



# Enhancing community-led action to ensure healthy diets for all



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



community  
food and health  
(Scotland)



The Community Food Summit brought together people from Scottish Government, local authorities, health boards, community food networks and third sector organisations. It explored ways in which we can work better together to sustain the community food sector in Scotland.

## A shared understanding of what “making healthy, affordable food accessible” means

Many see Good Food Nation as an opportunity to transform the food system to help achieve changes in the following five categories.

### Affordability

Price premiums, transport barriers and costs of fuel, equipment and storage all impact on accessing food. We need to create **clear pathways out of poverty**.

### Availability

For many reasons, people are forced to choose convenience over choice. We need **healthier, equitable food environments** and to challenge the push of poor food.

### Achievability

Low self-confidence or experience as well as limited equipment can impede capacity to cook. We need to ensure people are “**able**” (in the broadest sense) to cook.

### Attitudes

A disconnect between communities and the food chain can mean that the social aspects of food are lost. We need **social level change to create good food cultures**.

### Action

It is complicated and layered and there is no silver bullet. We need **joined up, local, place-based approaches** that focus on prevention and community integration.

## We all need to adopt a “health in all policies” approach

### Ideal role of key stakeholders

#### Community food initiatives Serving their communities

Need to manage expectations of public partners and push back on the need to constantly innovate and unrealistic reporting requirements.

#### Community food networks Facilitate and share resources

Need to develop a set of underlying principles which clearly states what they bring to areas and how smaller groups can feel part of the Network.

#### Third sector organisations Providing a social model of health

Need to stop competing for funding and instead start scaling up partnership working to share resources and increase collective power.

#### Academia Advocating community development

Need to link theory-driven research back to the reality of people’s experiences and continue relationships after the research.

#### Scottish Government Strategic, long-term thinking

Need to stop stalling and consulting to death, instead there needs to be better civic participation and earlier involvement.

#### Local authorities Putting national policy into practice

Need to lose the bureaucracy and focusing on income generation, instead they need to open up community buildings and work better with others.

#### NHS Promotion, prevention (and treatment)

Need to bring down the barriers that prevent access to resources, there needs to be true collaboration with the third and voluntary sector.

#### Businesses Genuine social responsibility

Need to offer healthy options and recognise and act on their role beyond redistribution e.g. sharing skills, experience, spaces, expertise.



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## Local actions

We need community anchor organisations and “networks” that are fully recognised strategically, both locally and nationally.

Core or long-term funding is needed to ensure they are sustained and able to support other initiatives.

### What is a network?

- A starting point for resource and expertise
- Provides a collective voice and supports collaboration
- Ensures consistent messaging around healthy eating
- Supports governance-building and contingency-planning



## What needs to happen next?

We need to develop local food strategies based on partnerships with clear shared purposes and long-lasting shared outcomes.



Could we look at creating a “community-friendly” charter mark for local authorities, health boards and businesses?

## “How does this help people to eat well?”

Decisions and priorities need to be able to answer this question.

We need to ensure “once for all” local approaches to avoid duplication and working in silos.

We need to work together to target wide-spread issues like transport, unhealthy food environments and sustainability.

## What did people commit to?

- Developing a community food network in their area
- Developing collaborative approaches to addressing food insecurity
- Looking for opportunities to work more closely together
- Mapping current activity
- Opening more buildings for community use
- Supporting community development trusts to reach out to appropriate people



“People drive the system, not the other way round...”

## National strategy

We need a national strategy that is reported on annually to overcome key challenges in the sector:

- Lack of job security due to funding processes
- Recognising the role of food in wellbeing as a whole
- Specific challenges for rural and remote communities



## Good Food Nation

The Bill needs to require Scottish Government, local authorities and health boards to provide core or long-term funding that focuses on outcomes rather than outputs.

This could be achieved through local food plans that give equal status to the environment and health concerns.



## Calls for action

- Facilitate the third sector to influence processes
- Involve academics and food retailers in these discussions
- Embed CFI work as a standard in public sector services
- Open up procurement
- Subsidise community groups to support Best Start Foods
- Change the food environment

