our milk and our eggs... it makes all the difference"

### Community Insights

**Life is complex and chaotic:** "Many families tell us they have bigger issues to deal with than their child being a bit overweight"

Many people lack the **skills, capacity or resources** to cook and to change routines & habits "we don't plan, we live day to day"

Professionals can lack resources or skills to have **difficult conversations** about weight, food and wellbeing to **help people to achieve a healthy weight:** "it is easier to talk about death than to talk about their child being overweight"

### GFO Community Research

Over 90% of respondents (members of the public) emphasised the importance of buying local food - to support the local economy, reduce food miles and care for the environment.



# Workshops on food and climate identified common themes and links across health, supply, waste and poverty.



Access to land for food production in Oxfordshire - much of the UK's fruit and vegetable supply comes from a small number of growing areas in Europe.



More veg and less and better meat reduce climate emissions, support sustainable farming practices and better animal welfare.





# 3.

## Vision and Strategic Priorities



## Ambitions to help deliver a collective vision

A coherent food strategy for all those involved with food in Oxfordshire can help push back against these pressures and deliver a vision in which: everyone in Oxfordshire can enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day.



# We have identified the following priority areas for action

Addressing these priorities will deliver the following outcomes.



## Tackle food poverty and diet-related ill health

### Priorities

Expand and strengthen existing services and programmes aimed at those at risk of food poverty, including Community Food Networks (foodbanks, larders and fridges), Healthy Start Vouchers, Holiday Activities and Food, adopting Healthy Place Shaping principles and a Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight.

### Outcomes

Everyone in Oxfordshire can access healthy food 365 days/ year without shame or stigma.

More eligible people access existing schemes that tackle health and nutrition inequality.

Uptake of available central government funding is maximised.

## Build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together

### Priorities

Support communities to grow, cook, learn and enjoy food together – promote campaigns and events that enable everyone to access healthy food, reduce food waste and encourage dietary choices that are good for health and for the planet.

### Outcomes

Stronger communities through sharing and participation in food-related activities.

More people can access knowledge and skills to support growing, cooking and better nutrition.

People make food choices that are better for health and the planet.

## Grow our local food economy through local enterprises, local jobs, local wealth generation

### Priorities

Focus on local enterprises that are driven by local needs, provide local employment and keep wealth local as part of a circular economy.

Use the power of Anchor Institutions (schools, hospitals, universities, businesses, etc) to procure locally and provide access to finance, infrastructure and skills. This is called a Community Wealth Building approach.

### Outcomes

More local food enterprises flourish.

Better livelihoods, skills and opportunities for local food workers.



## Strengthen short, transparent local food supply chains

### Priorities

Detailed scoping project to define the needs, options and roadmap for local supply chain solutions for Oxfordshire.

Use public and institutional procurement to provide scale and certainty for local sustainable producers.

Establish appropriate infrastructure to support the supply chain –e.g., local food processing hubs and dynamic procurement systems.

Work with landholders, existing producers and new farm entrants to increase access to land, infrastructure & skills to increase local production to meet local consumption patterns.

### Outcomes

Clear and robust understanding of the best solutions for Oxfordshire

More sustainable food is produced and processed locally for local consumption

Net zero goals are supported through sustainable food production and fewer food miles.

Consumers are more engaged and connected to the provenance of their food reinforcing healthier and more sustainable habits.



## Improve the health and sustainability of institutional catering

### Priorities

Embed healthy, sustainable local food principles and targets within institutional catering.

Link food to net zero targets and promote accreditation schemes such as Food for Life, Fairtrade, and Sustainable Restaurant Association.

### Outcomes

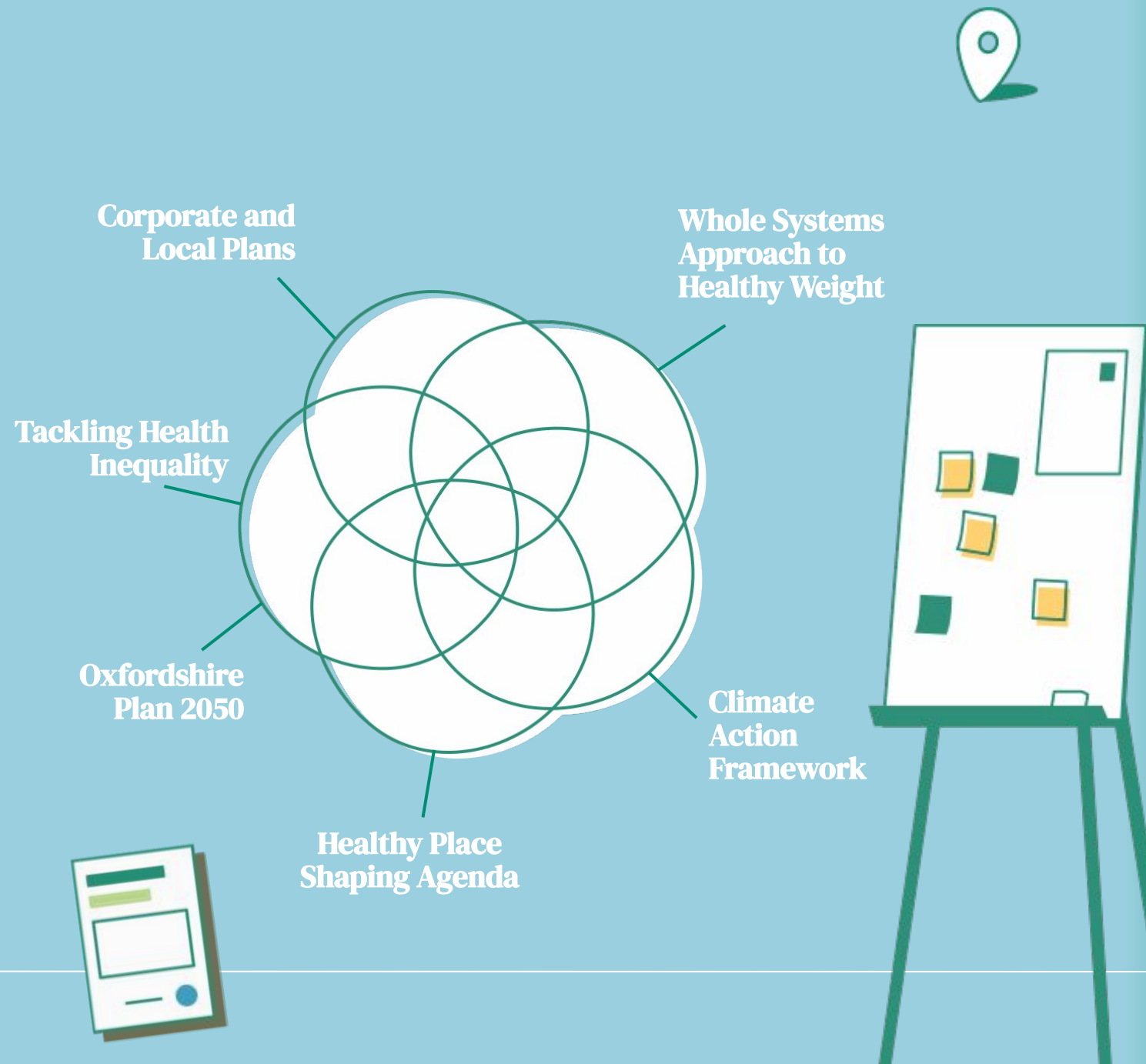
More people have access to healthy and sustainable food via local institutions.

The local food economy is supported by institutional procurement.

Institutions' scope 3 climate and sustainability targets are supported through better food practices.

# 4.

## Delivering the Outcomes



To achieve these ambitions we need to ensure that food is integrated within existing policy and programmes.

Policy/ Programme	Synergies with Food Strategy
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<b>Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight</b>	Access to healthy food Awareness and promotion of a healthy diet A healthy start for families Planning healthy weight environments Tackling health inequalities
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Access to healthy food  
Awareness and promotion of a healthy diet  
A healthy start for families  
Planning healthy weight environments  
Tackling health inequalities



<b>Healthy Place Shaping</b>	20 minute neighbourhoods- access to healthy food Planning healthy weight environments Food systems central to healthy places – growing, buying, cooking, sharing
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20 minute neighbourhoods- access to healthy food  
Planning healthy weight environments  
Food systems central to healthy places – growing, buying, cooking, sharing

<b>Tackling Health Inequality</b>	Director of Public Health Report 2019/20: focus on areas of inequality where access to food and health outcomes such as higher rates of obesity in children, and life expectancy gaps, are usually worse than the Oxfordshire average.
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Director of Public Health Report 2019/20: focus on areas of inequality where access to food and health outcomes such as higher rates of obesity in children, and life expectancy gaps, are usually worse than the Oxfordshire average.

<b>Climate Action Framework</b>	Emissions and biodiversity: Food choices, production, handling and waste Scope 3 emissions – short, local supply chains
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Emissions and biodiversity: Food choices, production, handling and waste  
Scope 3 emissions – short, local supply chains



<b>Oxfordshire Plan 2050</b>	Climate Action Planning and Infrastructure Healthy Place Shaping to guide housing growth Land-use – local food production to support short, local supply chains
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Climate Action Planning and Infrastructure  
Healthy Place Shaping to guide housing growth  
Land-use – local food production to support short, local supply chains

<b>Corporate and local plans</b>	Role of farming in climate, nature and economy Sustainable food businesses as part of Green Economy Inclusive communities – food as connector growing, cooking and sharing together Community health and wellbeing – access to affordable nutritious food Community action and engagement Access to spaces and infrastructure
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Role of farming in climate, nature and economy  
Sustainable food businesses as part of Green Economy  
Inclusive communities – food as connector growing, cooking and sharing together  
Community health and wellbeing – access to affordable nutritious food  
Community action and engagement  
Access to spaces and infrastructure



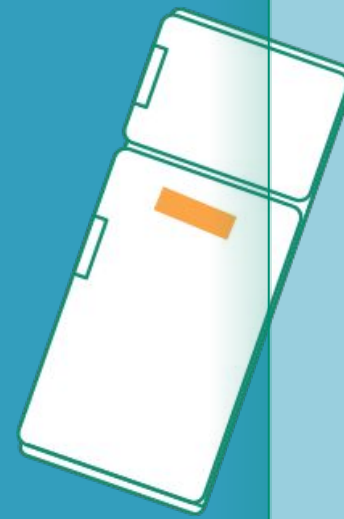
And ensure that flourishing campaigns and initiatives across Oxfordshire are supported and strengthened.



Better Health Let's do this



# By showcasing examples of excellence we aim to celebrate success and show what is possible...



# ...as well as building foundations and developing new initiatives.



## Case Study

## Great example of...

<b>Chippy Larder and Bruern Farm</b>	Communities growing and sharing food together
<b>Salt Cross Garden Village</b>	Ambition to create better food environments in new development, navigating complex planning challenges
<b>Oxford City Council – Healthy Start</b>	Partnership working to increasing the uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers
<b>Swan School</b>	Improving the health and sustainability of school food
<b>Play:Full</b>	Community-led approaches to tackling holiday hunger
<b>Cherwell Collective</b>	Building solutions to food poverty and the climate crisis through community growing, cooking, sharing
<b>OX4 Food Crew</b>	Community Wealth Building – tackling food poverty, supporting resilience and community-led enterprise
<b>Abingdon Community Fridge</b>	Building community, tackling food poverty, reducing food waste
<b>The Wonky Food Company</b>	Sustainable Food Enterprise preventing food waste
<b>The Orange Bakery, Watlington</b>	Supporting local producers and providing employment for disadvantaged groups
<b>Oxford City Farm</b>	Community education and engagement in growing
<b>Sandy Lane Farm</b>	Organic and regenerative agriculture

## Priority new areas to develop



**Work with schools, caterers and children to better understand the challenges of school food.** Work collaboratively on solutions to improve the health and sustainability of school food, that are impactful but achievable. This approach can also benefit the local food economy through institutional commitment to buying local, ethically and sustainably produced food. The learnings from the schools pilot can then be applied to other institutional settings – hospitals, social care.



**Strengthen short transparent local food supply chains that improve resilience to external shocks and build our local food economy.** Work with local institutional buyers – including schools, universities, hospitals – to commit to increase local procurement. Work with local producers to increase local production to meet local demand. Establish the technology, infrastructure, processes and relationships to facilitate this.



**Support Community Wealth Building approaches to preventing food poverty, building resilient communities, developing skills, jobs and enterprises that retain wealth locally.** Councils and major institutions commit to being anchor organisations – increasing local procurement, making local assets available to local enterprises, championing local enterprise.



# Examples of excellence from Oxfordshire

## Chippy Larder and Bruern Farm

Promoting dignity, affordable access to good food and community growing.



the chippy larder

I set up The Chippy Larder to redress the imbalance in my community. We support families who are not only in food, fuel and educational deprivation but also at high risk of poor physical and mental health. To be surrounded by businesses offering high quality, nutritionally dense, locally produced food, that was and still is financially inaccessible to many is not acceptable.

The first step was to set up a hub that didn't stigmatise those in need, the key was to be inclusive so the whole community could benefit. The Community Larder model was a perfect fit - Chippy Larder is open to everyone providing access to affordable food and reducing food waste. Partnering with Bruern Farm we have set up the Chicky Larder - getting members outdoors and involved with growing. Visiting a local farm, engaging with growers and learning new skills, having your own chick and farm fresh eggs at an affordable price, makes the 'aspirational' accessible.

## Wonky Food Company

Reducing food waste - flourishing with support from OxLEP



The Wonky Food Company makes relishes from imperfect and surplus fruit and vegetables. Started in Oxfordshire in 2018, the business sells via the Midcounties Co-op and Ocado, as well as through a growing network of independent delis, farm shops and artisan food stores.

In 2022, it was accepted on to the Co-op's first national incubator scheme, focusing on small sustainable food and drink brands. The Wonky Food Company has benefited from local business support since its inception. It received start-up support via OxLEP and is now part of OxLEP's eScalate programme, a three-year European funded initiative supporting social enterprises, charities and purposeful businesses in Oxfordshire. "It's been such a fantastic programme to be part of", says founder Ashley Cavers. "We have benefitted from some great peer group and networking opportunities. It has also enabled us to build our knowledge in important areas such as impact measurement and raising investment.

## Community Wealth Building

From food poverty, to resilience and prevention

## OX4 FOOD CREW

OX4 Food Crew OX4 Food Crew (OX4FC) is a partnership of 9 organisations based in OX4 working with and for people experiencing food poverty which has been exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic. Founded in April 2020, we quickly responded to local needs by delivering nutritious cooked meals to people experiencing food insecurity in the local area. We are now developing the partnership to move beyond the emergency pandemic driven response, to include services which help to build community food resilience. These include free cooking for health and wellbeing courses for parents, well as 'Pay as you feel' community meals and incubator support for food social enterprises including Damascus Rose Kitchen and No Vice Ice. As a coalition of organisations, our aim is to work with our local communities to co-investigate and design flexible community led support and innovations that will help build food resilience in the local area, alongside ongoing emergency food support.

## The Swan School Oxford

Improving school food



Family dining enables all students and teachers to share a delicious hot lunch together every day. No packed lunches are allowed.

We recreate a 'family' atmosphere where everyone is encouraged to engage in conversation and take responsibility for different aspects of the service, for example laying the table, serving food, or tidying the table at the end of the meal.

Lunches at The Swan are vegetarian (meat is available at other times) for three main reasons:

- Quality –vegetarian meals allow us to provide better quality for the same price.
- Environment – reducing our meat consumption decreases our carbon footprint.
- Community – all our students are able to sit together, regardless of their dietary preferences or religious requirements.

# Examples of excellence from Oxfordshire

## Cherwell Collective

**Stronger communities, reducing waste, alleviating poverty by growing, cooking, learning and sharing together.**

Started during COVID lock-down, Cherwell Collective was a response to food poverty, hardship and isolation. We have developed our ambitions to empower our community, to increase well-being, to support the vulnerable, and to reduce waste and environmental impact in daily lives. We have over 5,000 users, hundreds of whom are supported weekly.

Our food services include three main groups: Cherwell Larder: Friends feeding friends - alleviating food poverty, reducing food waste and a community hub for distributing surplus of all kinds.

Harvest at Home: Food security from the ground up - supporting people to get growing at home and in the community. Providing home-growing kits, skills training, support and access to resources. We have helped over 900 start growing food for the first time.

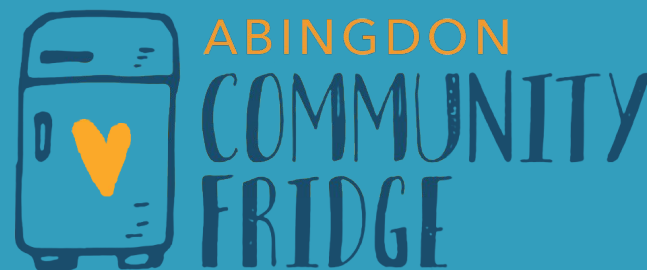
Climatarian Kitchen: Eat to save the earth!: At our food surplus cafe we enjoy climate-friendly meals together, using surplus and locally grown food. Pay what you can meals have suggested donations according to the carbon footprint of the dish. We also offer freshly made ready meals, meal kits, flexi recipes, shared equipment (via Oxford Party Library) and cooking courses.



## Abingdon Community Fridge

**Fighting food waste and building community**

Kerry to add text



## Orange Bakery, Watlington (South)

**Embedded in local community, supporting mental health, local producers, employment and training**

We started in our kitchen during lockdown to support mental health and help young people with focus, purpose and an opportunity for creativity. Initially we baked for ourselves, then our neighbours who were isolating and then through crowd-funding we were able to fund a shop front on the high street in Watlington.

We bake from the Scout Hut and now employ an apprentice from the local prison. We have learnt so much, from the basics of baking through to running a business. Being embedded in our local community has been vital to this journey - we have benefitted from the generosity of other bakers who offered their time, expertise and equipment as well as those who crowd-funded us. More formal start-up support from small local enterprise schemes for mission-driven businesses via OSEP's Escalate scheme has been invaluable, particularly the opportunity to connect with peers and networks of like-minded organisations.



## Play:Full

**A local response to holiday hunger**

Play:Full is a response to tackle holiday hunger experienced by many children who rely on Free School Meals during term-time. The evidence suggests that this group of children start the new term several weeks, if not months intellectually behind their more fortunate peers who have enjoyed a more wholesome diet and lots of activity during the school holiday.

Play:Full was initiated in Banbury as part of the Brighter Futures project and has since been trialled in the City and South and Vale. Healthy, nourishing food is embedded alongside enrichment activities and positive food experiences - from trying new foods, preparing simple snacks and meals and enjoying shared meal-times with friends. Sessions are open-to-all to avoid stigmatisation, but focused on the most deprived wards to target children most in need. The impacts of the programme are clear: children try new foods, less social isolation; children have fun, learning through enrichment; help with extra holiday food bills, connecting vulnerable families to a wider network of support.



# Examples of excellence from Oxfordshire

## Oxford City Farm

Growing Food and Growing Community



At Oxford City Farm we provide valued opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with farming and food production, animals, nature and each other. The food we grow is shared with volunteers and distributed within our local community, enabling us to get fresh produce onto the plates of people who might otherwise have limited access to it.

We work with a range of local organisations to deliver engaging hands-on land and kitchen based social and educational opportunities related to food and farming and the environment. Participants include children, vulnerable adults, and people experiencing loneliness and mental health challenges. Not only can participants learn growing and cooking skills in our new on-site teaching kitchen, but also experience an increased sense of well-being and connectedness, greater confidence, team-working and life skills.

## Oxford City Council - Healthy Start Vouchers

Partnership working to increase the uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers in Oxford



Healthy Start Vouchers support eligible pregnant women and young children to buy fruit, vegetables and dairy and are funded centrally via the NHS. In January 2022 in Oxford City, around 240 eligible families were missing out on Healthy Start Vouchers equivalent to £9,000/ week of unclaimed vouchers.

Through joined up working across housing, health and locality teams, the City Council has supported an additional XX families to access the scheme. Providing a dedicated contact point within the council to liaise with other teams and provide training, and communications materials has been pivotal to making this change happen.



## Sandy Lane Farm

Organic and regenerative agriculture

We are a traditional, family run farm in the South Oxfordshire countryside, passionate about growing organic veg. The team produces a wide diversity of vegetables in the farm's sandy soil. This is partly to spread the risk that is inherent when you farm without pesticides, partly to keep the soil healthy and also, to champion locally grown veg and prove that eating with the seasons can be varied and interesting!



The Bennett's commitment to organic growing is both a passion and a mission and they utilise traditional farming methods - firmly backed by modern science. Biodiversity (above and below ground) is at the heart of organic farming and George's approach is try to keep 'nature in balance' every step of the way. Each year the farm's fields are bordered by beautiful 'beetle banks' - areas of wildflowers and grasses, sown to encourage pollinators and 'nature's pest controllers' to the crops. Early in 2020 he also planted nearly 1000 trees on the farm, a mini-agroforestry project which should improve irrigation, provide a habitat for birds and other wildlife as well as providing valuable aerial cover for his 400 organic egg laying hens.

## Salt Cross Garden Village

Ambition to create better food environments in new developments, navigating complex planning challenges.

West Oxfordshire's Salt Cross Garden Village is a landscape led ambition. Tackling climate change, seeking a zero-carbon community and 25% biodiversity net gain. 2,200 homes, 50% affordable within walkable neighbourhoods. A park and ride 6 minute connection to Oxford City. Hanborough Station, to Oxford and London.



'a place to grow, a space to breathe'

West Oxfordshire's edible Garden Community embedding sustainable food systems; maximising food growing opportunities. Connecting people to growing, production, consumption; contributing to local fresh food supply.

Private and community food growing gardens, doorstep allotments and community orchards. People coming together to cook, learn and celebrate changing seasons. Dedicated growing spaces, careful species selections, hedgerows, woodland edges providing foraging grounds. Edible trees and plants along walkways, places for residents of Salt Cross to engage with growing food and nature.

Planning, delivery and stewardship challenges are being carefully considered with committed leadership, vision and ambition. Salt Cross; an edible Garden Community will contribute to Good Food Oxfordshire's sustainable food network, providing healthy, fair and environmentally sustainable food for all.





# We all need to act now to make this vision a reality

## Ideas for Local Councils

- Adopt a whole systems approach to food
- Embed healthy and sustainable food and healthy weight environments within existing policies, plans and targets
- Develop a specific Food Policy that encapsulates key themes and recommendations defined in the strategy
- Champion the development of **District Level** Food Action Plans to agree specific council commitments and measure progress against these
- Promote and support community groups and businesses working for a better food system through public procurement, access to infrastructure, assets and funding
- Support vibrant, healthy food communities through access to skills and spaces for growing, cooking and sharing food
- Lobby national government using local evidence and action
- Appoint Food Champions at cabinet level to be a conduit for food issues and action



ACT  
NOW

## Ideas for Community Groups

- Sign the Oxfordshire Good Food Charter and join a movement of Collective Action for a better food system for everyone in Oxfordshire
- Connect with a range of partners in your local food system to work together to solve local food problems – community food services, cooking and growing groups, councils, farms and food businesses – together we can do more [<link to CFN sign up and CAG>](#)
- Participate in the development of Food Action Plans for local areas, agree specific commitments and measure progress against these
- Join campaigns and events that bring communities together to grow, cook and share food



## Ideas for Institutions and businesses

- Commit to buying more sustainably produced local food for institutional catering
- Participate in initiatives to scope and develop short, local supply chain solutions
- Ensure food policies and reporting reflect health and sustainability targets and link into net zero ambitions
- Participate in development of Food Action Plans for local areas, agree specific commitments and measure progress against these
- Adopt accreditation and measurement schemes that support these targets
- Engage employees around healthy, sustainable local food – support campaigns and events



## Ideas for Individuals

- Support local organisations working to tackle food poverty and food waste
- Join local growing schemes
- Help with cooking and nutrition programmes
- Use local sustainable food businesses and markets where possible
- Support campaigns and events that promote good food
- Participate in the development of Food Action Plans for local areas



End of Part 1

