

# Progress Report

May 2022 – May 2023

# Introduction

Welcome to Food Sense Wales' annual **Progress Report**. Here we outline our key achievements and progress during the period May 2022 - May 2023. Much of our work centres around building the foundations for healthy and sustainable food systems; helping to build capacity within people, developing and supporting networks, building infrastructure and advocating for a supportive policy and legislative environment. These are not quick wins, progress can seem slow but over the course of this report we hope to show that by building these deep foundations, our investment is beginning to bear fruit, in spite of the strong headwinds.

We hope that you enjoy reading this report. If you'd like more detailed information about the programmes mentioned or want to know more about our wider work, you're welcome to contact us by emailing [foodsensewales@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:foodsensewales@wales.nhs.uk) or you can visit our website [www.foodsensewales.org.uk](http://www.foodsensewales.org.uk)

## Acknowledgements:

We are extremely grateful to all of our project partners, our Advisory and Steering Groups and to everyone who's worked with us and supported our efforts during the last year. The food system is vast and complex but by working together, we can make a difference and catalyse change. We look forward to working in partnership with individuals, organisations and Government again this year and continuing our goal of co-creating a food system that's good for people and the planet.

Food Sense Wales would also like to thank the funders that make our work possible, together with our hosts, Cardiff and Vale UHB Local Public Health Team and Cardiff & Vale Health Charity.



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# Foreword



As the challenges facing our food system mount, it is sometimes easy to forget that the problems that confront us are far from new. Even before the onset of the current wave of food inflation

– as I write food prices are rising at a pace not seen since 1977 – figures indicated that 4.7 million people were living in food insecurity according to the UK Government’s definition\*. The contribution of the way we eat to climate emissions, nature loss, and a seemingly relentless escalation of diet related disease, have also been long documented and it’s understandable to witness frustration and sometimes, a sense of helplessness in the face of such daunting challenges. Such sentiments seem a reasonable response but that is to ignore the progress being made both in public policy and the practical initiatives taking place in our communities. These are very hard yards, particularly in a time of huge pressure on a tightening public purse and more than ever, it calls for coordinated action to make best use of resources through cooperation, shared learning, and the targeting of resources. It also requires a knitting together of top down and bottom up approaches where practical action on the ground informs strategy and public policy and coordination at local, regional and national level provides a joined up and supportive policy context where the interrelated nature of the issues is fully understood and recognised.

I therefore take great heart from the way in which Food Sense Wales have demonstrated this understanding in their work and this report is packed with examples of both initiatives that are making

a difference to lives on a day to day basis and equally important contributions to informing the development of policy at all levels of government. This is most obviously illustrated in the leveraging of a £2.5 million fund from Welsh Government for local authorities in Wales to support the kind of place based food partnerships that Food Sense Wales have been crucial to establishing through its leadership of the Sustainable Food Places network in Wales. In my home county of Carmarthenshire for instance the establishment of Bwyd Sir Gâr and Sustainable Food Places membership in Spring 2022 has already brought a new sense of shared purpose to activity and interventions across the food chain in the county. With half the Welsh population now living in an area with a Sustainable Food Partnership, we should therefore be very hopeful for the future.

It is this understanding of the need for a coordinated and joined up approach that has been a key factor in making the interventions of Food Sense Wales so effective and impressive in their impact. That, and the quality of a team of people who bring a truly impressive degree of energy, commitment, creativity, rigour and optimism to their work. On a personal level it’s an inspiration and a privilege to work with them and a constant reminder that a better food future is possible.

## ***Simon Wright***

**Director of Food and Rural Economy,  
University of Wales Trinity Saint David  
and Advisor to Food Sense Wales**



## About Food Sense Wales:

Co-creating a food system for Wales that's good for people and the planet

Food Sense Wales works with communities, organisations, policymakers and Government across Wales to create a food and farming system that is good for people and good for the planet. We want to influence and impact on how food is produced and consumed in Wales, to ensure that sustainable food, farming and fisheries are at the heart of a just, connected and prosperous food system.

To read more about Food Sense Wales, including information about the team, our Advisory Board, our values and mission, please click [here](#).

Food Sense Wales is a fund within the Cardiff & Vale Health Charity and hosted by the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board Public Health team.

# Progress: at a glance

Between May 2022 and May 2023, Food Sense Wales has:



Helped ensure that nearly **50%** of the population of Wales live within an area served by a Sustainable Food Place

Developed **9** Sustainable Food Places in Wales

- 1 Cardiff
- 2 Vale of Glamorgan
- 3 Monmouthshire
- 4 Blaenau Gwent
- 5 Rhondda Cynon Taf
- 6 North Powys
- 7 Carmarthenshire
- 8 Swansea
- 9 Torfaen



Worked with all **22** Local authorities in Wales to develop cross sector food partnerships of which **9** are Sustainable Food Places members



Delivered or supported **9** food related programmes



Directly supported **44** Food Leaders to drive positive change in their food system

Delivered **1** action research project project, facilitating nearly **1 tonne** of courgettes through the supply chain, reaching **1500** children

Welcomed nearly **650** people to Food Sense Wales events

Responded to **7** consultations

Made **59** presentations at conferences or events



Leveraged **£2.74 million** into Sustainable food systems in Wales

# Building a Good Food Movement:

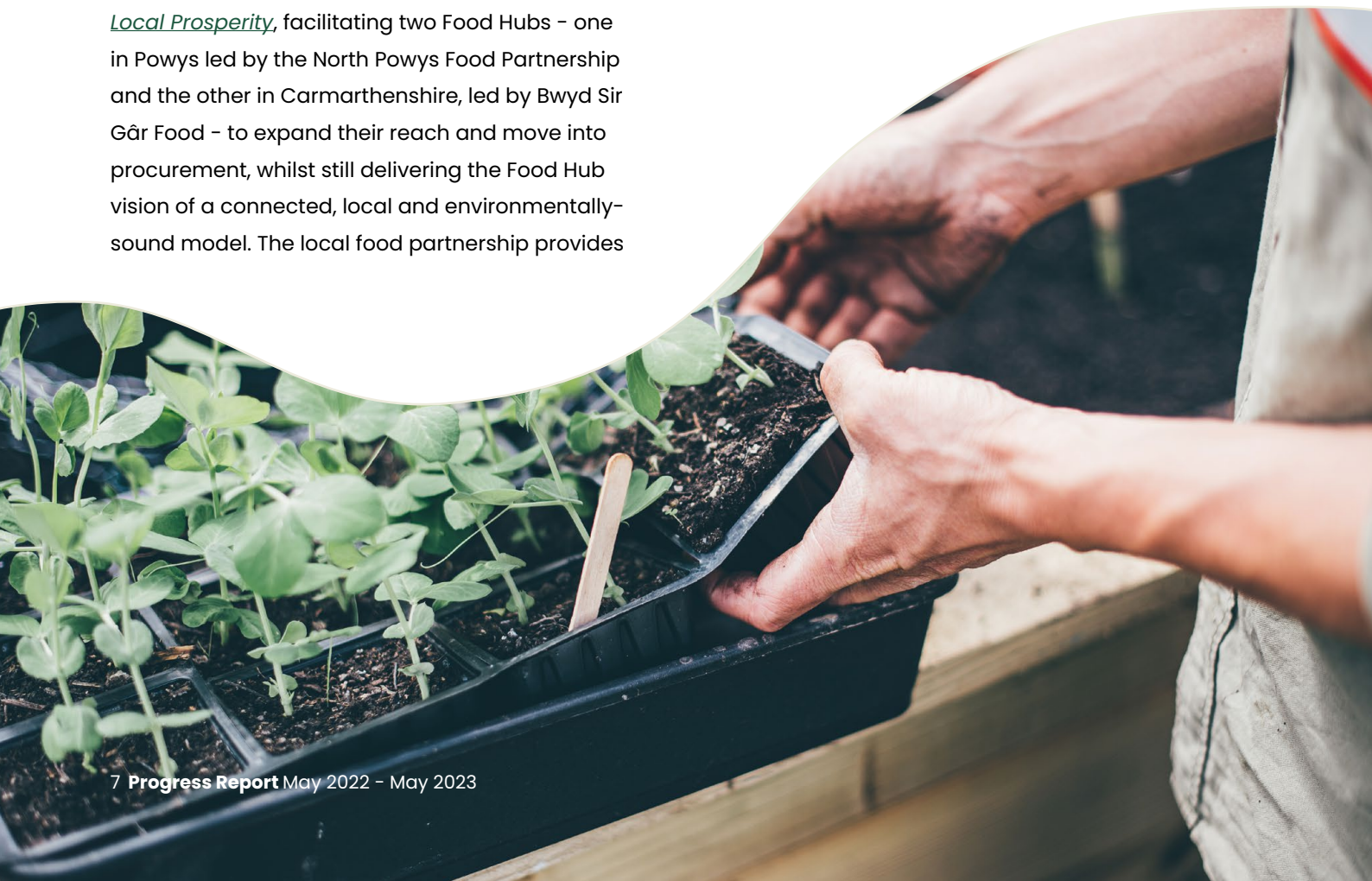
## An overview

Food Sense Wales is continuing to develop and sustain a **Good Food Movement** in Wales by delivering and supporting a number of food-related programmes. Underpinning all of this work is a desire to build capacity, leadership, confidence and a sense of place within communities across Wales. Key to this is the development of Cross Sector Food Partnerships through the Sustainable Food Places approach boosted by Welsh Government's support for developing new Food Partnerships, who may too become members of the Sustainable Food Places Network as work progresses.

In particular, it has been wonderful to see Sustainable Food Partnerships, Bwyd Sir Gâr Food and North Powys Food Partnership support the development of community food hubs for public procurement. Social Farms and Gardens has been leading a wider partnership as part of an RDP project, [\*Sustainable Food Procurement for Local Prosperity\*](#), facilitating two Food Hubs - one in Powys led by the North Powys Food Partnership and the other in Carmarthenshire, led by Bwyd Sir Gâr Food - to expand their reach and move into procurement, whilst still delivering the Food Hub vision of a connected, local and environmentally-sound model. The local food partnership provides

expertise and training to ensure access for Hubs and growers, and the project is developing and adapting existing technology to meet the needs of customers using procurement systems. Both Powys and Carmarthenshire are members of the Sustainable Food Places network exploring innovative approaches and collaboration to develop local supply chains. This project supports them with investments to diversify and work towards the economic and environmental benefits proposed within the forthcoming Agriculture (Wales) Bill.

Meanwhile Food Cardiff, through the [\*Courgette Pilot\*](#), provided the mechanism to investigate the development of local agroecological supply chains for veg into schools, linking in with our Peas Please work and Food and Fun, a programme that Food Cardiff pioneered with Cardiff Council and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board in 2015.



## Building a Good Food Movement: An overview

Moving forward, we will not only be looking at extending this work through Bwyd Sir Gâr Food and Monmouthshire Food Partnership, we also have the opportunity to explore how climate and nature friendly food can be affordable and accessible to all through a new programme of work, [Bridging the Gap](#), where we have joined forces with Sustain, Growing Communities, Alexandra Rose Charity (ARC) and Nourish Northern Ireland to bring together local organisations and trading enterprises.

It's inspiring to see how the Sustainable Food Partnerships in Wales are leveraging funding to develop their strategies and plans to further build capacity. This is especially true across the Gwent footprint where Sustainable Food Partnerships (Monmouthshire, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent) are working at a regional level on Shared Prosperity, building on their successful [Food for Growth](#) pilot. Carmarthenshire has launched a consultation on its very comprehensive [Food Strategy](#) which accompanies a bid into Shared Prosperity, while both Bwyd Sir Gâr Food and North Powys Food

Partnership are leveraging resources from a variety of places. The importance of food partnerships is being increasingly recognised by Health Boards and Local Authorities too. Evidence of Food Partnerships becoming embedded in local structures and plans can be seen through incorporation in Wellbeing Plans; for example in [Cardiff](#), The Vale of Glamorgan, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent; through local authorities' corporate plans such as [One Planet Cardiff](#), RCT's Tackling Climate Change strategy and Monmouthshire County Council's strategic Communities and Corporate Plan, where the partnership has also been adopted as a strategic delivery partner by Monmouthshire Programme Board, the Public Service Board's local delivery group.





## Building a Good Food Movement: An overview

Within Public Health plans, we are seeing cross fertilisation of ideas and resources across the Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales systems work. For example, in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, through the contribution of Food Cardiff and Food Vale to Move More Eat Well, and in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board where the Public Health Team has supported three of the five Local Authority Areas with their successful applications to become Sustainable Food Places to date.

In North Wales, where Food Partnerships work is newly unfolding, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's Public Health and Dietetic team have been key in supporting the establishment of new partnerships under the Welsh Government funding supported also by [Ambition North Wales](#).

Over the next 12 months we will be further deepening our work on developing cross sector food partnerships and the infrastructure needed to support them, both through our Sustainable Food Places work but also through wider food partnership development in conjunction with the Welsh Government. This will continue to form the foundation of our good movement work whilst we continue to add value and strengthen this capital through our other programmatic work such as Peas Please.

**In the pages that follow, you'll be able to read more information on the programmes that Food Sense Wales has delivered or supported during the period May 2022 – May 2023.**



### Definition of Agroecology – a term you'll see appearing throughout this report

Agroecology is the use of principles in farming practices that ensure a balance between plants, animals, people and their environment. Agroecological farming practices aim to work with wildlife, mitigate climate change and give power to local growers and communities to create systems best suited to their needs. Its objectives are consistent with a Sustainable Farming Future in Wales.

The Landworkers' Alliance, Sustainable Food Places, Food Sense Wales along with other members of Food Policy Alliance Cymru, including WWF Cymru, advocate agroecological farming as a way forward for sustainable food and farming in Wales.

# Programmes we deliver and support

## Sustainable Food Places

A partnership programme led by the Soil Association, Food Matters and Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming. It is funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The National Lottery Community Fund.



**Sustainable Food Places** is one of the UK's fastest-growing social movements. Its network brings together pioneering food partnerships from towns, cities, boroughs, districts and counties across the UK that are driving innovation and best practice on all aspects of healthy and sustainable food.

Food Sense Wales is Sustainable Food Place's national partner in Wales and has an ambition to see a food partnership in every local authority in Wales, creating a network that would form the foundation for developing the vision, infrastructure and action needed to make Wales' food system fit for Future Generations.

Food Sense Wales is supporting Wales' nine current members – [Food Cardiff](#), [Food Vale](#), the [Monmouthshire Food Partnership](#), [RCT Food](#), [Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership](#), [North Powys Food Partnership](#), [Bwyd Sir Gâr Food](#) in Carmarthenshire, [Bwyd Abertawe](#) in Swansea and the [Torfaen Food Partnership](#). Food Sense Wales encourages areas and communities across Wales to join in and to help lead the way in establishing and growing place-based infrastructure, contributing to the development of a 'good food movement' and wider community food strategies that will benefit the health, economy, sustainability and social prosperity of communities across Wales.



## Sustainable Food Places

Some of the programme's key achievements to date include:

- Food Sense Wales is continuing to support the on-going development and growth of 9 Sustainable Food Places members in Wales. In April 2023, we welcomed two new members to the Wales network – Bwyd Abertawe in Swansea and the Torfaen Food Partnership – approaching half of all local authority areas in Wales
- Prior to becoming members of Sustainable Food Places (SFP), Bwyd Abertawe were a recipient of a SFP Development Grant, supporting person and delivery time to do the groundwork in preparation for a membership application
- In June 2022, Food Vale received an SFP Bronze Award, becoming the second place in Wales to receive the accolade
- Food Sense Wales is supporting further food partnership development in Wales which has been accelerated by the Welsh Government Sustainable Food Partnership Funding, awarded to all 22 local authority areas in December 2022
- In March 2023, Food Sense Wales delivered an in-person workshop for the Wales Sustainable Food Places Coordinators and recipients of the recent Welsh Government partnership funding. The focus was on knowledge sharing and best practice, as well as developing cross sector relationships across the nation
- Food Sense Wales supports Wales' coordinator network in various ways which includes an invitation to join a Community of Practice facilitated by Welsh Government; through the facilitation of Peer to Peer exchange; organising regular meet-ups to share best practice and offering ongoing support throughout the year.
- In June 2022, Food Sense Wales produced a video explainer on Sustainable Food Places. Take a look [here](#).



- In July 2022, Food Sense Wales together with co-ordinators from three of Wales' SFPs visited Westminster for the SFP Day of Action. Katie Palmer gave a presentation at the event which was an opportunity to put the amazing work of food partnerships on the radar of local MPs, to celebrate the announcement that Welsh Government would be investing in cross-sector Food Partnerships and to put out a call for: "one food bill for every nation, one food plan and partnership in every local area." Read more [here](#).
- Food Cardiff, a pioneer of Sustainable Food Places, is now working towards attaining a [Gold Award](#). Food Cardiff is already the only Silver Award recipient in Wales.

*"Food Sense Wales has proven to be an essential partner for the Sustainable Food places Programme to adapt, and gain recognition, of its unique food system change model. Food Sense Wales has been instrumental in the remarkable success of local and national food policy change across the nation."*

**Leon Ballin, Programme Manager, Sustainable Food Places**




# Sustainable Food Places

Click on each one to find out more

<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">Food Cardiff</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Cardiff and Vale University Health Board</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Cardiff Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Food Cardiff believes that the food we eat has a huge impact on life in Cardiff – not just on people’s health, but on communities and businesses, individual farmers, and the environment too.</p> <p>Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b></p> <p>Silver</p> 
<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">Food Vale</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Cardiff and Vale University Health Board</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Vale of Glamorgan Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Food Vale is a partnership of dedicated individuals, community groups, organisations and businesses working together to build a thriving, healthy and sustainable food system in the Vale.</p> <p>Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b></p> <p>Bronze</p> 
<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">Monmouthshire Food Partnership</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Monmouthshire County Council</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Monmouthshire County Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Monmouthshire Food Partnership is a county-wide collaboration of people and organisations from the community, third, public, and private sectors who are committed to taking positive action towards a sustainable food system within the county and beyond. Monmouthshire Food Partnership aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• connect people, projects and partners in the development of a sustainable local food system</li><li>• take collective action to shape the local food system</li><li>• be a collective voice for food that positively shapes policy and shares best practice</li></ul> <p>Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b></p> <p>Member</p> 

# Sustainable Food Places

Click on each one to find out more

<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">RCT Food</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>RCT Food is a new food partnership hosted by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.</p> <p>Its vision is that all people living, working in or visiting Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) have access to healthy, tasty, affordable food that's good for the environment and for the local economy.</p> <p>Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b> Member</p> 
<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Tai Calon Community Housing</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership was established in May 2021 with the aim to set in motion an ambitious strategy that addresses the challenges and opportunities within Blaenau Gwent's food system.</p> <p>The partnership plays a pivotal role in coordinating local action on issues such as food access, the environment and the development of a 'Good Food Movement.'</p> <p>Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b> Member</p> 
<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">North Powys Food Partnership</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Cultivate</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Powys County Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>The North Powys Food Partnership provides a platform for everyone to become involved in, or increase their participation in, creating a sustainable food movement across North Powys</p> <p>Its current partnership members are: Powys County Council, Powys Teaching Health Board, Neath Port Talbot Group of Colleges and Cultivate. They will be exploring ways of adding to and extending the partnership over the coming 12 months.</p> <p>Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b> Member</p> 

# Sustainable Food Places

Click on each one to find out more

<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">Bwyd Sir Gâr Food</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> <a href="#">Social Farms and Gardens</a></p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Carmarthenshire County Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Empowering communities through a co-productive approach, Bwyd Sir Gâr Food’s vision is to enable social, cultural, environmental, and economic regeneration.</p> <p>The partnership is supported by Carmarthenshire County Council, Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services, Hywel Dda Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Public Health Wales, Carmarthenshire Public Services Board and Carmarthenshire Food Network (CFN). Read more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b> Member</p> 
<p><b>Food Partnership</b> Torfaen Food Partnership</p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> Torfaen County Borough Council</p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Since its launch in January 2022, Torfaen has successfully developed a cross sector Food Partnership, bringing together a group of like-minded individuals who are seeking food parity across the borough and wider Gwent. Their vision is to develop a sustainable and fair food system that provides affordable and healthy food for all.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b> New Member in 2023</p> 
<p><b>Food Partnership</b> <a href="#">Bwyd Abertawe</a></p> <p><b>Host Organisation</b> The Environment Centre, Swansea</p> <p><b>Local Authority Area</b> Swansea Council</p>	<p><b>More Information</b></p> <p>Bwyd Abertawe is a network of food system stakeholders within the City and County of Swansea, including everyone who is interested in sustainable food for Swansea. They support access to healthy, affordable and local food for all, for the Wellbeing of People and Planet.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Food Places Status</b> New Member in 2023</p> 

# Food Partnerships

Funded by Welsh Government and supported by Food Sense Wales

In June 2022, [Welsh Government committed to funding cross-sector food partnerships in Wales](#) as part of a series of intervention packages to help alleviate poverty.

The announcement was made by Jane Hutt, Minister for Social Justice, during a Cost of Living Summit. This funding commitment is now being realised with £2.5 million allocated to local authorities across Wales to support or strengthen the development of cross-sector food partnerships – building resilience in local food networks through the coordination of on the ground, food-related activity and helping to tackle the root-causes of food poverty.

**Food Sense Wales** has been key in establishing and nurturing food partnerships as part of its work leading on the Sustainable Food Places network in Wales. We are really excited to be supporting the Welsh Government and all the partners involved (Health Boards and Local Authorities as well as other dedicated stakeholders such as voluntary organisations, charities, food business, retailers, wholesalers, growers and farmers) as the funding is

invested in local systems and projects. Recognition of the importance of place-based approaches and the way in which local cross-sector food partnerships can support communities to respond to the cost of living crisis whilst also working to develop more resilient local food economies, has already been recognised in the Senedd as an example in evidence put forward in response to draft Food (Wales) Bill by the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd.

We've also been highlighting the impact and power of food partnerships in the media. In June 2022, Food Sense Wales worked with the production team working on BBC Radio Wales' [Country Focus series](#) to produce a 30 minute programme on Sustainable Food Places in Wales. The programme was first aired on June 19th and featured an overview of Sustainable Food Places as well as visits to three food partnerships – Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership, Bwyd Sir Gâr Food and Food Cardiff. During the same month, Vishvapani, a Cardiff-based writer and teacher of Buddhism, was inspired to talk about systems thinking on BBC Radio 4's [Thought for the Day](#) following some work with Food Sense Wales.

*“As someone about to start the work building a local cross sector food partnership, the work ahead, whilst exciting, was somewhat intimidating. The networking event in Wrexham organised by the awesome team at Food Sense Wales gave me the opportunity to meet and interact with counterparts from around the country who have already taken those initial steps. They were generous with their sharing of the pitfalls experienced so far, stories of their successes and offers of support going forward. It provided the opportunity to form closer bonds to geographically close organisations with whom I can envisage, working much closer as we move forward with the work. A valuable experience that offered a wealth of understanding, knowledge and valuable wisdom that will help pave the road towards the goal and make the ride smoother along the way. The event left me feeling a part of a welcoming and nurturing movement. I was enthused and felt better equipped to tackle the tasks ahead. Huge thanks to the organising team and the participants who made the whole experience so worthwhile.”*

**Gary Thomas, Sustainable Food Coordinator, GAVO, Newport.**

## Food Partnerships

### CASE STUDY:

#### Good Food Leaders gather in Wrexham

Food Sense Wales recently organised two days of training, networking and knowledge sharing in Wrexham for individuals and organisations involved with different aspects of food citizenship and leadership in Wales.

This second Wales-wide 'Good Food Gathering' brought together Sustainable Food Places coordinators along with Food Partnership leaders and the Wales My Food Community cohort to exchange ideas and experiences as well as to learn more about Wales' food policy landscape.

The first day of the gathering focused on the political context in Wales with Katie Palmer from Food Sense Wales and Andrew Tuddenham from the Soil Association delivering a session on political structures, food policy context and advocacy in Wales.

There was also an introduction to the work of Food Sense Wales, information on the Sustainable



Food Places network as well advice and guidance for those working on the development of [Welsh Government funded food partnerships](#).

The event was aimed at experienced food leaders as well as those new to food partnership working in Wales and gave an overview of the current community food landscape.

Read more [here](#).





# Food Cardiff

Founding member of the Sustainable Food Places Network sitting within Food Sense Wales' portfolio of programmes



Food Cardiff believes that the food we eat has a huge impact on life in Cardiff – not just on people's health, but on communities and businesses, individual farmers and growers, and the environment too.

Good food creates strong, healthy, resilient communities. It acts as a hub for connecting people and projects working to promote healthy, sustainable and ethical food; acts as a voice for wider change as well as being the catalyst for changing the local food system in Cardiff.

Food Cardiff now comprises 245 individuals across 115 organisations and has a [strategy board](#) that includes a range of members, including Cardiff Council, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board, Cardiff University, Cardiff Farmers Markets, Action in Caerau and Ely (ACE) as well as many others. Through this network of dedicated partners, Cardiff is driving change at a city level and is working to tackle some of today's biggest social, economic and environmental issues.

2022-23 saw Cardiff step up its ambitions, aiming to become the first place in Wales to achieve the prestigious Gold Sustainable Food Places Award by 2025. Food Cardiff has ensured this ambition is supported by key policies and institutions, including in [Cardiff's 23-28 Draft Well-being Plan](#) and in the [Cardiff Council Corporate Plan 23-26](#). Food Cardiff has also presented its work nationally to Welsh and UK Governments, including taking part in the SFP Day of Action in Westminster in July 2022; presenting at the Wales Co-operative Party conference and Food in Communities Conference as well as taking part in webinars to as part of the Welsh Government's food partnership roll out.

## Good Food Movement

Food Cardiff's '[Make a Pledge](#)' campaign continues to inspire action from individuals, businesses and organisations. Over 240 pledges have been made and since 1st May 2022 the website has had over 20,000 page views.

## ACTIONS TAKEN SO FAR

43

I will connect with my community through food

63

I will cook and eat for better health

79

I will cook and eat to protect the environment

25

I will help Cardiff's Good Food Movement to grow

29

I will support local food businesses

In Autumn/Winter 2022, Food Cardiff ran a targeted business campaign, with the help of funding from For Cardiff's City Ambition Fund. A [new toolkit](#) was developed, demonstrating how city centre businesses of all sizes and from all sectors can get involved. Businesses were encouraged to pledge actions that contribute towards a thriving local food economy, defined as one in which everyone has access to food that is both healthy, and environmentally sustainable. Food Cardiff also created [two videos](#) and two case studies highlighting food and non-food businesses who are taking action.

Food Cardiff co-ordinated the 3rd Annual [Good Food Cardiff Autumn Festival](#) from 10th September – 17th October. The festival launched

at [Amgueddfa Cymru Food Festival](#) at St Fagans National Museum of History on the weekend of 10-11 September. Food Cardiff partnered with the festival to host a Good Food Cardiff Zone with a programme of workshops and demonstrations, showcasing the work of Food Cardiff members including bakers, community chefs, food growers, dietitians, volunteers and more. In response to the cost of living crisis, all sessions focused on accessing healthy and nutritious food and Food Cardiff also sourced funding to provide transport for marginalised groups.

Food Cardiff also re-launched its full in-person networking gatherings in March 2023.

Read about the event [here](#).



## Food Cardiff

### Peri-Urban Farming

The Fringe Farming programme, led by Sustain, is a collaboration with partners across the UK to understand barriers, identify opportunities and local actions, and develop national policy to enable agroecological farming at the edge of cities as part of a green economic recovery.

In 2022, Cardiff joined the programme to undertake action planning to highlight opportunities, barriers, and the resources that might be required for next steps.

In October 2022, [Food Cardiff worked with Landworkers Alliance Cymru](#) to host a discussion about the opportunities for Welsh edible horticulture and mixed farming, the barriers to expansion and policy changes needed. The event included presentations from innovative farmers about the positive work they are doing producing

food for local communities through ecologically sustainable methods; the challenges they face, and the support needed for the sector to thrive. Around 25 people attended including Jenny Rathbone MS, Welsh Government officials, farmers and industry representatives.

In November, Food Cardiff followed this up with a regional workshop and [published a detailed report](#) summarising the barriers, opportunities and potential actions which the 22 stakeholders identified during the workshop.

Food Cardiff was also involved in the [courgette pilot](#) that culminated in the publication of a report published by Food Sense Wales. This action research study is now evolving with the second phase being undertaken during the Summer of 2023. Food Cardiff is delighted to be involved again and is pleased to be continuing with the work that started last year.



## Food Cardiff

### Community Food Retail Network

Food Cardiff's Community Food Retail Network is a thriving network of food co-ops, pantries, community fridges, breakfast clubs and other alternative food provision. Food Cardiff has hosted 4 network gatherings and organised a field trip to London for 10 network members in partnership with colleagues at Sustain. As a result of these, at least one network member is setting up a new food co-op and other members are supporting each other (for example one pantry is now working with the dietetics team).

Food Cardiff instigated a project called Plot to Pantry which aimed to build resilience in projects by creating local supply chains. The project was delivered by Edible Cardiff, with support from Food Cardiff.

Since April 2022:

- An electric van has been ordered by Grow Cardiff, which will be available for all members of the Edible Cardiff network and Community Food Retail Network to book to support the transport of food across the city. This should result in an additional 500kg of veg being distributed locally.
- £520 worth of plug plants were grown by the local council nursery to distribute to 4 local growers, with the provision approximately 30% of the resulting produce would be donated to community retail projects.
- £2250 was awarded as small grants to community growing groups and allotments for capital items that would increase food production (e.g. polytunnels, automated watering systems, composting systems).



*"We love the Plot to Pantry project, we really appreciate the extra veg and it always flies off the table! We received a tray full of pak choi and they disappeared faster than you can say pak choi! We have regulars who love spinach and were excited to receive purple spinach."*

**Recipient of Plot to Pantry produce**

## Food Cardiff



### City-wide Impact

In May 2022 Food Cardiff commissioned Cardiff Research Centre to re-run a city-wide survey to compare citizen's experiences with food from 2021 to 2022. Over 1,200 people responded and some of the key results include:

- Awareness of Food Cardiff has increased by nine percentage points since the previous survey (26.3% and 17.3% respectively).
- Over a third (36.6%) of respondents felt there was a movement for good food in Cardiff (similar to last year which was 36.4%).
- There has been a large increase in people reporting 'Shopping at a farmers market' (+31.0

percentage points), whilst the proportion attending a 'Street food event' has risen by 26.0 percentage points; perhaps reflecting the lifting of lockdown restrictions. Those involved in 'Food growing at home' has risen by 12.4 percentage points.

- The only activity to have seen a decline was 'Informal volunteering around food' (-2.5 percentage points).
- Only 7.9% of respondents recognised the #GoodFoodCardiff 'Make a pledge' campaign, but about 60% of those who did had acted as a result.

You can read more about Food Cardiff and its work by visiting [www.foodcardiff.com](http://www.foodcardiff.com)

*"...What's happening in food in Cardiff isn't a coincidence, or the result of just one or two well-minded business owners. It's a result of long-term funding and hard work by a small team working at Food Sense Wales and the Sustainable Food Places scheme, Food Cardiff, where pioneering food partnerships have helped combine hyper-local interest in food with national lobbying."*

**Nina Pullman, Wicked Leeks**

## Food Cardiff



### CASE STUDY:

#### City centre businesses urged to take action to help Cardiff become one of the UK's most sustainable food cities

City centre businesses are being urged to take action to help Cardiff become one of the UK's most sustainable food places by 2024.

Last year, Cardiff was awarded **Silver Sustainable Food Places** status – becoming the first place in Wales (and one of only six places in the UK) to achieve the prestigious accolade; the scheme is based on bronze, silver and gold achievements across six key sustainable food issues.

Now, independent businesses, third-sector organisations, and major institutions in the city

centre are being urged to join in, and help Cardiff achieve Gold Sustainable Food Places status by the year 2024.

The campaign is being coordinated by **Food Cardiff**, the city's rapidly growing food partnership which has evolved into a dynamic and inclusive city-wide network.

A new toolkit demonstrating how city centre businesses of all sizes and from all sectors can get involved has been created with the help of funding from For Cardiff's City Ambition Fund.

Continue reading this case study [here](#).

# Peas Please

UK partnership led by the Food Foundation and funded through the National Lottery Community Fund



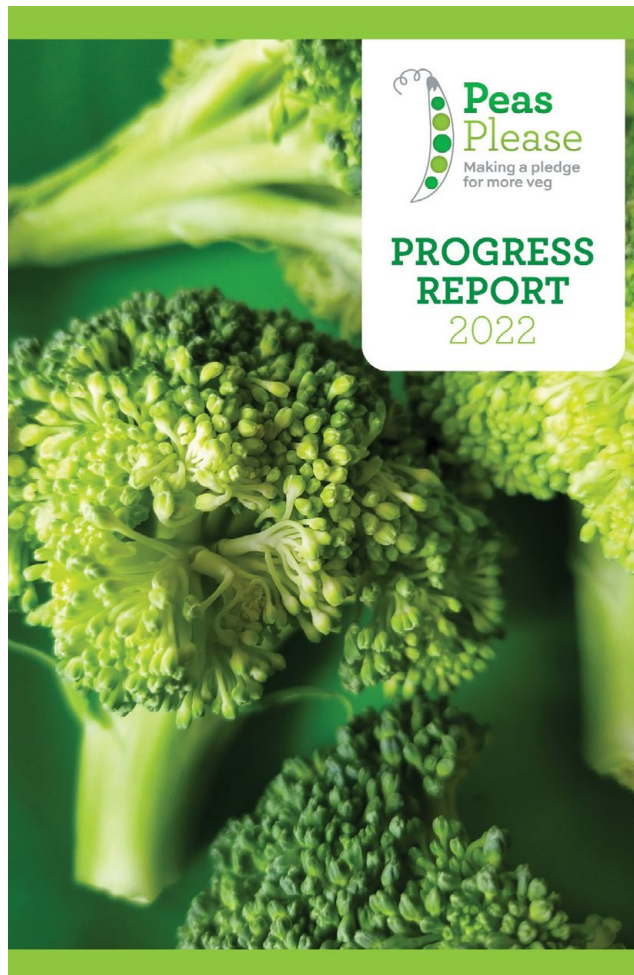
**Peas Please** is a UK-wide initiative that has a very clear mission: to make it easier for everyone in the UK to eat more veg. Food Sense Wales leads on the Peas Please work in Wales and brings together farmers, retailers, and restaurant chains, caterers, processors and government departments with a common goal of making it easier for everyone to eat veg. Other UK project partners involved in this initiative are [The Food Foundation](#), [Nourish Scotland](#), [Food NI](#) and [Nourish NI](#).

A ground-breaking programme focused specifically on veg, Peas Please aims to secure commitments from industry and government to improve the availability, acceptability (including convenience), affordability, and quality of the vegetable offer in shops, schools, restaurants and beyond, and in turn stimulate increased vegetable consumption among the UK public, particularly children and those on a low income.

More than 100 organisations have pledged to play their part to help everyone in the UK eat an extra portion of veg a day. These pledges are known as [Veg Pledges](#) and in Wales, we are currently managing 8 national pledgers.

Food Sense Wales has also been managing a group of 12 actively engaged Veg Advocates who are working as individual agents of change in their local communities and helping to drive the enormous changes needed in our quest to get everyone eating more veg.

Peas Please launched in 2017 and since then, 771 million extra portions of vegetables have been sold. Even though this is an amazing achievement, there was a significantly smaller increase in 2022 than in



previous years. This was not unexpected against a backdrop of rising food prices, challenges with supply chains and product availability, rising business costs and the cost of living crisis. The report also showed a widening nutrition gulf between rich and poor. Among those earning less than £10,000 the proportion of vegetables in the shopping basket fell in the past year while for those earning over £70,000 it remained the same despite rising prices. Other data in the report show people are buying lower volumes of food overall as the cost-of-living crisis deepens.

## Peas Please

However, in spite of the challenges, we continue to highlight and celebrate efforts by committed businesses, organisations and groups to combat these trends with examples of 'veg innovation' from both pledgers and Veg Advocates.

Here are some of the project's recent highlights:



- In May 2022, the Food and Fun programme – a Welsh Government initiative that's co-ordinated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) – won the Good Society award at the 2022 Peas Please Prizes
- During 2022, Peas Please supported the TGrains Accessible Veg Research Project in Wales, exploring the impact of CSA memberships to food-insecure households, with the following objectives:
  - ◊ Identify barriers to CSA memberships and participation.
  - ◊ Measure the impact of CSA membership on food-insecure households
  - ◊ Explore means for CSAs to implement solidarity models to make vegetable bags accessible for all.
- Accessible Veg worked with 4 CSA farms who expressed an interest in exploring solidarity models for making their vegetables accessible to food-insecure households. These farms were:
  - ◊ Ash and Elm Horticulture, Llanidloes
  - ◊ Glasbren CSA, Bancyfelin, Carmarthen
  - ◊ Henbant CSA, Clynnogfawr, Caernarfon
  - ◊ Slade Farm Organics, St Brides Major
- Farm partners were encouraged to partner with local food charities to help support their work with food-insecure households. Thirty-eight households received a weekly veg bag for a period of 2-4 months. The research team interviewed participants and collected 3-day food diaries at the project start and prior to the end of the harvest season. Following the harvest period, the research team held a workshop for all four farm partners and 2 charity partners, to share project learnings with each other. You can watch an evaluation video [here](#) that shares the success of CSA solidarity models and the benefits of making healthy and sustainable veg accessible to all in the community.
- In January 2022, Food Sense Wales published the findings of an action research project that was partly funded by Peas Please, and involving many of our peas please pledgers, looking at Welsh Veg for Primary Schools in Wales. Following the success of this project – or the courgette pilot as it's often referred to – Food Sense Wales received funding from the Foundational Economy team of Welsh Government to further expand the pilot in 2023 to include a range of veg, a range of areas, more schools, activities and producer visits.
- All Veg Advocates were encouraged to apply for small grants that would benefit their local communities. 11 of our Veg Advocates were successful with 10 events being organised that were attended by 234 people.



## Peas Please

- A 3-year evaluation study conducted by the Centre for Food Policy at City, University of London, in collaboration with the Food Foundation and Peas Please, has been documenting the impact of Pease Please engagement activities. As part of the UK-wide evaluation, two Veg Advocates in Wales have been documenting the work being done in Wales and working with the Peas Please on the study.
- In March 2023, Veg Advocates and project implementers from across Wales attended a focus group as part of the evaluation study, which included a team-building Kimchi cookery class.



### SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLEDGERS



Since Peas Please was launched in 2017 >>

**771**  
MILLION

cumulative additional portions of veg sold or served



THIS YEAR

**16** pledgers have met their commitments

**59** Veg Advocate led activities have been carried out



**605,331** people have been reached through the VEG CITIES campaign

### VEGPOWER

**40** MILLION people have been reached every year since 2019 by Veg Power



**3,845**

schools took part in Veg Power's schools' programme



*"Hopefully this (the Veg advocate programme) is something that will go on and doesn't just come to an end... there is a need for this kind of thing to carry on... it needs to be increased!"* Veg Advocate, Wales

*"I feel quite passionate about it (role as a Veg Advocate). It's changed a lot of my personal life in a very positive way."* Veg Advocate, Wales

## CASE STUDY: Courgette Pilot: Welsh Veg for Primary Schools in Wales

School meals represent an opportunity for a secure market for agroecological veg producers and could be used as a key mechanism for investment in vegetable supply chains in Wales, according to findings published in an [evaluation report of a pilot project](#) commissioned by Food Sense Wales.

The report notes that subsequent investment would have the knock-on effect of developing a regionalised and resilient network of food producers that would be able to supply veg into the heart of their communities. In order to achieve this, the report recommends the need for a sustainable supply chain investment scheme that specifically targets the gap between cheapest available veg and sustainably produced Welsh veg.

The report also concludes that if the Welsh Government committed to every primary school meal containing 2 portions of veg next school year then they would have to supply 5331 tonnes of veg into schools. If this was all from agroecologically

produced Welsh veg then this would generate a guaranteed market for agroecological producers in Wales of around £15m. This would involve doubling the area growing field veg in Wales and would support nearly 100 businesses employing nearly 1000 people. It would also have the knock-on effect of developing a regionalised and resilient network of food producers able to supply veg into the heart of their communities.



These are some of the key findings included in the Agroecological Welsh Veg for Welsh Primary Schools evaluation report written by Dr Amber Wheeler and commissioned by Food Sense Wales. It's an evaluation of a recent pilot project that saw courgettes from Blas Gwent, a Wales-based agroecological grower being delivered to schools in Cardiff via Wales-based wholesaler, Castell Howell with the support of the Sustainable Food Partnership, Food Cardiff.

You can read the press release [here](#) and read the report in full [here](#).

# Food for Life Get Togethers

Led by the Soil Association and funded through the National Lottery Community Fund



[Food for Life Get Togethers](#) (FFLGT) is a community focused programme connecting people of all ages and backgrounds through growing, cooking and sharing good food. It is a 4-year National Lottery Community Fund programme that started in June 2019 and is led by the Soil Association Food for Life charity and delivered in Wales through Food Sense Wales.

Food for Life Get Togethers supports community organisers through three main delivery streams; My Food Community, Campaigns and Networking, running good food activities, providing resources, online training and small grants.

Since its inception, Food for Life Get Togethers in Wales has actively engaged with both diverse and disadvantaged communities, with 38.7% of groups engaged with the programme in Wales located in the nation's 10, 20 and 30% least deprived areas.

## My Food Community

[My Food Community](#) is a leadership programme for good food champions to learn, connect and take action. It's a programme of activities delivered by experts and project partners, bringing together people who champion good food – food that is good for climate, nature and health.



Chris Nottingham, co-ordinator of the Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership and Louise Denham, co-ordinator of Food Vale receiving their certificates for completing My Food Community

## Food for Life Get Togethers

Building on the success of the first My Food Community programme (Sept 2021 – June 2022), version 2 of the pilot (September 2022 – March 2023) aimed to scale up recruitment and delivery

as well as support an extensive evaluation by the University of the West of England, in the form of reporting, case studies and promotional films to convey the success and impact of the programme.

### My Food Community Version 2 in numbers:

**76**

new members recruited,  
13 from Wales



**50%**

from **10–30%** most  
deprived communities

**4**

Leadership “masterclasses”  
delivered by programme  
partner Koreo

**4**

Action Learning  
Sets delivered

**5**

Learning & Inspiration  
sessions delivered



**28**

Action Learning  
Grants awarded,  
4 in Wales



**2**

partnership sessions delivered  
by Food Ethics Council and  
Eden Project Community

*“I am a bit surprised about how much impact the leadership skills aspects of the My Food Community participation has affected me. I have loads more experience, better networks and more respect now so I can be an active leader at many levels including Welsh politics. I am really hoping that I can contribute to Cardiff’s campaign to get a gold award for our capital city in the Sustainable Food Places award scheme.”*

Member of the first My Food Community cohort in Wales.

# What are you growing this **Plant and Share** month?



### Key Campaigns

#### Cook and Share / Plant and Share

Cook and Share Month 2022 started on World Food Day on 16th October and ran until 18th November. It celebrated the work of volunteers, schools, and communities, encouraging relationship building and connection through cooking and sharing good food. Across the UK, during the 2022 campaign 310 events took place; 600 new subscribers were added to the mailing list; 29,000 resources were downloaded and 4,974 individuals participated.

[Plant and Share Month 2023](#) launched on Earth Day on 22nd April, running until Word Bee Day on 20th May. Each of the 4 weeks had a different theme, with corresponding bilingual resources encouraging communities to engage in growing and nature activities with their communities. These themes included Growing for All, Growing for Joy, Growing to Eat and Growing for Nature.

Due to the success of the previous campaigns, Plant and Share has been adopted as a core campaign for the Soil Association further establishing the legacy of the Get Togethers programme.



# Food for Life Get Togethers

## Networks

As a way to further develop the network and capacity building by FFLGT, all existing online network spaces linked to the programme were migrated onto a core digital platform. Circle is a platform that brings together engaging discussions, members, live streams, chat, and events all in one place under the Get Togethers brand. The platform was piloted in September 2022 with dedicated space given to My Food Community members from both cohort 1 and cohort 2, to maintain their connection once they had completed the programme. Spaces on the platform have subsequently been given to the 14 Locally Commissioned Partners and the wider Get Together networks.

Rachael Walsh from Groundworks Wales reported that engaging with other partners on the platform had helped raise her awareness of and make contact with others who were doing a similar kind of project in other areas of the country has become a source of ideas, inspiration and mutual support.

*"It's become a mini network in its own right."*

**Rachel Walsh, Groundworks Wales**

Local Commission Partners have been delivering both in person and online events to support both the FFLGT campaigns and network development. As an example, in Autumn 2022 Groundworks Wales co-facilitated a session on turning Seasonal gluts into jams and chutneys that focussed on reducing food waste and providing store cupboard ingredients that can be used through the winter months.

## Other highlights from Food For Life Get Togethers

With support from FFLGT, Food Sense Wales brought together close to 100 partners and network members for a 2 day [Food in Communities](#) event in July 2022. The event offered an opportunity to discuss place-based approaches; community resilience and food leadership and brought together food leaders from across Wales to connect with each other, to share experiences, and inspire change. The conference included speakers and contributions from across the FFLGT network, including core staff, My Food Community cohort and programme partners.

Following the completion of the My Food Community Leadership programme, a participant from cohort 1 agreed to speak on a panel at Wales Real Food and Farming Conference specifically about the benefits of My Food Community and community leadership.

With FFLGT in the final stage of programme delivery, in March 2023 events were held across the nations, bringing together partners, networks and My Food Community cohorts to celebrate the achievements of the programme, discuss legacy ideas for future delivery and relationship building. The Wales event was held at Ty Pawb in Wrexham, gathering 27 food leaders for two days of workshops and networking. This included a Wales Policy workshop delivered by Food Sense Wales and the Head of Policy in Wales from the Soil Association. You may have already read about this in the Good Food leaders case study earlier. Click [here](#) to read again.

## CASE STUDY: My Food Community: My Story

Louise Denham is the Coordinator of Food Vale, a local food partnership in the Vale of Glamorgan, that's part of the Sustainable Food Places network.

As a partnership of dedicated individuals, community groups, organisations and businesses, Food Vale is working to build a thriving, healthy and sustainable food system in the Local Authority Area. Louise Denham's work co-ordinating this activity is integral to the partnership's success and last year, the Vale of Glamorgan was awarded Bronze Sustainable Food Places Status, a prestigious accolade that recognises pioneering work promoting healthy and sustainable food.

An experienced coordinator, facilitator and convenor, Louise was already an active food leader, but starting her role with Food Vale during the pandemic meant that connecting with others was more challenging than she'd anticipated. When the opportunity came about to take part in My Food Community, a food leadership programme led by Food For Life Get Togethers, Louise jumped at the chance to learn; to build new networks and to further develop her skills.

Continue reading this case study [here](#).



# Bridging the Gap

In June 2022, the National Lottery Community Fund awarded Sustain and partners from across the UK, including Food Sense Wales, an initial three-year grant of around £1.5m to explore how climate and nature friendly food can be affordable and accessible to all, under the new Bridging the Gap programme.

Sustain, Growing Communities and Alexandra Rose Charity (ARC), is working together with Food Sense Wales and Nourish Northern Ireland to bring together local organisations and trading enterprises. Together, we will run pilots in all UK nations to overcome pricing and other barriers, making climate and nature friendly foods available to people on lower incomes.

The Bridging the Gap programme will learn from and build on locally based small-scale initiatives with promising solutions and aims to build evidence and momentum behind these ideas, so that credible models can be backed by funders and policy makers, with the intention of mainstreaming viable models.

The programme is particularly welcome at a time when we have seen over 300 areas declare a climate and nature emergency, coupled with a

dramatic increase in emergency food bank use. The cost of living crisis is adding additional pressure to low-income households, who, according to the Food Foundation, often have to spend 40% of their income on food if they want to meet healthy eating recommendations. This is compared to just 7% of disposable income for the richest fifth of the population. This not only exacerbates health inequalities, but also makes many foods produced in ways that we need to encourage, such as sustainably grown fruit and veg, out of reach of those on lower income.

The programme will operate pilot projects in a range of locations across the UK, and will use the results to demonstrate what works to policy makers. Importantly, the pilots will be co-produced with the people who will benefit from them and we are currently progressing ideas in two communities in Wales, one in urban south Wales and the other in rural north Wales.





# Veg Power

**VEGPOWER**



**Veg Power**'s main aim is to increase veg consumption across the UK – an initiative that was founded in 2018 having developed from the work of Peas Please. Food Sense Wales works closely with Veg Power to support its activity in Wales and Katie Palmer, Programme Manager, is also a member of the board.

Currently in the UK, 80% of our children are not eating enough vegetables, with a third eating less than one portion a day and only a third of adults achieving the 5-a-day target. Veg Power works in close partnership with Peas Please and aims to use advertising and marketing to increase consumer demand and perceived value of vegetables.

[Eat Them To Defeat Them](#) is a campaign from Veg Power. Its approach to inspire kids to eat more veg, combines the power of advertising with a schools' programme. It brings together a huge alliance including TV advertising, celebrities, supermarkets, chefs, schools, communities and families.

## In partnership with ITV, Eat Them to Defeat Them 2023:

- Ran from February to April 2023
- Supported by a £3.5m advertising campaign led by ITV, Channel 4 & Sky
- Schools programme went out to 2,358 primary and special schools including 638 in Wales thanks to the support of Welsh Government
- 628,000 children took part with activities in schools, tasting events and reward charts and sticker pack
- 57% of parents of children who participated in the schools' programme in 2022 said their children ate more vegetables. The 2023 results will be published in July 2023.

## Other UK-wide Veg Power campaigns include:

- Growing to love....tomatoes – a primary school tomato growing project encouraging kids to love tomatoes
- Kung Fu Panda: Lunch of Legends – a partnership with DreamWorks Animation to improve the quality of children's lunchboxes
- Simply Veg – to support parents & carers to navigate the cost of living crisis with veg-packed meals their families will love.

## UNDP Conscious Food Systems Alliance

**The Conscious Food Systems Alliance (CoFSA)**, is a movement of food, agriculture, and consciousness practitioners, convened by [UNDP](#), and united around a common goal: to support people from across food and agriculture systems to cultivate the inner capacities that activate systemic change and regeneration.

Food Sense Wales is honoured to be a member of this movement and is proud that Katie Palmer, Programme Manager at Food Sense Wales is an elected member of CoFSA'S Inner Council, a group chaired by Andrew Bovarnick, UNDP Global Head, Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems. The group defines and steers the implementation of CoFSA strategy as well as being responsible for decision-making on key aspects of the Alliance. Katie is one of only 12 food systems practitioners from across the globe sitting on the Inner Council and her presence will help influence positive transformational change within both a Wales and a global context.

Having also contributed to the development of the [CoFSA Manifesto](#), Katie is now working with Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Change Manager around developing a community of practice to support the growing food partnerships network in Wales. Part of the offer is guidance to build inner capacities linked to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act's ways of working and using these techniques with colleagues in the Welsh Government to approach areas of conflict within the food system to seek resolution.

In April 2023, Katie attended a CoFSA Strategic Retreat - an opportunity to dive into practical ways to collaborate and transform food systems through strengthening our connection to self, others, and nature. During the retreat members reflected on CoFSA's journey to date and planned its implementation across the globe.

Watch the [video](#) to find out more or click [here](#) to visit the website.



## CASE STUDY: Conscious Food Systems Alliance and COP27

During COP27, as part of a global parallel event organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Katie Palmer, Programme Manager at Food Sense Wales, joined a panel of experts to discuss 'Food for Climate: Activating Transformation from the Inside Out.'

CoFSA approaches food systems transformation by working with all relevant stakeholder groups across food systems, including consumers, companies, governments, development agencies, academia, global and local NGOs, local communities, and farmers and food producers. CoFSA believes that in order to transform food systems, we must work not only on policy, research and project implementation, but also on the inner drivers of individual, collective and institutional behaviours. We must reconnect with ourselves, each other and nature to activate the

transformative qualities and skills needed to support the transition to regenerative food systems.

During her presentation, Katie shared her reflections with colleagues across the world on being part of this global community of practice, and how an initial reluctance developed into her embracing a new approach. You can read more [here](#).



*"Those of us working to make the food system better are being constantly exposed to the devastation that poverty, climate change and nature loss are causing. It is difficult to escape and remain in a positive headspace and to keep pushing for solutions. This is just one reason why CoFSA is so important – to help practitioners navigate these challenges and remain in a positive problem solving space."*

**Katie Palmer, Food Sense Wales.**

# Food In Communities Conference

In July 2022, [Food Sense Wales](#) hosted a Food in Communities Conference at Yr Egin in Carmarthen. The event discussed place-based approaches; community resilience and food leadership and brought together food leaders from across Wales to connect with each other, to share experiences, and inspire change. The conference included keynote addresses, panel discussions and Q&A sessions to enable delegates to share best practice and inspire future collaboration, highlighting new opportunities for food leaders and partnerships across Wales.

You can access recordings of the sessions by visiting the [conference page on our website](#). And you can also [watch a video](#) from the conference that gives you an overview of the day.



*"...an amazing opportunity for us to come together and speak face to face with experts and organisations from across Wales to see what we can do to deliver on this agenda which is central to us, not only as a county council but for the public sector partnership across Carmarthenshire."*

**Cllr Darren Price, Leader, Carmarthenshire County Council**



# Policy and Advocacy work

Food Sense Wales takes a systems approach to food and farming, forging strong working relationships with public, private and civil society organisations. We advocate for positive changes that will help to improve people's health and social outcomes as well as benefiting the environment too.

There's a lot going on in terms of legislative activity linked to food. With implications of the Social Partnerships and Procurement Bill on food (which is currently post stage 4 in the legislative process), Welsh Government's Foundational Economy team has been working on a [Procurement tool kit](#) [Buying Food Fit for the Future \(adobe.com\)](#). We look forward to contributing to any statutory guidance relating to food moving forwards. This work also connects to the commitment from Welsh Government on the delivery of Universal Free School Meals for all primary school children where we have been supporting through the development of [local supply chain initiatives](#).

The Agriculture (Wales) Bill has entered the third stage and we are currently awaiting the co-design report following the consultation exercise on the Sustainable Farming Scheme. We are keen to see how the upstream and downstream farming connections can be facilitated through the scheme, for example through developing short agroecological supply chains and supporting small-

scale horticulture. Meanwhile we have contributed to the consultation on the Community Food Strategy, in particular advocating for support of cross sector food partnerships and the development of local food plans through Food Cardiff as a case study [Community Food Strategy | Business Wales - Food and drink \(gov.wales\)](#)

Above all, we have been advocating for a collective vision for our Food System in Wales. What do we want it to deliver for our communities and our landscape in Wales? This is why the successful ballot of Peter Fox MS's Food (Wales) Bill has been so instrumental in the last 12 months in raising the profile for why we need a coherent and collective vision for our Food System in Wales. Indeed in her departing media interviews as Future Generations Commissioner, Sophie Howe talked about how, if she had her time again, food would be one of her key focus areas. Food Sense Wales has already met with the new Commissioner, Derek Walker, for an introductory meeting on the food system in Wales.



## Policy and Advocacy work

Aside from directly addressing the multiple ailments that manifest from our food system (nature loss, climate change, diet related ill health) and simultaneously transpire within it (inequality, nature loss, climate change, diet related ill health) there are some major UK developments that require Wales to have a comprehensive plan for food. How is Wales responding to the Food Standards Agency's programme of regulatory reform activity which aims to ensure food regulation remains proportionate, appropriate for the current climate and effective? What are the post Brexit implications for food related legislation now that the initial Sunsetting of all EU regulations has been scrapped? What are the implications of the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill rapidly making its way through Westminster?

How does Government work with business to reduce diet-related ill health through interventions within retail and hospitality without unintended consequences for local economies, the environment and mental health? Having an agreed vision may help set all actors on the same, agreed, coherent course, even if some of the powers may not lie with the Senedd.

These are some of groups and mechanisms through which we support the development of food policy thinking:



## Policy and Advocacy work

### Food Policy Alliance Cymru

[Food Policy Alliance Cymru](#) is a coalition of organisations and stakeholders building and promoting a collective vision for the Welsh food system. As a co-founder Food Sense Wales provides Food Policy Alliance Cymru with the Secretariat and also provides the group with Communications support.

Through collaboration, engagement and research the Alliance aims to:

- **Co-produce a vision for a food system in Wales that connects production, supply and consumption and gives equal consideration to the health and wellbeing of people and nature.**
- **Advocate for policy change to address climate and ecological emergencies, the public health crisis and the rise in food insecurity.**
- **Ensure Wales is linked to UK policy, research opportunities and the broader global system.**

Food Policy Alliance Cymru has continued to build momentum and support for a collective vision for food in Wales. Communication and secretariat support have been key in driving forward the work of the alliance.

The alliance has continued to influence decision makers through [consultation responses](#), meetings, presentations, research and publications and has increased opportunities to hear voices from all aspects of the Food System. FPAC continues to advocate the need for an overarching vision and strategy for the food system in Wales to optimise the opportunities that both the current and forthcoming legislature present and the opportunities to harness the energy from the ground up. In particular we have worked together to respond to consultations on the Sustainable Farming Scheme, the [Food Bill](#) and the [Food Environment](#) and to make connections across projects and research on the ground.

FPAC also recently launched a video explaining our current food system – its current state, its impact as well as the opportunities for change. Watch the video [here](#).

Ahead of the Food (Wales ) Bill debate in the Senedd on May 24th 2023, FPAC published a useful guide on the Food Sense Wales website that included a briefing paper, a series of insightful infographics as well as committee reports. Read more [here](#).



## Policy and Advocacy work



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

### Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales

Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales is the Welsh Government's long term strategy to prevent and reduce obesity in Wales. As part of its ambition, Welsh Government wants:

- The people of Wales, and our future generations, to have the best start in life and live longer, better and happier lives
- Support making the healthier choice the easy choice and for people to feel enabled to make positive lifestyle choices to sustain or maintain a healthy weight.

Food Sense Wales is one of the organisations working in partnership with the Welsh Government to implement and communicate its strategy effectively with individuals and communities across Wales. Food Sense Wales is noted as a lead partner in the strategy's [2022 – 2024 Delivery Plan](#) and Peas Please is noted in the plan's National Priority Area 1.

### Healthy Start

The [Healthy Start](#) scheme is a Government initiative that provides eligible families with vouchers worth £4.25 every week to spend on milk, fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables, fresh, dried, and tinned pulses, and infant formula milk.

The scheme supports families in receipt of certain benefits, specifically helping pregnant and breastfeeding mums, and children under the age of four. Women and children receiving Healthy Start food vouchers are also given vitamin coupons to exchange for free Healthy Start vitamins, specifically designed for pregnant and breastfeeding women and growing infants and pre-school children.

In December 2020, the Welsh Government [announced](#) that it would be increasing the value of the Healthy Start vouchers in Wales, in line with the UK Government, from £3.10 a week to £4.25 to provide support with nutritional intake amongst children and families on low incomes. This increase came into effect in April 2021. The scheme was also digitised in 2022 and Food Sense Wales is working closely with Welsh Government colleagues to support its work around Healthy Start and actively supporting its communications effort. Food Sense Wales is pleased to be a member of the All Wales Healthy Start Network as well as a member of the UK Healthy Start Working Group which is jointly convened by Peas Please and Sustain. The group recently carried out research that showed that in March 2023, on average, only 64% of eligible families were receiving Healthy Start payments across the UK. This represents over £3.2m unclaimed in Wales alone.





## Policy and Advocacy work

We were also joint signatories on an open letter that was published in March 2023, calling on policy makers to:

- address technical challenges preventing auto-enrolment of all eligible families
- invest £5 million in a communications campaign to promote the scheme widely
- increase the value of Healthy Start in line with inflation
- expand eligibility to all families on Universal Credit and equivalent benefits with children under five years old
- expand eligibility to all families with young children with No Recourse to Public Funds who are on very low incomes

Many of Wales' food partnerships have also been encouraging the uptake of Healthy Start in their areas. In Blaenau Gwent, a pilot project run by Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership and supported by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, issued a limited number of top up vouchers for Flying Start families. The extra £5 to boost Health Start payments was spent at local greengrocers M&J Fruit and Veg in Abertillery and Fresh 'n' Fruity in Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale. As a result, the partnership increased access and affordability of healthy food whilst supporting local food businesses, and Blaenau Gwent is one of the local authority areas in Wales that consistently has one of the highest uptake figures of Healthy Start vouchers in Wales.

### **CASE STUDY:** Food Related Benefits Package launched in Cardiff and the Vale

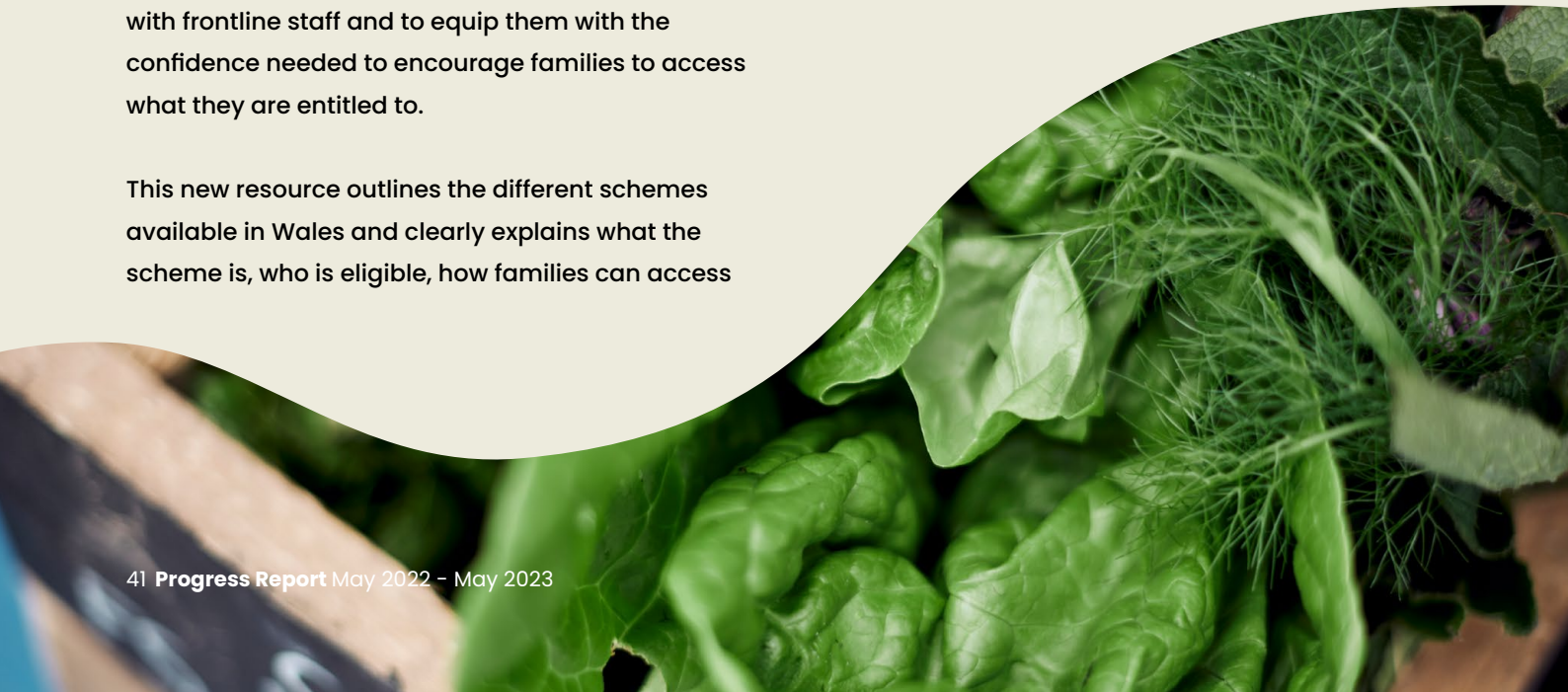
In January 2023, a digital resource was published on the Move More Eat Well website in a bid to increase awareness and uptake of food related benefits, including Healthy Start.

With the support of Food Cardiff and Food Sense Wales, the teams collaborated to create this important resource as a way to share information with frontline staff and to equip them with the confidence needed to encourage families to access what they are entitled to.

This new resource outlines the different schemes available in Wales and clearly explains what the scheme is, who is eligible, how families can access

the scheme, and why it's important. Users can also find information on some of the fantastic food projects that offer families much needed support.

Read more about the package [here](#).



## Policy and Advocacy work

### Well-being of Future Generations Act

In early 2023, the outgoing Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Sophie Howe published a paper entitled [Cost of Living: Now and In the Future](#). This paper set out a number of policy areas which could drive multiple long-term benefits to Wales' well-being goals, whilst also helping families who face huge cost-of-living pressures in the short and medium term. The Commissioner clearly called for a long-term commitment to roll out food partnerships in every Welsh local authority. She also stated that the Welsh Government could look at integrating many of its progressive interventions in the food system by producing a national food strategy, fit for both current and future generations, as well as urging the Welsh Government to make a long-term commitment to the free school meals holiday programme.

In March 2023, Derek Walker, Wales' new Future Generations Commissioner started his six-year tenure. Food Sense Wales has already met with the Commissioner and looks forward to further discussions around prioritising food and food systems during his term in office.



*"I welcome the Social Justice Minister's recent announcement on short term funding for cross sector food partnerships through Food Sense Wales. But I urge for a longer-term commitment to roll out food partnerships in every Welsh local authority within the Welsh Government's proposed Community Food Strategy. Food Partnerships, led by Food Sense Wales coordinates a local multi-stakeholder approach to address food poverty, supporting the provision of affordable food involving public bodies, the voluntary sector and local communities. I am also supportive of the approach of the proposed Wales Food Bill which calls for the development of more coordination across government through a national food strategy."*

**Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2016 - 2023)**

## Policy and Advocacy work

### Land of our Future series: Working in partnership with Landworkers' Alliance Cymru to create content for WWF Cymru

In the summer of 2022, [Food Sense Wales](#) and [Landworkers' Alliance Cymru](#) were commissioned by WWF Cymru to deliver a suite of six case studies demonstrating the potential for agroecology in Wales.

Each case study was presented as a package in written and video formats with accompanying photography. The campaign culminated in a final report which featured the six farmers and included key recommendations.

The purpose of creating this suite of content was to both inform WWF Cymru's policy and advocacy work as well as demonstrating to the public and decision makers what is possible through an agroecology approach to land use. The case studies were used across social media, print media, web as well as being presented directly to stakeholders.

Undertaking this piece of work allowed Food Sense Wales to further deepen our relationship with both WWF Cymru and Landworkers' Alliance Cymru whilst fostering new relationships with farmers across Wales, highlighting their stories and raising the profile of their important work.

Find out more about the campaign [here](#).



## Policy and Advocacy work

### Boards and Group Membership

Food Sense Wales has representation on a number of food systems related Boards and Groups – across Wales and the UK. Here's a snapshot of those groups we were involved with between May 2022 and May 2023:

- Founding members and secretariat of [Food Policy Alliance Cymru](#)
- [Food and Drink Wales Industry Board](#)
- Safe Sustainable Authentic Food Wales- Food Standards Agency
- Healthy Weight Healthy Wales Communications, Engagement and Campaign Group
- Healthy Start UK Working Group
- Healthy Start Wales Network
- Human Rights Stakeholder Group – which also feeds into the [Senedd Cross Party Group on Human Rights](#)
- Anti-poverty Coalition – which also feeds into the [Senedd Cross Party Group on Poverty](#)
- [Cross Party Group on Children & Families](#)
- Attend and contribute to the [Senedd's Cross Party Group on School Food](#)
- Veg Power Board
- UK School Food Working Group
- [United Nations Development Agency Conscious Food System Alliance](#)
- Food Cardiff chairs the Edible Cardiff Development Group
- Members of the [Food and Fun](#) Wales advisory group
- Members of [Sustain](#)

# NEXT STEPS: 2023 / 2024

## Building on our Foundations

This year will see us setting our new strategic direction for the next three years against a backdrop of unfolding food related legislation and policy; a growing food movement, and the continuing cost of living crisis. Over the last three years the breadth of our work has been significant and we have taken some time to consider where our strengths lie and how we fit into the bigger picture of food system actors in Wales. We want to deepen our action in those parts of the system where we feel we can have the most impact.

Together with our advisory group we have identified three areas that will shape our future strategy over the coming months, building on the foundations of our work to date:

**1. A food culture shift in Wales that builds on inner capacities of actors within the food system and embraces our heritage, celebrates and values “the local” and puts food education front and centre in schools, Further Education, Higher Education and in the workplace.**

- 2. A revolution in local and sustainable procurement led by public procurement and followed by other markets. Agroecological food on the public plate should catalyse agroecological demand on every plate in Wales.**
- 3. A Food Policy and legislative framework that enables, sets targets for and monitors the transition of agroecological production and consumption in Wales to benefit the environment and society.**

Key to the successful development and delivery of our new strategy will be weaving our programmatic work with our advocacy work. This includes working with the UK Peas Please partnership on our next chapter; nurturing the expanding Sustainable Food Partnership in Wales; deepening our global-local work with the Conscious Food System Alliance; developing our new areas of work, and continuing to support Welsh Government with Programme for Government commitments such as the roll out of Universal Primary Free School Meals and the Community Food Strategy.

We now look forward to developing our programmatic and policy work further, and to taking the next steps in our mission to co-create a food system for Wales that's good for people and the planet.





For more information or to talk to any member of the team, please contact [foodsensewales@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:foodsensewales@wales.nhs.uk)

Find out more about our work by visiting our website [www.foodsensewales.org.uk](http://www.foodsensewales.org.uk)

And you can also follow Food Sense Wales on social media:

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