

April 2025

Status of Local Food Partnerships in 2025

By Dr Andrea Gibbons and Pearl Costello
on behalf of Food Sense Wales



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Welsh Government

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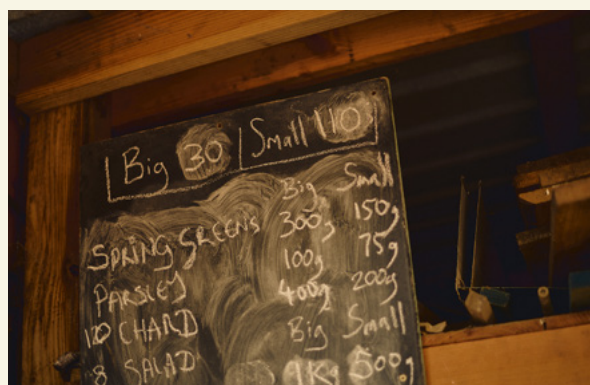
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**By Dr Andrea Gibbons and Pearl Costello
on behalf of Food Sense Wales**

Report Contributors: Pearl Costello, Katie Palmer, Sian-Elin Davies, Lowri Johnston, Will Barker and Aled Llywelyn. The report was designed by Rebecca Ingleby Davies.

Pearl Costello
Sustainable Food Places Manager
Food Sense Wales

Foreword

This **Status of Local Food Partnerships in Wales in 2025** report provides a snapshot of the current status and examples of best practice happening across the 22 Local Food Partnerships in Wales, along with feedback voiced by members of food partnerships themselves.

A good food movement is happening all across Wales. Actors include citizens, farmers, community groups, local businesses, public bodies, charities and many others all working on initiatives to enable Wales' population to have equal access to food which is good for people and planet. This grassroots momentum has rapidly gained traction over the past few years, accelerated by the local food systems infrastructure pioneered by Sustainable Food Places and the 22 Local Food Partnerships in Wales and supported by Welsh Government. It is this foundational approach that has been recognised by the Ministry of Social Justice that can help to tackle inequalities, mitigate the root causes of poverty and help to build community food resilience.

The need for civil food resilience has been starkly outlined by Professor Tim Lang in a new report by the UK's National Preparedness Commission. The report warned about the precarious state of the UK's food security and urged immediate action to develop civil resilience to safeguard the nation's food supply against global pressures such as climate

change, extreme weather, geopolitical issues and other potential shocks. The report also highlighted the fact that people who are already vulnerable and those on the lowest incomes are most likely to be negatively impacted by food shocks.

In 2023, Wales' Future Generations Commissioner published [Cymru Can](#) – a strategy for 2023- 2030 outlining his long-term vision and announcing the food system as his first area of focus. As a result, the Commissioner has been working with Food Sense Wales, Public Service Boards and Public Bodies to integrate sustainable food policies within their Well-being Plans, including developing community food plans, to make changes and improvements at a local, place-based level.

Welsh citizens are also driving stronger action on food system transformation. Insights from the Food, Farming & Countryside Commission's Food Conversations highlight [widespread public support](#) for policies that prioritise sustainability, health, and resilience in Wales' food system. Across civil society in Wales, [Dads are Getting Cooking](#), people are teaching each other how to [grow culturally appropriate food](#), groups have established [community food hubs](#) to tackle food poverty, [small-scale growers are sharing machinery](#) and volunteers are [running pop up sustainable greengrocers](#).

Local Food Partnerships have been recognised as a vital force for bringing together these stakeholders, policies and initiatives, enabling local actors to work collaboratively to create and deliver a shared vision and strategy for a more sustainable, just, and resilient food system.

We hope that this report and the accompanying films provide a comprehensive picture of the successes to date and highlight the passion and conviction of those working to secure a fairer food system. We believe it shows the opportunity that can arise as a result of strong national leadership and the cross-government support for the systems approach of Local Food Partnerships in Wales.

Pearl Costello

Sustainable Food Places Manager
Food Sense Wales

Local Food Partnerships at a Glance



MEMBER



BRONZE



SILVER



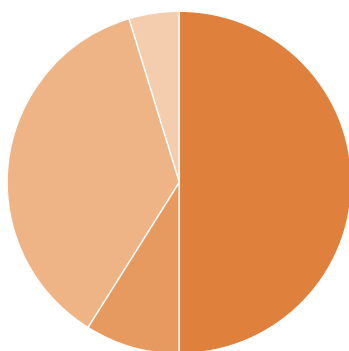
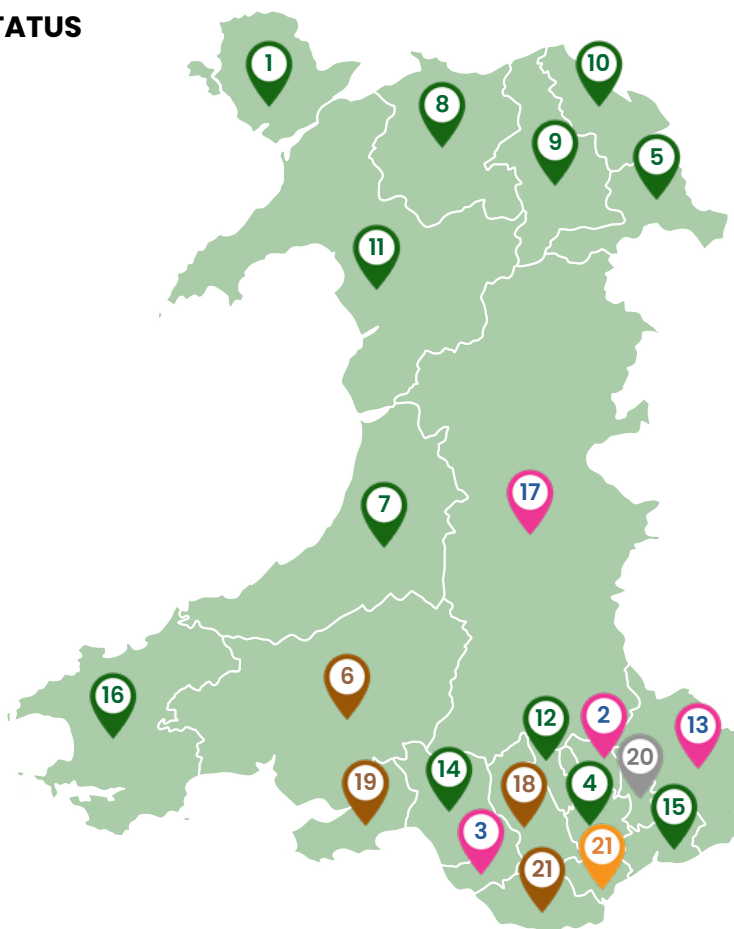
GOLD



NEITHER

AREA / MEMBERSHIP STATUS

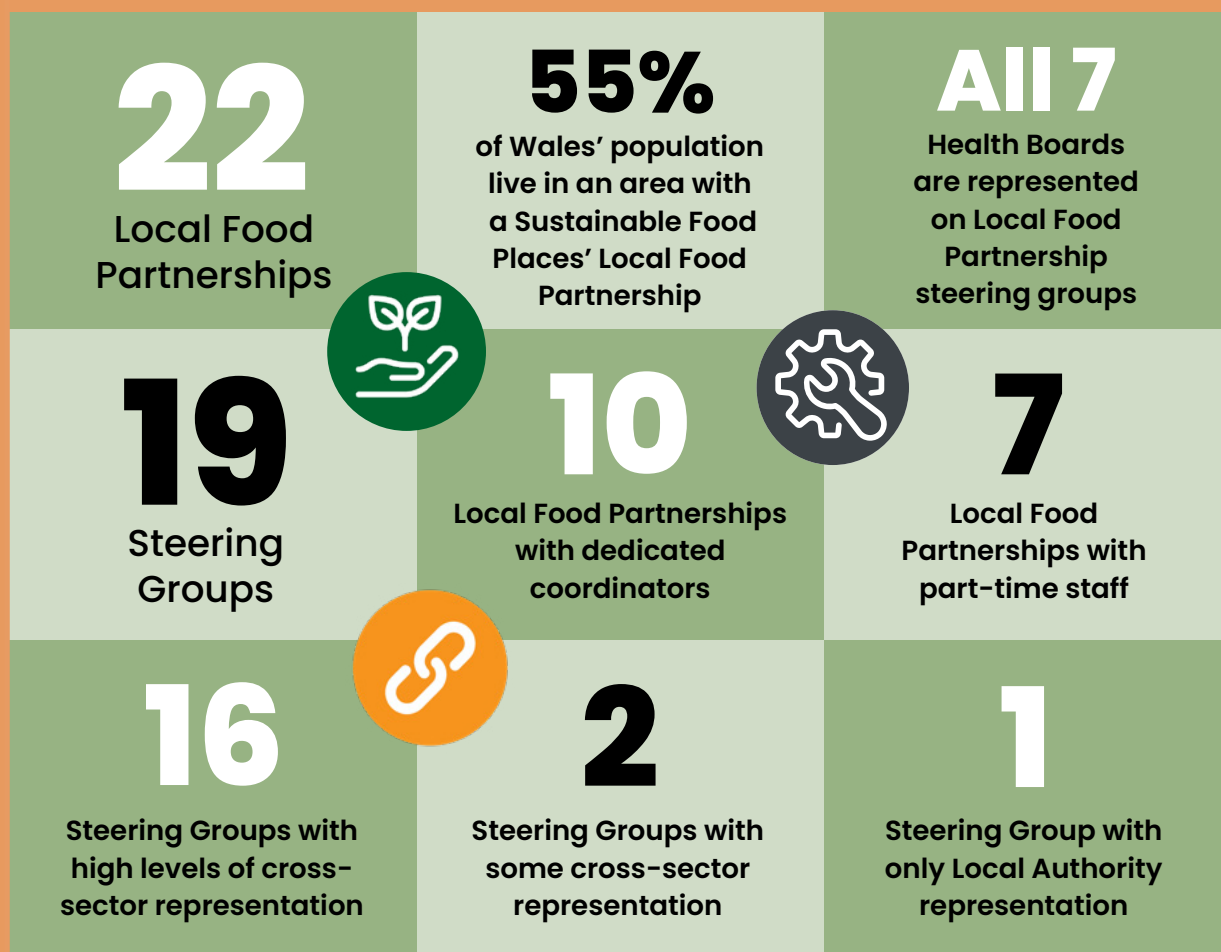
1. Anglesey
2. Blaenau Gwent
3. Bridgend
4. Caerphilly
5. Cardiff
6. Carmarthenshire
7. Ceredigion
8. Conwy
9. Denbighshire
10. Flintshire
11. Gwynedd
12. Merthyr Tydfil
13. Monmouthshire
14. Neath Port Talbot
15. Newport
16. Pembrokeshire
17. Powys
18. RCT
19. Swansea
20. Torfaen
21. Vale of Glamorgan
22. Wrexham



HOST ORGANISATION TYPE

- 11 Public Sector, Council
- 2 Public Sector, Health
- 8 3rd Sector/Social Enterprise
- 1 Housing Association

LOCAL FOOD PARTNERSHIPS AT A GLANCE



The recipe for success

- **A NATIONAL VISION:** A clear national vision for Welsh food systems.
- **PUBLIC BODY COLLABORATION:** More cross-organisational working within public bodies.
- **A DEDICATED CO-ORDINATOR:** Every area to have a dedicated Local Food Partnership co-ordinator in post.
- **SECURE FUNDING:** Multi-year funding in order to create long-term strategic change.
- **A CLEAR FRAMEWORK:** Clarity about what a Local Food Partnership is and what they are expected to do.
- **A SUPPORT NETWORK:** To connect with other Local Food Partnerships to share challenges, best practice and work collaboratively.

PART 1

Introduction

Local Food Partnerships

Local Food Partnerships are networks bringing together stakeholders from across the food system to develop a shared vision for a more sustainable food future, and coordinate actions necessary to make this vision a reality. They include local authorities, voluntary sector organisations, farmers, local businesses, and residents. By championing a whole system approach to food, they connect issues such as food poverty, diet-related health inequalities, agriculture, food security, and climate change to develop solutions that transform food and farming in a just and sustainable way.

Local Food Partnerships were pioneered by Sustainable Food Places: a partnership programme led by the Soil Association, Food Matters, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming, Food Sense Wales, Nourish NI, and Nourish Scotland. In order to become a Sustainable Food Place member, local food partnerships need to demonstrate they have a cross-sector food partnership that is collaboratively developing and delivering a local food plan or strategy.

There are 22 Local Food Partnerships in Wales, 10 of which are members or award holders of the Sustainable Food Places programme.

In June 2022, the 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. Over subsequent years the Welsh Government has continued to support and strengthen the development of Local 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.

In 2025/26 Local Food Partnerships will be supported through both the Social Justice and Climate Change and Rural Affairs divisions of the Welsh Government, in recognition of the cross-cutting nature of the food system. The Social Justice portfolio has also committed to resource Local Food Partnerships until the end of March 2028 (subject to review in year 2) and Local Food Partnerships will form an important delivery mechanism for the forthcoming Community Food Strategy.



Food Sense Wales

Food Sense Wales aims to influence how food is produced and consumed in Wales, ensuring that sustainable food, farming and fisheries are at the heart of a just, connected and prosperous food system.

Founded in 2018, Food Sense Wales was established to drive forward a cross-sector approach to the food system in Wales. 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.

Its strategy is built around three key pillars:

- **Building a positive food culture in Wales that invests in people, embraces our heritage, celebrates and values “the local” and puts food education front and centre**
- **Catalysing a revolution in local and sustainable procurement inspired by horticulture**
- **Supporting the development of 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**

Food Sense Wales operates by building the foundations for change through:

- **Developing a network of cross sector food partnerships across Wales that meet local needs in order to achieve national change**
- **Piloting and scaling innovative approaches to inspire action with initiatives such as Welsh Veg in Schools**
- **Advocating for and developing good food policy building consensus with food related organisations operating in Wales and beyond through Food Policy Alliance Cymru**
- **Telling the stories of the experiences, achievements and challenges within the food system in Wales through effective communications**

Read more about Food Sense Wales [here](#).

Report Aims and Methodology

Food Sense Wales was commissioned by the Welsh Government in December 2024 to provide an update for each of the Local Food Partnerships and gather key intelligence on areas such as securing funding, understanding the impact of local grant schemes, identifying key challenges and highlighting best practices.

Between January and March 2025 Food Sense Wales conducted a series of 22 “MOTs” with every Local Food Partnership: a self-reflection exercise where attendees scored themselves on the strength of their work covering areas such as governance, strategy, activity, resource and impact.

The main purpose of the MOTs was to increase Local Food Partnerships’ own awareness of their strengths, challenges and priorities, but they also gave useful insight to inform this reporting.

Following the MOT, we used a mixture of desk-based research and interviews with Local Food Partnership co-ordinators to develop an individual status report for each of the 22 local authority areas.

The following report summarises the current status of Local Food Partnerships, the key themes that emerged from the research and examples of best practice from Local Food Partnerships across Wales.

The report is structured around the four objectives the Welsh Government, across multiple departments, has developed for the Local Food Partnerships for 25/26 onwards. These four objectives complement and are complemented by the Sustainable Food Places’ 6 Key Issues framework, recognising the holistic food systems approach that Local Food Partnerships are taking.

Case Studies

Food Sense Wales has also produced a series of six case studies that you’ll see included throughout this report. The aim of the case studies is to bring to life the work of the Local Food Partnerships, themed across the Sustainable Food Places six key areas. Each of the written case studies is complemented by a short film produced by Will Barker and images taken by Aled Llywelyn.



Click on the arrows to watch the films

PART 2

Progress towards Objectives

AREA 1: Leadership and Joined-Up Action



Objective 1: To establish and lead a broad and dynamic Local Food Partnership network, which is representative of the communities they are supporting:

- Inspiring active, diverse and cohesive connections between the key actors (public, private and third sector) across the local food system.
- Developing strategic relationships with Local Authorities, public bodies, Public Health Boards and Public Services Boards to influence local food as a priority within local procurement, planning and delivery. For example, this may include promoting food as a focus area within local Well-being plans and Healthy Weight; Healthy Wales plans.

Sustainable Food Places Key Issue 1

Food Governance and Strategy: Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action.



The Building Blocks of a Local Food Partnership

Food Cardiff and a handful of other UK Local Food Partnerships have been in place for over a decade now, with 110 members joining the wider Sustainable Food Places network over the past ten years. Together they have developed and demonstrated the key infrastructure needed for both breadth and depth of effective collaboration.

This infrastructure includes:

- A host organisation to resource the first steps, build the network and develop the infrastructure that can support healthy collaboration and a system change approach;

- The key enabler to all of the above is a minimum level of staffing, with a paid coordinator in post. A Local Food Partnership coordinator's role is to facilitate and hold spaces for people from very different sectors and backgrounds to connect and work together to transform their local food system.

They support democratic process and ensure accountability; share information and open access to resources; develop relationships outside of existing networks to bridge community divides and overcome barriers; support a balance of planning and long term vision alongside crisis management; secure funding and administer small grants' undertake comms and promote everything from tackling food poverty to healthy eating to local business and farming with local residents; push forward local policy while staying up to date with national policy and keep the systems change approach in view. Many co-ordinators are involved in delivering local project activity, often with a particular focus of tackling food poverty by strengthening existing and building new community food initiatives.

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graph TD
    Residents[Residents and Community Groups of RCT]
    Network[RCT Food Partnership Network]
    GrowRCT[Grow RCT Subgroup]
    Economy[RCT Food Economy Subgroup]
    Pantry[Pantry and Foodbank Subgroup]
    Steering[RCT Food Partnership Steering Group]
    Sustainable[Sustainable Food Places UK]
    Community[Community Support Steering Group]
    Funders[Funders]
    Council[Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council]

    Residents -.-> Network
    Residents -.-> Steering
    Network -.-> GrowRCT
    Network -.-> Economy
    Network -.-> Pantry
    Steering -.-> Network
    Steering -.-> Sustainable
    Steering -.-> Community
    Steering -.-> Funders
    Council -.-> Steering
  
```

Figure 2: RCT's food partnership structure, from RCT *Taith Bwyd* 2025–2030

Figure 3: Bwyd Sir Gâr Food Partnership’s **model** showing the relationship of the steering group with its working groups and key areas of focus

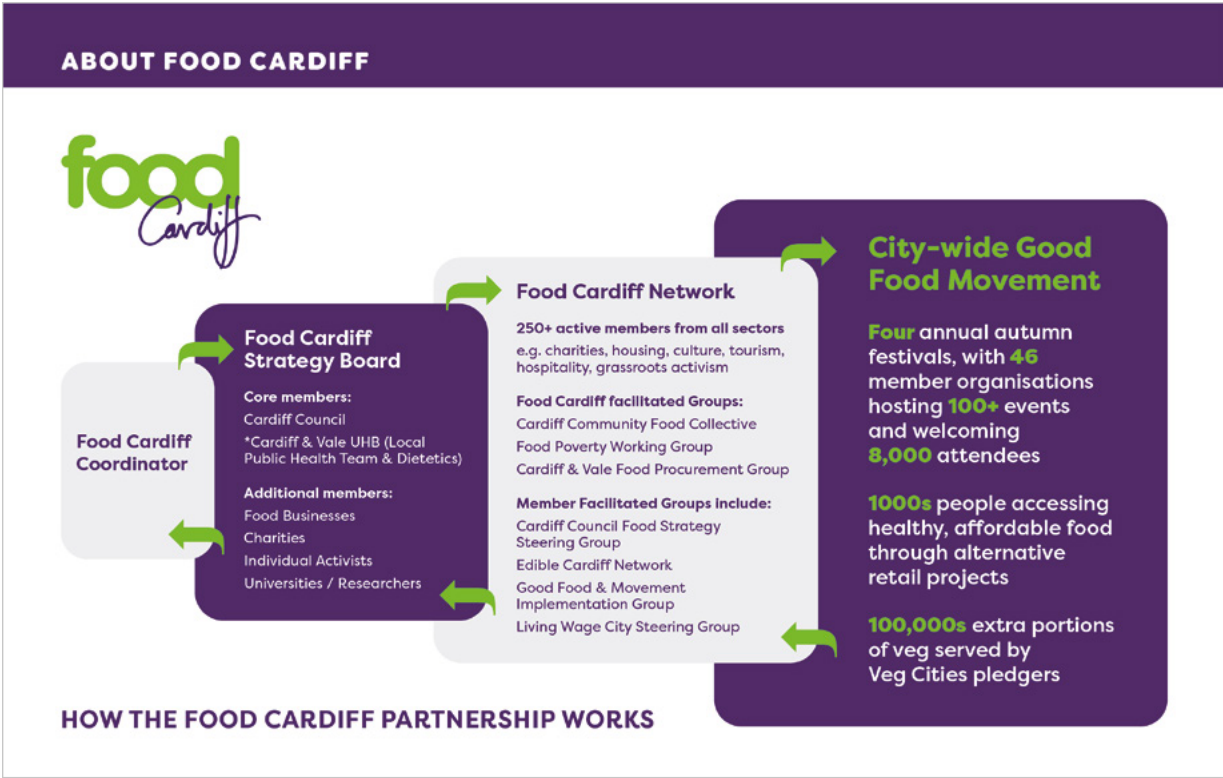
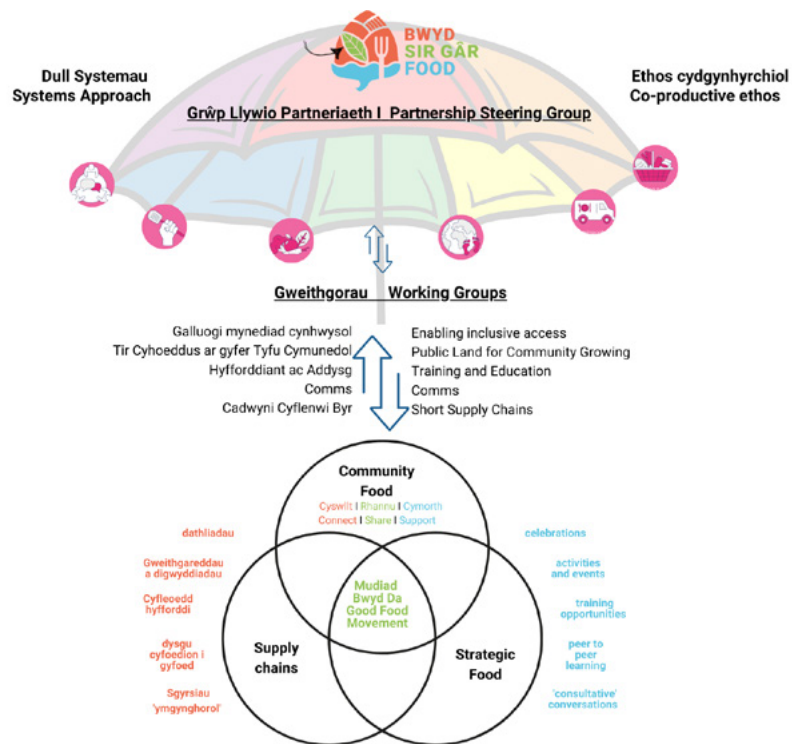


Figure 4: Graphic developed to show the structure of Food Cardiff.

Local Food Partnership Leadership

Half of the existing partnerships are led by County and Borough Councils, with two others sitting within a Public Health team. The others are primarily based within the third sector, with one Housing Association and one business led.

Local Food Partnerships work to identify and convene anchor institutions and relevant stakeholders within their local area. Mapping out existing work around the food system, they identify key areas for collaboration, helping maximise the effectiveness of projects and ensuring that resources are targeted at areas of greatest need.

All Welsh Health Boards have staff sitting on Local Food Partnership steering groups, and most Local Food Partnerships are engaging with their Public Service Boards. Similarly, various Government funded agencies such as Farming Connect and Natural Resources Wales have staff sitting on steering groups across the country. Other partners regularly represented on steering groups include Educational institutions, Housing Associations, the National Farmers Union, and third sector organisations working at local, regional and national levels.

The 7 Health Boards are currently represented on the following Local Food Partnership steering groups:

- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board – Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Caerphilly
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Anglesey & Gwynedd, Wrexham
- Swansea Bay University Health Board – Swansea
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board – Bridgend, RCT
- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board – HOSTS for Food Vale and Food Cardiff
- Hywel Dda University Health Board – Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire
- Powys Teaching Health Board – Powys



The chart below from Bwyd Powys, hosted by the third sector organisation Cultivate, demonstrates the strategy and policy mapping that underpins so much of the collaborative work of established partnerships.

Figure 5: Bwyd Powys Food Connectivity Map



This mapping and convening role also serves to support cooperation rather than competition for limited funding. Neath Port Talbot’s call for collaboration puts into words the spirit partnerships bring to their leadership role:

We warmly invite you to reference this strategy in your own funding applications and project proposals, and to use it as evidence for the work that you are seeking to deliver. And if you see opportunities for collaboration, please reach out to us so that we may connect you with likeminded partners. Thank you for your support and partnership as we work to make healthy, affordable and local food available to all!

(NPT Cross-Sector Food Strategy 2024)

Local Food Partnership Visions and Strategy

The majority of partnerships with food strategies have developed these with broad reference to the 6 key themes of the Sustainable Places Framework, though often adjusted and adapted to better speak to local priorities. These are outlined in the following bilingual graphic developed by Powys, which they have made available to other partnerships to use and distribute:

Figure 6: Graphic and handout from Bwyd Powys explaining the 6 themes from Sustainable Food Places



The Blaenau Gwent Food Charter is a good example of how the Sustainable Food Places approach has been a template for the partnership to adapt to best serve their Local Food Partnership:

Blaenau Gwent Food Charter, published 2022

- **Good Food Daily:** Affordable food that sustains and promotes the health and wellbeing of Blaenau Gwent residents is available to all, every day.
- **Learning for all:** People of all ages are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources to make healthy and sustainable food choices.
- **Community at our Heart:** Celebrate the power of community with vibrant and inclusive community activities and promote learning and sharing across all community settings.
- **Protecting our Environment:** Improving the environment by reducing food waste, plastic packaging and enhance nature and biodiversity through sustainable land use.
- **A Prosperous Food Culture:** Local businesses and organisations harness our rich heritage, value people with fair jobs and strengthen local supply chains.

In this example, the priorities identified through the food charter have emerged through steering group discussions alongside a series of wider community engagement alongside an annual food summit. These goals have then become guides to support the plan of activity outlined in their new draft five-year strategy, 2025–2030, which will be launched through a public event. This includes actions that can be taken by local residents, community groups and networks, institutions, and public bodies.

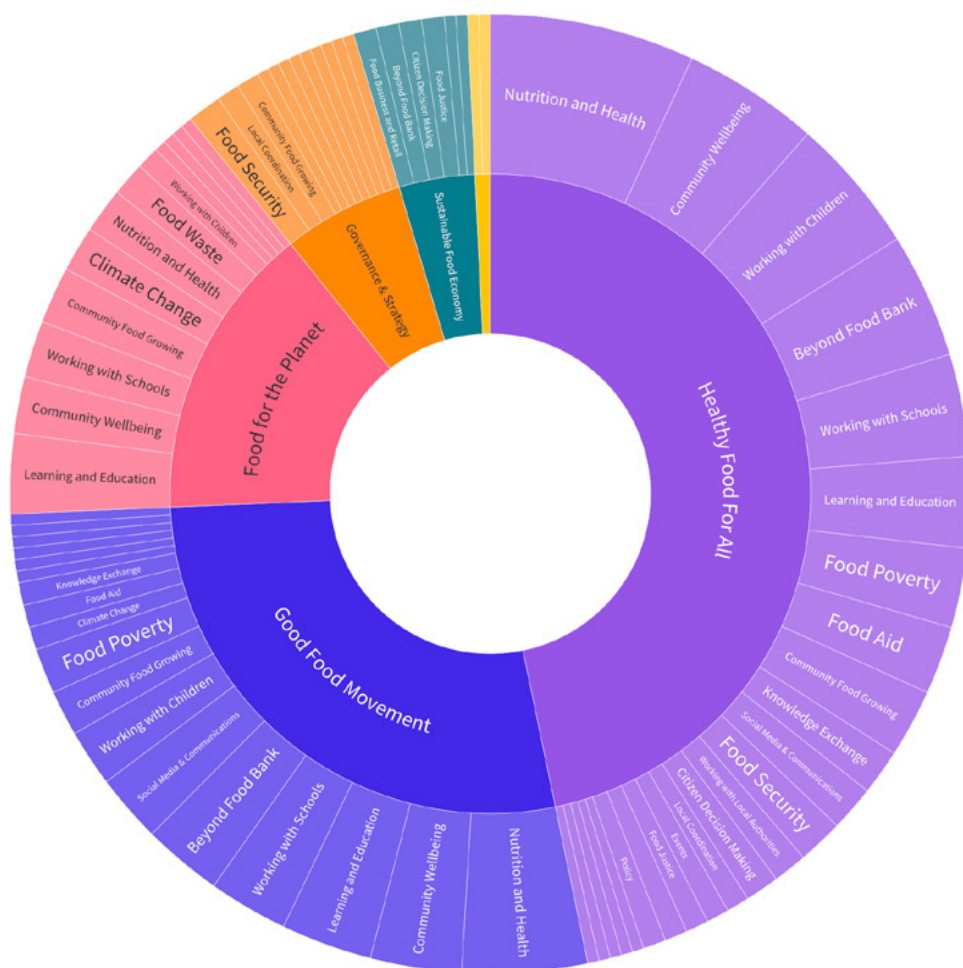
Within Sustainable Food Places, this is often described as the backbone model. Local Food Partnerships provide a space for collaboration and development of a shared framework, providing the convening, facilitation and capacity building work that in turn supports wider collaboration among members. This gives them the ability to see how their efforts in delivering individual projects fit together to become something greater than the sum of its parts at the community, the region and the national levels.

Understanding Impact

Collaboration in developing strategic plans with a range of short- and long-term actions supports greater impact, joining up work and ensuring there is amplification not duplication of effort. This in turn supports the ability to document and evaluate impact, identify and share best practice as well as mistakes and lessons learned, and celebrate success.

Partnerships regularly check in with steering groups on their progress against their goals, which can range from an informal process to formal reviews. Bwyd Powys, for example, has a full review every six months with written progress updates. Others have generated a wide range of reports, evaluations and case studies, many noted in the individual status reports. Both Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen have adapted the interactive impact wheel developed by the national Sustainable Food Places programme as seen in figure 6.

Figure 7: Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership's [Impact Hub](#)



For those who are part of the national network, the awards process also allows partnerships to more objectively benchmark their achievements against all partnerships working across the UK.

Embedding Food in Local Policies and Plans

Partnerships have worked hard to demonstrate the ways that collaboration can support public bodies to deliver against their duties, and how action around food supports broader local, regional and national agendas.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's (RCT) partnership's new strategy Taith Bwyd lays out how they support delivery of key strategies for the Council. Within the [Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2030: 'Working with our Communities'](#), they outline a key role for food in the following four Wellbeing objectives:

- **People and Communities:** Supporting and empowering RCT residents and communities to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives;
- **Work and Business:** Helping to strengthen and grow RCT's Economy;
- **Nature and the Environment:** A green and clean RCT that improves and protects RCT environment and nature;
- **Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language:** Recognising and celebrating RCT's past, present, and future.

Taith Bwyd also contributes to the Council's [Think Climate Strategy](#) by its intention to promote sustainable, local food in services and communities. Regionally, the Strategy contributes to the [Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan](#), with the aim of providing access to nutritious, high-quality food locally to create communities that are healthy, inclusive and cohesive (from the 2025-30 Strategy).

In Carmarthenshire, the partnership has identified its role in supporting the following strategies:

- **The County Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-27, which includes providing 'nutritious free school meals to every primary school child'**
- **The Procurement Strategy, increasing 'local public procurement from 53-70%.'**
- **Natural Resources Wales' Southwest Area Statement which identifies the food system as one of the three main factors impacting on natural resources.**
- **Hywel Dda's 'A Healthier Mid and West Wales Strategy', which states 'our focus is not just on traditional NHS services, but working with others in areas like social care, housing, education, employment, leisure, food and the environment.'**

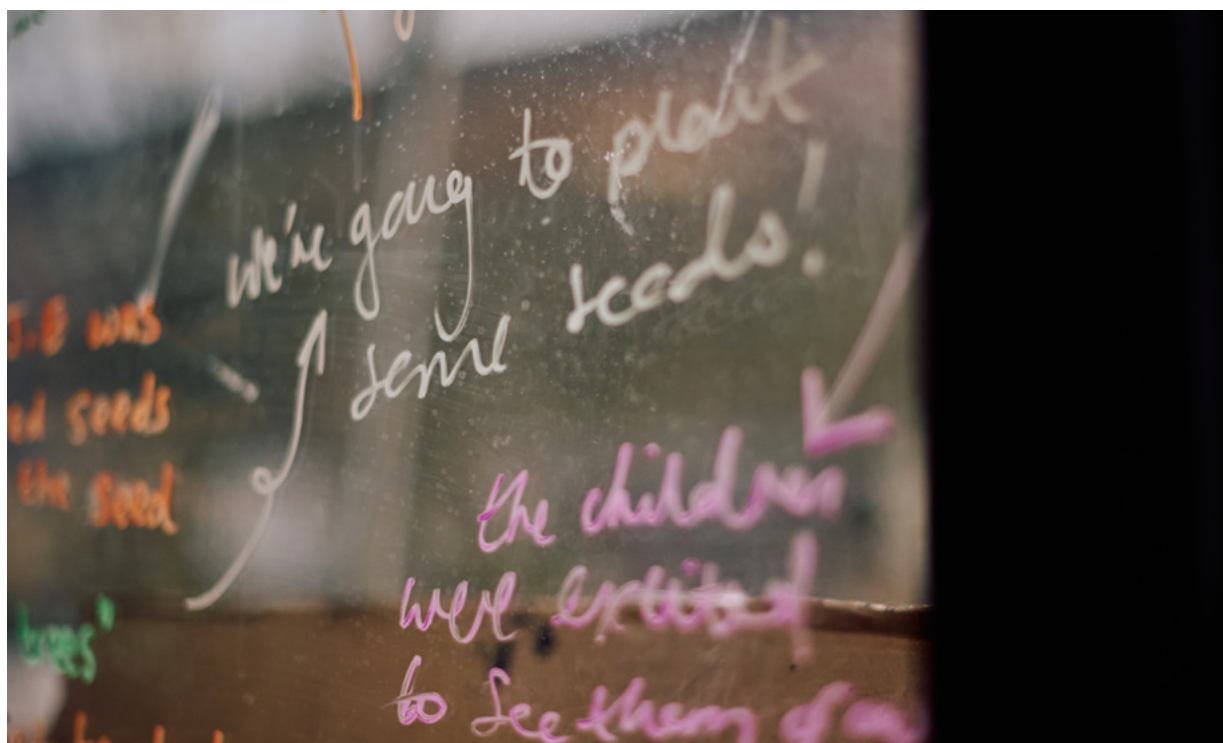
This understanding of the role of food in successful delivery of key objectives, and the power of local councils and health boards to deliver change, has also supported the wider embedding of food within key strategies.

One of Carmarthenshire's steering group members is supporting the drafting of a new food strategy for the County Council. Monmouthshire County Council has also been held up as a role model for its [new food strategy](#) developed together with Monmouthshire Food Partnership.

The partnership for the Vale of Glamorgan has worked to incorporate food into the following:

- **Project Zero (the council's climate emergency plan) commits to "promote sustainable food systems"; the Council's Corporate Plan commits to "work with partners to encourage people to think about the food they eat and how it can impact on their health and well-being";**
- **Move More Eat Well – the health board's obesity plan pledges to "create healthy and sustainable food procurement systems" and "support communities to be healthier";**
- **Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan "ensure that the Vale has a sustainable, quality food environment which supports the local economy, agriculture and tourism**

As demonstrated above, partnerships are coming together to play a greater role in in both development and implementation of Council strategies as well as Public Service Boards, supporting them to meet their objectives. As one example, having identified the key role food could play in Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan, Local Food Partnerships from RCT, Bridgend and Merthyr are working together to form a working group on the creation of healthy food environments.





Case Study: Food Cardiff

Food Cardiff: taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action.



Transforming a place's food culture and system requires a **joined-up strategic approach** and **long-term collaboration** between individuals and organisations across all sectors and levels — from community groups and third-sector organisations to businesses and public bodies.

Since its establishment over a decade ago, **Food Cardiff**, the city's food partnership, has consistently worked in collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders and its recent Sustainable Food Places Gold Award is a testament to the partnership's success in bringing together sectors to drive meaningful and strategic change in the capital's food system.

Food Cardiff operates through coordination, strategy, and operation, overseen by the Strategy Board. This Board is composed of core members from organisations such as Cardiff Council and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, as well as

CASE STUDY: FOOD CARDIFF



representatives from third sector organisations and professionals and citizens who are part of the local sustainable food movement.

The wider partnership is made up of over 250 members which includes businesses, community organisations and individuals. Together, their collective efforts are aligned with the [Good Food Strategy](#), which was collaboratively developed to guide the city's long-term food goals.

Food Cardiff also coordinates subgroups such as the Cardiff Community Food Collective which is made up of almost 30 local community food projects. Cardiff Community Food Collective presents a collective voice for change to tackle the root causes of food poverty; and works collectively to deliver projects, for example on securing resilient sources of food supplies.

*"The role of the **Food Cardiff** coordinator is really making sure all the different links of the partnership work together," explains Pearl. "And the idea is that through those different layers, from the coordination to the strategic to the operational, we create the city-wide good food movement reaching hundreds of thousands of people."*

Mission & Strategy

At the heart of **Food Cardiff**'s success is its clear strategy that's been shaped by Cardiff's residents, aiming to meet the needs of the diverse communities that make up the city. The partnership has developed a [Good Food Strategy](#) – a roadmap for transforming the city's food systems through collaboration, inclusivity, and sustainability – as well as the five [Good Food Goals](#) that are key to delivering change.



*"The work of the Strategy Board and the wider **Food Cardiff** partnership is really shaped by our good food strategy, which was developed in collaboration with citizens and organizations from across Cardiff," explains Pearl.*

"If there wasn't a food partnership in Cardiff, I know that there'd be lots of amazing work happening from lots of different people and organizations, because there's so much energy and enthusiasm for making good food accessible in the city. Without the strategy and that vision, we would probably see more duplication, we wouldn't see as big an impact of people working together and creating things that are more than the sum of its parts."

Strategic Collaboration Across Sectors

Collaboration is the cornerstone of the **Food Cardiff** model.

"There are so many different projects and different groups across the city doing amazing things, but you need a way to bring all those voices and projects together so that people aren't working in silos," says Jane Cook, a freelance PR and social media consultant and a member of the Strategy Board.

Jane has lived in Cardiff all her life and feels strongly about being part of a movement that is making tangible improvements to the city's food system. As someone deeply invested in sustainability and urban environments, she finds it rewarding to work strategically within the partnership to amplify the positive change happening in Cardiff.

CASE STUDY: FOOD CARDIFF

*"Being part of that strategy board and being part of **Food Cardiff** in general, means that you can start to pull together all those threads and make sure that everybody's singing from the same hymn sheet, or being able to help each other, widen that network and really increase the impact of what everybody's doing," continues Jane.*

"For me, it means being able to get involved with things that I'm interested in and that I care about, and feel like that I'm part of a movement. I really enjoy the fact that I'm in a capital city, but I'm connected to all of this information, these projects around food and farming. It feels like a privilege to be part of."

Camilla Lovelace, another key member of the Strategy Board, stresses the need for a holistic approach to ensure that people across the city have access to healthy, nutritious and sustainably produced food.

"If we're going to have a big impact on food – the food that people eat – we need to think strategically. We need to join up all the dots," says Camilla.

"I think it's really important that we have the NHS on the board, we have community groups, we have the private sector, we have the public sector, we have the local authorities. And it takes the synergy from everybody working together to actually produce the changes that we need to see."

The recognition of Cardiff as a Gold award-winning Sustainable Food Place, underpins the effectiveness of this strategic, city-wide approach and Camilla is excited to see what happens next across Cardiff.





*"I think there's always room for improvement. There's always room for more collaboration. There's always room for new projects, and there's always room to expand existing projects. And I feel positive about the future of **Food Cardiff** and food in Cardiff reaching the people that it needs to reach."*

Dietetic Expertise in Action

A unique strength of **Food Cardiff** is the integration of nutrition and dietetic expertise into its operations. Emma Holmes, the Head of Nutrition and Dietetic Services at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, has been involved with **Food Cardiff** since its inception and emphasises the critical role that dietitians play in making the principles of good food a reality for all residents in Cardiff.

By working within the strategic framework set by **Food Cardiff**, dietitians ensure that their expertise is accessible to everyone, enabling the partnership to make a meaningful difference.

*"From my point of view, I think it's really important the dietitians are involved...because we bring that dietetic knowledge and expertise, but translate it into real, everyday messages that we can include within the **Food Cardiff** strategy"* says Emma.

Through initiatives like Nutrition Skills for Life and Food and Fun, Emma and her colleagues ensure that residents can access evidence-based advice and practical tips on making healthier food choices.

CASE STUDY: FOOD CARDIFF



"We have nutrition education programmes of work that local communities can access. But also, it's about how we work with individuals, with public and third sector organisations to make sure that those messages that we're giving are evidence based, simple and straightforward for people to understand."

Emma goes on to highlight the fact that collaboration is key. *"Food is everybody's business, and no one organisation or group can do it on their own. There are too many facets to it, so we have to come together to enable that to happen."*





The Food Strategy in action

One of **Food Cardiff**'s current flagship projects is the [Planet Card](#), an initiative, which aims to make healthy, planet-friendly fruit and veg more accessible and affordable for everyone. Planet Card is a pilot project, co-produced by citizens and farmers and now being led by a team involving Cardiff Farmers Markets, Cardiff University and **Food Cardiff**.

The Planet Card offers discounts on organic produce at Cardiff Farmers Markets and is designed to address the issue of food insecurity and to improve access to healthy, sustainable food options for people experiencing low-income.

"The Planet Card is just one example of how, through strategic collaboration, we can bring organic food to more people. The initiative would not have been possible without the input and support of our diverse partners," says Pearl.

In addition to the Planet Card, **Food Cardiff** continues to explore new projects, renew existing partnerships, and expand its impact. Membership on the Strategy Board is renewed annually, allowing for fresh ideas and perspectives to guide the partnership's work.

The Future

Even though Cardiff is now a Gold Sustainable Food Place, **Food Cardiff** is committed to deepening collaboration across sectors, expanding successful initiatives, and exploring new opportunities for positive change. With its strong foundation and growing momentum, **Food Cardiff** is well-positioned to continue transforming the city's food systems and ensuring that good food becomes a reality for all Cardiff residents.

PART 2: PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES

AREA 2: Local Food System Action & Coordination



Objective 2: To provide leadership and coordination for local food activity towards embedding a new resilience in the local food system:

- Identify, inspire and create opportunities for collaborative and innovative food solutions across a diverse range of people and organisations.
- Build capacity in local food activity through guidance and expertise, covering resourcing, equality and diversity, funding, skills and other support, and by promoting best practise.

Sustainable Food Places Key Issue 2

Good Food Movement: Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement.



Food Citizenship

The idea that people can be more than passive consumers of food is central to the Sustainable Food Places model. As food citizens, a term championed by the Food Ethics Council, they have the power to make conscious decisions about buying, growing and sharing food that is good not just for their own health and wellbeing, but also for their communities and the planet. As food citizens, organisations and people can take positive action across the food system as the graphic developed by Food Vale illustrates:

Figure 8: Food system graphic from Food Vale website – <https://foodvale.org/charter/>





The theme of Good Food Movement sees the collective action of food citizens as central to the transformation of our broken food system. Importantly, this is not about ‘telling consumers how to behave’ but recognises the need to change systems and communities to ensure people have the opportunity for involvement.

As RCT’s Local Food Partnership states in their *Taith Bwyd*:

‘Public involvement transforms food from a commodity into a shared responsibility, energising a movement that connects people with the values of good food and community well-being.’

(RCT Taith Bwyd 2025–2030)

The partnership itself creates a space for the connection and collaboration of the public around food. They work hard to identify, map and promote the many groups and activities involving food in their areas, opening up opportunities for involvement as well as ensuring people know how to get support.



Public Engagement

Partnerships also hold a wide range of events, training, community meals and workshops over the course of the year, and many hold an annual or biannual food summit to engage their wider membership in strategic planning, networking and celebration. These happen at different scales, but each makes a difference in the lives of local people, while also contributing to wider shifts in the food system.

- Several partnerships have held local Food Conversations in connection with the national work undertaken by the [Food Farming and Countryside Commission](#), including Ceredigion, Cardiff and Carmarthenshire. By doing this, Local Food Partnerships are aiming to understand how people in their communities see food and the kinds of changes they would like to see in the food system.
- Caerphilly's Community Cooking Champion programme brings a chef together with a small cohort to explore cooking together over time. This develops peer relationships, confidence and a new relationship to food, with participants often going on to be key volunteers.
- Chwedlau Bwyd/Food Stories in Monmouthshire works to make food fun through storytelling and play, introducing children to new and healthy foods and expanding the take up of free school meals.
- Torfaen's 2024 food summit brought together over 200 people to help define its strategy. The central dialogue around food inclusion involved local residents, food businesses, farmers, community and third sector groups and representatives from the public sector. This has been central to Torfaen achieving the SFP Silver Award.

The use of small grants in supporting a wide range of local community groups, schools, faith institutions, third sector organizations and small businesses is one way that Local Food Partnerships have greatly expanded the involvement of diverse communities around food. Usually ranging from £150 to £5,000 pounds, these funds have served to start up new growing spaces, put on cooking classes and distribute slow cookers or blenders, support seed swaps and community dinners, provide infrastructure for food growing or distribution and more. Many examples of these are included throughout the report.





Case Study: Bwyd Abertawe

Building a Good Food Movement: expanding public awareness of food, empowering local food citizenship and building the momentum of local good food movements.



Creating a shift towards healthier and more sustainable food requires increased public awareness and active participation from individuals and institutions. It involves developing a movement of food citizens through inspiring communications; events that highlight the importance and joy of good food; opportunities for hands-on activities like growing, cooking, and sharing food; and building a strong network that connects food-related groups.

Bwyd Abertawe serves as a prime example of how a strong food movement can empower individuals and communities to drive meaningful change within the food system.

The partnership spans a diverse region, from the bustling city of Swansea to the rugged coastline of the Gower Peninsula, and as a member of the Sustainable Food Places network, it was awarded a bronze award in 2024 for its work across the region.

CASE STUDY: BWYD ABERTAWE



To date, **Bwyd Abertawe** has over 600 members, including individuals, organisations, and community groups, all collaborating to promote sustainable food systems in Swansea.

Good Food Movement

"Our good food movement is raising awareness within the population of the benefits of sustainable food – to them, the local economy, the environment – and also understanding how they can connect with the sustainable food system as agents of change," says Mary Duckett, co-ordinator of **Bwyd Abertawe**. *"That is what I would say makes a good food movement – it's that we all get involved and really, really enjoy the deliciousness of a sustainable food system."*

"For Swansea, it's really important to get the citizens and organisations involved.... understanding the benefits of sustainable food – and when we're talking about sustainable food, we're talking about moving away from a food crisis system to one that is actually more seasonally aligned, has better nutritional value, so therefore is better for our own well being, the local economy and the environment."





Health and Wellbeing

One of the ways that **Bwyd Abertawe** has been building this momentum is by working with the Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS) to offer courses within the community.

"It's really fundamental to a good food movement to have that connection with community groups and organisations, and the voluntary Council is an excellent conduit for that, so that we can help raise awareness of the sustainable food movement at a community level, engaging all different people from different backgrounds and parts of Swansea," adds Mary.

Arron Ring from SCVS delivers health and wellbeing programmes in Swansea and also represents the third sector on the **Bwyd Abertawe** steering group.

"I run a six week programme based on cooking and nutrition, developing cooking skills and at the same time, promoting good nutrition in line with government guidelines," says Arron. "It's with people from the local community in Gorseinon and North West Swansea who have either referred themselves to the project or have been referred through their local GP, and just want a bit of support to improve nutrition and improve healthy lifestyles in general, develop cooking skills and make sustainable changes.

"We try to tailor our programs as much as possible to suit people's needs," continues Arron. "We tend to start quite basic, find out what people want and then, it's quick, easy, simple meals that people can adapt, use different varieties of ingredients, and use what they've got....it's basically just trying small changes that can have a long lasting impact on their health and well-being."

CASE STUDY: BWYD ABERTAWE



Volunteering opportunities

Bwyd Abertawe has been working with the team at Cae Tân to provide opportunities volunteering opportunities for citizens across Swansea.

"Cae Tân is a real leader when it comes to the example of Community Supported Agriculture in Wales and indeed in the UK and they've really been wonderful in creating engagement with their own customers. We've linked with them by bringing urban Swansea citizens, particularly those impacted by low income, for example, to have food growing experiences in these rural settings," explains Mary Duckett.

Eva Walter Jones, Head Grower at Cae Tân has relished the opportunity to work with Mary and the team.

"Bwyd Abertawe has allowed us to engage more people with the food that we grow and the food system – and what that looks like for us is a lot of people coming from inner city, Swansea; some of whom have hardly ever really left the city, and who know nothing about growing food so it can, it can be quite a shock!"



CASE STUDY: BWYD ABERTAWE

Eva continues by explaining some of the activities that they've offered through its collaboration with the food partnership.

"Volunteers will get involved with all sorts of tasks, from sowing seeds, planting, harvesting. It really depends on the volunteers and what their level of skills are, and what jobs we have on the day - but a big job for us is definitely harvest. We try and get our volunteers involved with harvest, because I think that's a really enjoyable thing for people to do - to be able to actually see like the fruits of their labour, and harvest beautiful veg, and maybe even take some home at the end of the day."

Building meaningful relationships in green spaces

EYST Wales provides ethnic minority people with the opportunity to reach their fullest potential through holistic, targeted, and culturally sensitive programmes covering education, employment, health, community safety and cohesion.

In Swansea, the EYST team has worked with the food partnership to offer food-related activities and opportunities to communities across the city, including volunteering at Cae Tân.

*"Our volunteers in EYST mentioned that they needed that connection to the rural environment," says Najma Ali, volunteer co-ordinator at EYST. "I started looking for other avenues to provide that connection and that's where **Bwyd Abertawe** came in. We started connecting and one of the projects was growing vegetables in Gower. It gave our volunteers a chance to explore other volunteering opportunities, but at the same time feel connected to the environment."*



CASE STUDY: BWYD ABERTAWE



As well as craving green space, many of those who volunteered at Cae Tân through EYST were looking for a deeper connection with food.

"A lot of our volunteers were looking for that kind of outlet, to be able to relax and have that kind of peace within their daily lives....most of them mentioned how it enhanced their well-being and how they were looking for something more. So I had to then look at other projects and how to connect with them," continues Najma. "They reconnected to fresh produce, and got them into growing their own food. In itself, it's a testament to the positive work that the project started - especially if you look at the volunteers that we work with in EYST - they're looking for that connection. They've come to an area where they haven't got family, they haven't got extended family. They're looking for that vital human to human connection."

Local businesses as part of the Good Food Movement

Bwyd Abertawe is also working closely with farmers, encouraging short supply chains and championing local produce.

"I always say that next to the soil, farmers are the cornerstone of our food system, so clearly, farmers need to be involved in a sustainable food network," adds Mary. "And a really good example is Alison at Gower Coast meats."

Alison Groves, owner of Gower Coast Meat, raises her cattle at Fairwood Common on the Gower and sells her sustainable meat across the region.

"We graze the cattle out here, and then we produce beef and sell locally," says Alison. "I think it's really important that we try to get the support of local people, to support local businesses. If I'm looking for anything, I try to find it locally and source locally. I think it's just better; sustainable, less food miles."

Alison is excited about working with **Bwyd Abertawe** on raising the awareness of sustainable food businesses operating across the region.

*"Working with **Bwyd Abertawe**, we get our name out there so we can offer our product locally to anyone who wants to try it," adds Alison. "If you can buy and support local*

CASE STUDY: BWYD ABERTAWE



businesses; support families, you're helping us make our living. We're also giving you a good product, rather than it travelling from another country across the world."

Shift in awareness

Arron Ring concludes by crystallizing what a good food movement is all about: "It's from the ground up.....it's the whole movement understanding and learning more about food and how we can just eat in a more sustainable and healthier way. I think the most beneficial thing to Swansea as a whole is connecting organizations and people..... it enables us to get to know organisations better and be able to better service them, because we get a better understanding of what's going on."



PART 2: PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES

AREA 3: Strengthening Community Food Resilience



Objective 3: To address the fundamental societal need for tackling food poverty and for supporting household food security across all citizens within the local community, including for those with protected characteristics:

- Encouraging the local availability, access and consumption of affordable, healthy and nutritious food for all community citizens, including for those with protected characteristics.
- Promoting a widespread awareness across the community of the importance of locally produced sustainable and healthy food (including within schools and education settings), and high levels of participation in social / community food related initiatives.
- Initiatives to maximize income through uptake of support and signposting – for example, Universal Primary Free School Meals, Food and Fun, Healthy start, etc.

Sustainable Food Places Key Issue 3:

Tackling food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food.



Tackling Food Poverty

Between the financial years ending 2021 and 2023, 21% of all people in Wales were living in relative income poverty (Welsh Government, 2024) and many organisations argue that financial hardship has become the new norm in many communities in Wales.

Local Food Partnerships report that the demand for emergency food aid continues to be higher than the supply and they can see that it's not reaching the root causes of poverty. The extent of the need, and the widespread local and voluntary action to help meet it, has made tackling food poverty a principal area of work for local Food Partnerships in Wales and across the UK.

Local Food Partnerships are supporting joint working across local areas to support the increased numbers of people facing food poverty by strengthening community food initiatives and developing new initiatives to mitigate the root causes of food poverty. They are helping to drive sustainable solutions for tackling food poverty, as well as strengthening the wider food system work. They are also helping local organisations respond to the need in a strategic, joined up way to maximise effectiveness and target resources to the areas of greatest need.

Local Food Partnerships have played a supportive role with the distribution of small grants, provision of advice and support, development of networks and connecting local authorities and third sector and voluntary groups to widen collaboration. They have supported the expansion of both breadth and depth of access with an array of wider activities and wrap-around services which maximise household income and reduce the dependence on emergency food aid.

They also provide space for organisations to take a step back from the intense responsibility of their day-to-day work to connect, think strategically and do long term planning. There is a constant tension between meeting overwhelming, immediate need and taking steps towards addressing underlying causes. Sustainable Food Places' holistic, systems change approach supports the emergence of new models to meet emergency need while also pushing towards longer-term collective food provision that provides more nutritious food and increased wellbeing, supports local livelihoods, builds social cohesion, and is better grounded in dignity and choice.

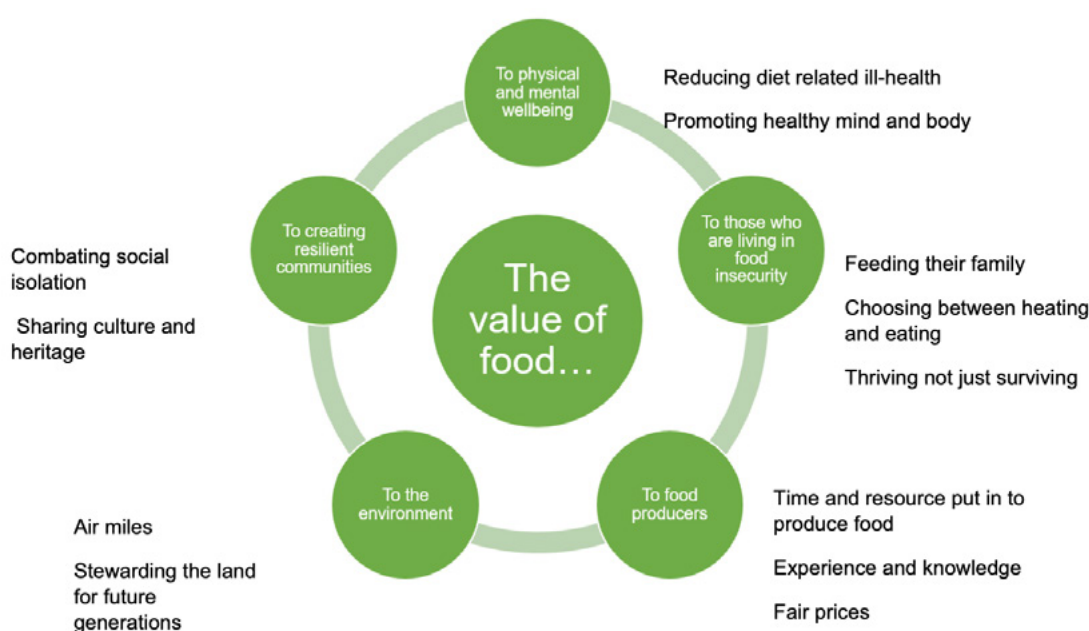
Some of the highlights across the Local Food Partnerships include:

- **Food Cardiff's Food Poverty Working Group brings together key actors tackling food poverty in the city. Cardiff Council sit on this group and take the lead in the income maximisation support, which between April 21 and March 24 have provided money advice to over 30,000 people, enabling people to claim a total of over £5m in one-off payments and identified over £58m in weekly benefits available to people. The Living Wage City campaign has led to 215 accredited Living Wage employers, resulting in almost 78,000 employees paid the Living Wage with 13,300+ of these having their wages uplifted.**
- **Blaenau Gwent, Neath Port Talbot, RCT and Swansea have all developed "Worrying About Money?" cash-first leaflets to signpost households to advice to maximise income, in collaboration with the Independent Food Aid Network.**
- **After identifying major barriers of cost and travel, Flintshire Food Partnership is supporting the establishment of a specialised food pantry that will ensure immigrant and refugee communities can cook meals that meet all their cultural and religious needs.**
- **The Merthyr Tydfil Food Prosperity Network is hosted by VAMT and attended by the Local Food Partnership coordinator (based in the Council). It comprises third sector and statutory organisations working collaboratively to address and**

mitigate the impact of poverty in the borough. The network meets regularly and ensures everyone knows what projects are operating where and when and often signposts to funding and support for groups.

- RCT has worked to embed a system change approach into its new strategy through a holistic vision of the value of food itself, understanding the importance of emergency food support while being able to see beyond it as seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9: The value of food from *RCT Taith Bwyd 2025–2030*



Tackling Diet-Related Health Inequalities

Acknowledging the importance of good food to health and wellbeing, all seven local Health Boards have staff on the steering groups of one or more of their Local Food Partnerships. Partnerships support a wide range of activities around health and improved diets in their local areas. These are overwhelmingly asset-based approaches, often moving away from language related to health or weight and towards an appreciation of growing, cooking and sharing food. All of the partnerships have supported a range of cooking activities across age groups and communities, reconnecting people to where their food comes from and the many ways it can be cooked. Projects delivered on the ground range from storytelling and growing/tasting activities to the involvement of chefs and dietitians in the development of higher quality school meals.



Case Study: **Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership**

Healthy Food for All: working to ensure that all are able to access healthy and nutritious food in a dignified and equitable way.



The **Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership**, led by Coordinator Chris Nottingham, seeks to ensure that all residents of Blaenau Gwent have equitable access to healthy, affordable food and includes collaboration with local authorities, health boards, and third-sector organisations. *"At the core of our mission is to make sure that every resident in Blaenau Gwent has fair access to healthy and affordable food,"* says Chris. *"Tackling food poverty, diet related ill health and access to affordable food is key to everything we're doing."*

A Growing Crisis

Blaenau Gwent faces alarming obesity rates, with 70% of adults and 29% of girls starting school either overweight or obese. In response, the partnership is working across the entire food system, with a particular focus on reducing health inequalities and improving access to healthy food.

CASE STUDY: BLAENAU GWENT FOOD PARTNERSHIP



"What we're trying to do is build on community initiatives that are happening across the borough to amplify the good work that's going on in Blaenau Gwent," explains Chris. "We're seeing that there's difficulties accessing food – whether that's the cost of food, poor transport or just local availability. Accessing unhealthy foods is the easier option, so we're working really hard in the community to make healthy, sustainable food choices more commonplace and easier for people to access."

Key initiatives aim to empower residents to make better nutritional choices, creating pathways to healthier lifestyles for people across the borough.

Several local projects are already making a tangible impact in Blaenau Gwent and are working to bridge gaps in food access whilst also fostering community engagement.

Llanhilleth Miners' Institute Food Hub

The Llanhilleth Miners' Institute offers a diverse range of food-related activities for people of all ages.

"We do a variety of food classes, which can be anything from healthy eating to specialist cuisine. We do youth cookery classes; a slow cooker club; a project that we call cook fresh; an emergency food pantry....it's quite a lot really!" says Jamie Nethercott, the food hub manager. "We also do mini cooks, youth cookery....we have single mums....we have working families....we do lovely family sessions and we do tend to see a lot of elderly."

Jamie credits the partnership for playing a pivotal role in the success of these initiatives. *"We all have different ideas with how we want to run things and do things, but as they say, two heads are better than one – and creativity and ideas definitely come from within the partnership."*

CASE STUDY: BLAENAU GWENT FOOD PARTNERSHIP



Sirhowy Hill Woodlands Trust

The work of the **Sirhowy Hill Woodland Trust** has evolved from woodland management to providing community allotments and cooking sessions for children. The food partnership has been supporting its work, including providing funding to create raised beds.

Susy Arnold from Sirhowy Hills Woodland Trust believes engaging children in cooking and nutrition is vital and runs workshops for schools and families, taking the produce from the allotments and cooking with it in their on-site kitchen.

"I think it all starts with children," says Susy. "Today, the children have cooked savoury muffins... we're trying to show them how to use real ingredient, real food, and not too much of it, and without any rubbish in it."

"This work would not exist without the food partnership. Its support is really, really important, because you can't do this sort of thing on your own, and we're all volunteers, so the funding is crucial."

Collaborating with Flying Start: Raising Awareness and Empowering Families

During the last few years, **Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership** has collaborated with the **Flying Start** team to raise awareness of the **Healthy Start** benefit, significantly increasing uptake.

CASE STUDY: BLAENAU GWENT FOOD PARTNERSHIP

"We identified that Healthy Start with an underused benefit in Blaenau Gwent so we've worked with the Flying Start team to raise awareness," continues Chris. "We've done this through surveys, engagement with the with parents, and the food partnership have been able to host training sessions for flying start staff, so we've been troubleshooting problems they've faced on the ground, and that's translated into an increase in Flying Start uptake."

Training and Education

In partnership with the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, the **Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership** has provided **Nutrition Skills for Life** training to Flying Start practitioners, ensuring that families receive the evidence-based information needed to make healthier choices.

Sherelle Jago is the Flying Start Programme Manager for Blaenau Gwent and has been working with the food partnership over the last four years.

"Access to high quality and nutritious food is a real issue for some families....so predominantly, the main focus has been around supporting access to healthy food and to also ensure that our families understand nutritional value of food as well," says Sherelle. "We run a number of different activities and events to ensure that families understand what support is available. Nutrition is something that all of our family



CASE STUDY: BLAENAU GWENT FOOD PARTNERSHIP



support workers are really passionate about however, we felt that we needed to have assurances that they were being given the right information," she adds. "So, as part of our Flying Start work and through additional funding brought in through Chris, we were able to provide Nutrition Skills for Life training to enable all of our practitioners to be suitably trained in order to give the correct messages to families, which, in turn, will hopefully change their eating habits allowing them to make healthier choices. We're now in a position to move our Flying Start community hubs to healthy eating zones, and we feel confident through our work with the food partnership that we can achieve that."

Marmot Region: A Strategic Step Towards Reducing Health Inequalities

Gwent is a designated Marmot Region meaning that its Public Service Board is committed to tackling inequity through action on the social determinants of health.

"Becoming the Marmot region has been a really useful step for Blaenau Gwent as it means that food now plays a central role in key decisions. It means that food now plays a central role for decision makers in the borough, and the most powerful impact of that is giving every child in Blaenau Gwent the best start in life, and key to that is good nutrition. And if we can give children in Blaenau Gwent the best start in life through accessing a better diet, then we've got a better chance at having a healthier future and of reducing health inequalities."

Addressing the Root Causes of Food Poverty

Access to healthy food is a fundamental issue in Blaenau Gwent, impacting residents' health and well-being. As Chris notes, *"If where people live dictates what food they buy - and in Blaenau Gwent, there's high access to takeaways or convenience foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar - and the cost of healthy food means that accessing healthy food is a luxury... people are more likely to access foods that are those calorie dense, nutrient poor, foods that are just convenient and much more affordable for people to feed their families of children starting school."*

The **Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership** showcases the power of collaboration between dedicated individuals, communities, and organisations. By addressing the root causes

CASE STUDY: BLAENAU GWENT FOOD PARTNERSHIP



of food insecurity, expanding access to nutritious food, and equipping residents with the knowledge and tools to make informed food choices, the partnership is fostering a healthier, more equitable food system for Blaenau Gwent.

Chris concludes: *"I came into this job passionate about food, ingredients, how to cook, where food comes from – but my work embedded in the community has really, really made me passionate about the power of being part of this social movement – seeing all the good work going on in the ground and being part of that change."*



PART 2: PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES

AREA 4: Stronger and More Diverse Local Food Systems



Objective 4: To raise the capacity and diversity of local food supply to satisfy local food demand:

- Developing sustainable local food supply relationships across agriculture, food businesses, community initiatives, and the public sector. In particular, improving direct supply connections between rural and urban and producer to consumer.
- Supporting the local supply of sustainably produced healthy food, including the uptake of environmentally responsible production methods, by encouraging community growing, horticulture and/or farm diversification.

Sustainable Food Places Key Issue 4:

Creating a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy.

Sustainable Food Places Key Issue 5:

Transforming catering and procurement and revitalizing local and sustainable food supply chains.

Sustainable Food Places Key Issue 6:

Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste.



Good Food Economy

A strong farming and horticulture sector with local processing, direct sales and/or access to local markets, locally owned shops, cafes and restaurants can create wider access to more affordable and climate friendly food. It also supports the creation of jobs and thriving small businesses particularly vital to rural communities, alongside improved health through healthier food options, and more vibrant high streets and stronger local economies. Local Food Partnerships are working to support wider

understanding of how action across this sector complements direct service around food insecurity through development of longer-term pathways out of food poverty. At the same time, they often find their grounding in food poverty action can make it difficult to find routes into the business and farming sector.

There are still a number of partnerships successfully bridging these divides to work across local supply chains. On the ground, this includes work to support farmers and market gardens with business training and networking; help to maintain and expand farmers markets, delivery vans and other infrastructure they need to bring their products to local consumers; and start up support for small business. Examples include

- **Food4Growth in Torfaen's award of small grants to 14 local businesses, among them 6 local farmers, to diversify and strengthen their business. It also convenes the Food Business Network for peer learning.**
- **RCT has supported local organisations through the Community Assets Transfer programme to access council-owned land for local social enterprise. One of these is developing a community supported agriculture model affordable to residents of the valley, alongside biochar.**
- **While the use of vending machines has been growing across the country to support direct sales of milk, cheese and eggs from farmer to customer, Pembrokeshire Food Partnership has pioneered their use for the sale of meat products.**

Partnerships are also working to help increase demand for higher quality locally produced food, promoting the circular economy and farmers, small producers and local ethical businesses through maps, blogs, publications, events and the development of festivals and food trails that connect local residents with where their food comes from.

- **Neath Port Talbot has created an extensive guide to local producers, small food businesses and community food action. It highlights everyone from local farmers to butchers to artisan bakers and community growers through interviews that bring to life all the knowledge and passion of their owners, and makes the case for better health, local connection and a stronger Welsh economy through support for local food. The partnership also supported a range of activities at the Neath Port Talbot Food and Drink Festival.**
- The [Vale of Glamorgan Food Trail](#) is in its 3rd year. In 2024 they featured 25 local producers through farm tours and tastings, and made the connections between food production, community, culture, health and nature across 10 days of events and workshops.





Case Study: Ynys Môn Food Partnership

A Sustainable Food Economy in Ynys Môn:

building prosperous local food economies by supporting local food businesses to grow and develop.



The **Ynys Môn Food Partnership** was established in 2020 with the aim of providing a strategic focus for food-related activities on Anglesey. Hosted by **Menter Môn**, the partnership is led by a project manager and focuses on supporting sustainable food practices that benefit both local businesses and the community.

Ynys Môn Food Partnership works towards the goals outlined in the Ynys Môn [food charter](#); promoting sustainable food for local people, strengthening community ties, and developing a sustainable food economy.

To further strengthen and support the local economy, the Local Food Partnership launched the **Ynys Môn Food Partnership Fund** in 2023 to provide financial backing to local and sustainable food projects. Since its inception, the fund has supported a wide range of initiatives, providing opportunities and vital funding to develop Anglesey's sustainable food landscape.

CASE STUDY: YNYS MÔN FOOD PARTNERSHIP



Supporting local food businesses

Talking of the progress made so far, David Wylie, Project manager for **Ynys Môn Food Partnership** explains; *"We've supported 11 projects including schools, community groups, Bwyd Da Môn, educational businesses, along with the Ynys Môn farming community. All of which are working towards the goals of the Ynys Môn Food Charter. In total we have received 46 applications for the latest round of funding, showing the demand for support from the Partnership."*

One of the first beneficiaries of the funding was **Anglesey Bees**, a local business that specialises in honey production and beekeeping courses. With the help of the grant, **Dafydd and Dawn Jones**, the owners of Anglesey Bees, were able to purchase essential equipment that significantly improved the efficiency of their operations.



CASE STUDY: YNYS MÔN FOOD PARTNERSHIP



"With the money, we purchased all the stainless steel work surfaces, the sink, the sub-clean flooring and the honey press, which is really important when you have to crush the honey out of the comb," explains Dawn. "It's made life much easier for us."

Dafydd Jones added how the partnership's networking opportunities have benefited their business: *"We've had a lot of help with networking with other food producers. We've had a lot of help and advice through that, and now we can offer advice too. It's good to be able to work together and make produce together too with other local food producers."*

Anglesey Bees is committed to keeping its business local, focusing on reducing food miles by selling exclusively on the island. Dafydd explains: *"We've made the decision to keep the business local to keep the food miles down, and the honey we produce is all created on Anglesey and is all sold here too. We received a Great Taste Award recently and that's helped with our sales, and we have lots of people coming here to buy honey and people who come on courses and so on."*

"We live in a Geo Park Unesco site, and that creates honey that's unique to use because of the influence of the rocks on the soil, the soil on the plants and the plants on the honey, so the environment is really important for us to be able to create our product."

CASE STUDY: YNYS MÔN FOOD PARTNERSHIP



Empowering Communities

Another project that's received funding from the **Ynys Môn Food Partnership** is **Caru Amlwch**, a not for profit organisation based in the Amlwch area of Anglesey, established to provide new and exciting opportunities to residents. One of their initiatives is an allotment space in Amlwch, established in 2019. However, they faced challenges with access to water on-site, and the grant from the Local Food Partnership enabled them to overcome this obstacle.

Julie Hughes, one of the Directors of **Caru Amlwch** explained how the funding made a difference. *"We have water here now because of the grant funding we received from the Local Food Partnership, which means people can grow more here as they don't have to carry water over. We've also started an 'honesty cart' so if we grow too much we can place that food on the honesty cart and the money goes back to the allotments so it completes the circle and it works really well."*



CASE STUDY: YNYS MÔN FOOD PARTNERSHIP



Research in Agriculture

In addition to supporting local food businesses, the partnership has also funded research initiatives. One such example is the **ADAS** project, which received £3,000 to study greenhouse gas emissions within the island's agricultural sector.

"ADAS supported a group of farmers to collect and analyse appropriate data from their farm enterprises, to help them understand what their baseline greenhouse gas emissions were and how these could be reduced," says David Wylie as he explains the significance of this project. "The audits were then compared against other members of the group and against suitable industry benchmarks within Agrecalc. Recommendations and action plans were provided to the farmers in individual reports with guidance on how they could consider reducing their emissions."

The project focused on grassland farms, which have a significant role in the local food supply chain. By providing farmers with tailored action plans and guidance on reducing emissions, the project aims to create a more sustainable future for food production on Anglesey.

Collaboration

Talking of the impact of the Local Food Partnership, David Wylie can see a unified effort on Anglesey with individuals, communities, public bodies and businesses coming together to improve the island's food environment. David concludes: *"To me, the food partnership is important because it brings together so many people, everyone's impacted by food in life so it's not just food businesses but it brings in the public sector as well."*

Catering and Procurement

Action around catering and procurement provides the scale necessary to support increased local production and transform local supply chains. This scale ensures it often remains the most difficult area for Local Food Partnerships to influence, given how much it has been centralised. Partnerships described challenges in understanding legal requirements relating to procurement, particularly where catering for schools and other institutions had been put out to tender.

Nonetheless, there is still action taking place at the local level. The Welsh Veg in Schools project originally piloted in Cardiff has since expanded to include first Carmarthenshire and Monmouthshire, and now Bridgend, Powys and the Vale of Glamorgan. The pilot continues to be an area of innovation and best practice highlighted within the SFP network across all four nations. Other partnerships have undertaken extensive studies of local supply, infrastructure and supply chains to explore what actions are needed to develop food supply chains and expand the amount of local food able to reach the public plate.

- Bridgend partnership has undertaken extensive mapping of its local supply chain, from producers to infrastructure and local business. This is in addition to their involvement in Welsh Veg in Schools.
- Bwyd Abertawe has undertaken two large studies of local supply chains and procurement in partnership with 4theRegion, who also lead on the Port Neath Talbot partnership. The [Gower Grown Winter Veg Project](#) brought locally grown veg into local schools, and the [Local Food Procurement Journey](#), undertaken in partnership with Swansea Public Service Board, convened catering and procurement professionals to explore how more local food can be brought into local procurement.
- Menter Môn is a lead on the Larder Cymru project, and in Gwynedd actively work to bring more locally grown and fresh veg into school menus.
- A number of partnerships are currently working to support development of food hubs able to support business to business trading and potentially meet the volume required by procurement contracts, they include Torfaen at the feasibility study stage, Powys, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire.





Case Study: **Bwyd Sir Gâr Food**

Catering and Procurement in Carmarthenshire: innovating how caterers procure food, making local supply chains more resilient and sustainable.



Bwyd Sir Gâr Food is dedicated to building a healthier, more sustainable, and fairer local food system for Carmarthenshire. Established in 2021, the food partnership is committed to strengthening local food networks and creating lasting change.

With one part-time coordinator and additional staff funded by Shared Prosperity, **Bwyd Sir Gâr Food** is hosted by Social Farms and Gardens. The partnership includes an active steering group with cross-sector membership. As Augusta Lewis, coordinator of **Bwyd Sir Gâr Food**, explains, *"Bwyd Sir Gâr is a collaborative, cross-sector partnership that brings together public sector institutions, private sector partners, and community organisations to take a holistic approach to developing the local food system."*

CASE STUDY: BWYD SIR GÂR FOOD



Food for the public plate

Carmarthenshire is an agricultural community, but also a post-industrial one, facing challenges such as food insecurity. *“The food produced here doesn’t always reach the people who live in the county,”* says Carwyn Graves, Chair of Bwyd Sir Gâr. *“As a food partnership, we are working to reconnect food production with local consumption, especially within public institutions. Our goal is to ensure that as much locally-produced food as possible reaches our children, elderly, and all those who depend on public services for their meals.”*

Bremenda Isaf: Strengthening Local Food Production

Bremenda Isaf is a 100-acre lowland farm in the village of Llanarthne nestled in the heart of the Tywi valley that forms part of Carmarthenshire County Council’s rural estate. This public land is now being used as a trial location for an exciting initiative to grow fresh, high-quality and affordable vegetables for the public plate – schools, care homes and cafés.

“Bremenda Isaf is owned by the County Council, and as a pilot, the Council has decided to establish the farm as a place to experiment with growing food for the community, to keep the food that is grown as close as possible to where it’s then consumed,” Carys Jones, Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Community Cohesion, and Planning Policy explains.

CASE STUDY: BWYD SIR GÂR FOOD



"The council's vision is that children and older people can have access to food that is grown locally - and that's why we've started with looking at supplying schools and care homes in the county."

Augusta Lewis adds: *"We're using public land here at Bremenda Isaf to grow for the public plate and support growers with access to machinery and we're exploring shared processing and aggregation facilities to streamline market access."*

"Public procurement is a really powerful way of supporting a fledgling horticulture sector. Here in Carmarthenshire, we are able to use public land and public facilities, to really be able to build confidence and develop those supply chains that will enable more Welsh food to get onto the public plate."

Carys Jones, Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Community Cohesion, and Planning Policy, agrees, adding: *"Local food is crucial because through local procurement, we can improve the diet of our population and provide healthier, more sustainable food options."*



CASE STUDY: BWYD SIR GÂR FOOD



Integral part of the food partnership

"The farm is an integral part of the food partnerships activity and delivery," says Alex Cook, Food Systems Development Manager at Carmarthenshire County Council.

"Here at Bremenda Isaf, we are growing, we are producing food, and we're providing an opportunity to aggregate that ties really nicely with a lot of our work around menu development in schools and building on years of work up to this point by the partnership and partners.

"The next steps for us here on the farm is to increase the scale of production to a lot more field scale, enable other growers to use the processing unit as an aggregation hub, but also build some infrastructure to allow for more community groups, social prescribing health and well being groups through a new community garden, which will act as a modern allotment model"



CASE STUDY: BWYD SIR GÂR FOOD



Growing at Bremenda Isaf

Last season, Bremenda Isaf grew a variety of crops including tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, carrots, fennel, and more. This year, the farm plans to push boundaries with early crops and larger-scale production.

Piers Lunt, Head Grower at Bremenda Isaf believes that by growing veg really well, on what is a relatively small area of land, you can demonstrate what's possible in an area like the Tywi Valley.

"It's really important for lots of reasons, obviously getting seasonal, organic, nutritious food onto the public plate, with all the health benefits that come with that," add Piers. "We're in the middle of a nature and climate emergency, and anything that we can do to enhance biodiversity on farms is a really welcome thing. And then, over time, we can invite people onto the farm and show them what that biodiversity enhancement looks like."



CASE STUDY: BWYD SIR GÂR FOOD



Local Food for local businesses

The Warren, a seasonal and organic restaurant in Carmarthen, is a key supporter of the local food movement. Owner Deri Reed also runs Cegin Hedyn, a community project that offers a pay-what-you-can model for local, seasonal organic food.

"Local sourcing is at the heart of our values," says Deri Reed. "In a global economy, it's increasingly difficult to find local vegetable growers. Bremenda Isaf is the closest we have, and their scale allows us to rely on them for consistent, fresh produce. Their commitment to sustainable, nature-friendly growing practices keeps money local while offering fantastic flavour and freshness."

Looking Ahead

As **Bwyd Sir Gâr Food** continues to grow, the vision is clear: build a resilient, sustainable local food system that serves both the community and the environment. By supporting local food production, increasing supply and working with procurement across the public, private and third sector, the local food partnership is helping to create a future where local, healthy food is accessible to all.



Food For the Planet



The final Sustainable Food Places theme looks at food that is good for the planet. All the Local Food Partnerships have done work with local producers ranging from community gardens and allotments to market gardens to farmers. Often the first step has been mapping growing activity and supporting development of a grower's network, in turn supporting increased collaboration and resource sharing. Most partnerships have supported the expansion of local growing spaces through the use of small grants, many of them then networked with food banks, pantries and community cafes to expand access to fresh, healthy veg. Partnerships have provided additional support such as the development of training and resources, and events such as seed swaps and harvest festivals. Some have also helped open access to land through facilitating connections or supporting applications for Community Asset Transfers.

While all expressed a desire to support the growth of horticulture and collaborate more with local farmers to expand agro-ecological practices, many were just starting this work. Initial steps have included mapping to build a picture of agriculture and understanding of the landscape. Others have successfully funded training, supported access to land, and partnered with Farming Connect and the National Farmers Union to work more collaboratively. Work with small-scale growers and farmers has also usually includes a dimension around climate action or protection of biodiversity, reflecting the underlying systems approach.

- In distributing small grant funding, Neath Port Talbot Food Partnership has focused on community growing to complement the council's food insecurity support. All of their grants of funding came alongside funded time from expert growers to provide the additional support needed to ensure project success.
- The Ynys Môn Food Partnership led by Menter Môn has worked on a carbon capture study with ADAS and the Grassland Society to look at how to reduce the carbon footprint of local farming.
- In Conwy, the food partnership supported Incredible Edible to hold a No Waste 'Veg-X' stall on the first and third Saturday of the month between May and September of 2024. Encouraging local growers to bring by surplus produce, they successfully supported no-waste, no-packaging and low food-mile local fruit and veg access for local residents.
- Monmouthshire Food Partnership has sponsored three 12-month places in a mentoring scheme to support regenerative farming. Working with Ben Taylor-Davies (Regen Ben), the farmers are working to improve their soils, building both their financial and environmental resilience through their practice.



Case Study: **Bwyd Powys**

Food for the Planet in Powys:

tackling climate change by supporting local sustainable food production, protecting the environment and minimizing food waste.



Launched in March 2022, **Bwyd Powys** aims to provide Good Food for Powys, supporting local, sustainable, and healthy food for communities and the environment. The partnership has **four main goals** and also encourages everyone to join its Food Charter, which promotes sustainable food practices across the county. The partnership's work reaches from the town of Brecon in the south to Newtown in the north, impacting communities throughout this vast rural region.

CASE STUDY: BWYD POWYS



Tackling the Climate Emergency through Sustainable Food Systems

Bwyd Powys is deeply committed to tackling climate and nature crises by focusing on sustainable food production and consumption. Richard Edwards, Chair of **Bwyd Powys**, explains that working with many partners allows them to connect different projects under themes like **Food for the Planet**, helping to address the climate crisis with food-related solutions.

“Working with a range of partners means that Bwyd Powys has a strategic overview and can tie many different projects together and look at them thematically, like we do with Food for the Planet,”

Richard Edwards, chair of **Bwyd Powys**.



CASE STUDY: BWYD POWYS



Key Projects Making a Difference

Future Farms

One of the biggest initiatives that **Bwyd Powys** is involved with is **Future Farms**, which is helping new growers get started. The project has seen a 36-acre county farm being divided into three 8-acre units and offered to local growers, providing them with land and infrastructure to grow food. These new growers will supply the Welsh Veg in Schools project and will be able to make the most of other local procurement opportunities to supply into the public sector. As Lydia, one of the growers, explains, *"We grow so little of the fruit and veg that's consumed in Wales and that means it's coming in from further afield...right across the globe and at the same time, a lot of the food we produce in Wales is being shipped off to other places, so in a time of climate crisis and us needing to think about where our food is coming from and where it's going....trying to grow food here that's going to feed the people who live here."*



CASE STUDY: BWYD POWYS



The partnership has also helped fund key infrastructure, like polytunnels, to help the growers with their initial set up costs.

Tilly, another grower, values the local focus, saying, *"We've got some really great land for growing.....and having shorter supply chains is really important and we're hoping to feed local people directly. It's also really important to keep local knowledge and skills involved with growing food."*

Sustainable Transport for Local Food

To help transport food sustainably, **Bwyd Powys** worked with Newtown Dial a Ride to secure funding for an electric minibuss. This will enable the transport of both people and food, reducing the carbon footprint of local food distribution as well as enabling people to connect with local communities. *"If we've got all this new veg that's being moved around, some of it hopefully going into public procurement, also some going into the local economy, into shops, hospitality, veg boxes, then for that we need transport as well,"* Richard Edwards.



CASE STUDY: BWYD POWYS



Local Food Trails

Bwyd Powys is in the process of reviving local food trails so that producers can showcase their produce and local residents and visitors can find out more about the local food that they can enjoy, helping to keep money in the local economy and benefiting the environment too.

Ifor Humphreys is one of the producers who's hoping to get involved as a way of sharing his story of the nature-friendly way that he farms and the local grass-fed wagyu beef that he produces in the north of the county:

"We make enough silage in the summer to last us for the winter, and that's the majority of what they eat. We also supplement the young stock and the finishing cattle with barley and wheat which comes from my neighbouring farm just over that hill up there – using local produce and cutting down the food miles. Most of the Wagyu sold in the UK comes from Australia or South America and so we're trying to do something special by producing locally here."



CASE STUDY: BWYD POWYS



Time Traveller Project

Bwyd Powys is currently partnering with Bannau Brycheiniog National Park on the Time Traveller Project, which uses food to engage young people with climate change. The project takes young people back in time to explore past food production methods and compare them with today's practices.

Eleanor Greenwood, a facilitator of the project, explains, *"Food is a really useful topic to use to talk about climate change and food impact because it covers everything. When we're looking at producing food within Bannau Brycheiniog, we're also looking at creating sustainable jobs for the future, for the next generation who can stay and contribute to this community and to this special landscape. It's also a way of focusing on the challenges the national park faces; so that's climate, nature, rivers, people and place."*

Collaboration for a Stronger Future

By working together, **Bwyd Powys** can bring together ideas from across the public, private, and third sectors to enhance existing projects and make the most of new opportunities.

As Richard Edwards says: *"For me, the best thing about being part of a food partnership is the ideas....hearing about other organisations and discovering we're all on this journey together. In the past, there were ideas and there were people developing them but they weren't together in one place. You can do so much more together than you can apart."*

PART 3

Moving Forward

This report presents the vital role that the 22 Local Food Partnerships are playing in shaping a resilient and sustainable food system in Wales. Their collaborative approach demonstrates the power of coordinated action in tackling food insecurity, improving health outcomes, strengthening local economies and delivering a food system fit for future generations.

Throughout this research, Local Food Partnerships reported immense pride in their work. Local Food Partnerships co-ordinators and members strongly believe in the difference they can make, based on what they can see on the ground, and what is backed up by their monitoring and evaluation.

Local Food Partnerships welcomed the fact that the food system has been recognised as the focus in the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' Cymru Can Strategy. They felt that this focus was already prompting public bodies in their areas to work on sustainable and healthy diets. They were pleased to hear that the Welsh Government are working across portfolios to recognise the cross-cutting nature of the food system and they reported being eager to see how this would be reflected in the Welsh Government's Community Food Strategy. Many Local Food Partnerships want to take on the challenge presented by Professor Tim Lang on civil food resilience and some are already starting to work with Local Resilience Forums as recommended in the [Just in Case: 7 steps to narrow the UK civil food resilience gap](#) report.

Throughout our almost 100 hours of interviews and discussions with Local Food Partnerships as part of this research, Local Food Partnership co-ordinators and members regularly reflected on what they felt they need in order to continue delivering this work. In this final part of the report, we have summarised some of the common themes emerging of what Local Food Partnerships think the "recipe for success" is going forward.

The Recipe for Success according to Local Food Partnerships:

A NATIONAL VISION:

A clear national vision for Welsh food systems

Local Food Partnerships hoped that the upcoming Community Food Strategy will provide clear direction to help direct Local Food Partnership work at a local and regional level, although some wanted to see a more comprehensive national food resilience plan or legal framework for food policy.

PUBLIC BODY COLLABORATION:

More cross-organisational working within public bodies.

Local Food Partnerships welcomed the Future Generations Commissioner's focus on food within Cymru Can and support the development of detailed guidance for public bodies on local food policy levers. They hope that this guidance will support more cross-departmental collaboration on food within public bodies, rather than food being seen as the domain of one or two departments.

A DEDICATED COORDINATOR:

Every area to have a dedicated Local Food Partnership co-ordinator in post.

Local Food Partnerships recognised the value of having a coordinator to dedicate time and create spaces to build connections and trust across the steering group and wider partnership, enabling shared responsibility and effectiveness when developing and delivering the strategy. They emphasised the need for secure funding and a supportive host organisation to enable this.

SECURE FUNDING:

Multi-year funding in order to create long-term strategic change.

Local Food Partnerships appreciated the significant investment into Local Food Partnerships by the Welsh Government and Sustainable Food Places, but many felt that the short-term nature of funding was a barrier to creating long-term strategic change. They were pleased to hear that funding will be available for the full 25/26 financial year and think that the multi-year funding from Social Justice from 2025-2028 will have a transformational impact.

THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS ACCORDING TO LOCAL FOOD PARTNERSHIPS:

A CLEAR FRAMEWORK:

Clarity about what a Local Food Partnership is and what they are expected to do.

Local Food Partnerships described the usefulness of the Sustainable Food Places framework to understand the model and communicate what a Local Food Partnership is to stakeholders. Local Food Partnerships also felt that the cross-government support in 2025/6 and the shared Welsh Government objectives will provide direction. They welcomed the clear aims for Local Food Partnerships to work on governance, co-ordinated action, community food resilience and the development of diverse and resilient supply chains.

A SUPPORT NETWORK:

To connect with other Local Food Partnerships to share challenges, best practice and work collaboratively.

Local Food Partnership coordinators said they felt fairly unique in their systems approach and often were the only staff member working on the partnership, which they felt can be isolating. Local Food Partnerships appreciated the support given to them by Food Sense Wales and Sustainable Food Places, such as the monthly Community of Practice. There is an increasing desire from Local Food Partnerships to work regionally and collaborate with each other.

“I think partnerships are key in in tackling this situation that we’re in right now, and working together, we can achieve a lot more than trying to do this on our own, for sure. So having local food partnerships are just integral to be able to make serious change.”



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For further information on the Local Food Partnerships in Wales please visit

www.foodsensewales.org

For further information on the Sustainable Food Places scheme please visit

www.sustainablefoodplaces.org



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