



Chelmsford City Council Cabinet

12th September 2023

Food Plan

Report by: Cabinet Member for a Greener and Safer Chelmsford

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Purpose

To approve a Chelmsford Food Plan

Options

1. Approve the Food Plan
2. Approve an amended version of the Food Plan
3. Not approve the Food Plan

Preferred option and reasons

Option 1 is the preferred option as the Food Plan as it will contribute to achieving the best possible environment for the health of residents and a thriving, sustainable local economy.

Recommendations

To approve the Food Plan

1. Background or Introduction

- 1.1 The Council and Livewell Chelmsford are committed to achieving the best possible environment for the health of residents and a thriving, sustainable local economy. To effectively prioritise efforts and allocate resources based on identified needs, the Council approved the Health & Wellbeing Plan in October 2022.
- 1.2 Within the Health & Wellbeing Plan a specific commitment was made to develop and implement a Food Plan with the core aim of raising awareness across the District of healthy eating, improving access to good-quality food, and promoting sustainable diets, all of which contribute to Chelmsford's vision of becoming a healthier and more sustainable District.
- 1.3 The Food Plan has been developed in line with the guidance provided by the 2021 National Food Strategy, which emphasises the importance of collaboration between local authorities and communities to develop food strategies. The Food Plan has been linked with other local strategies and plans, through extensive conversations and collaborations with various partners, creating a cohesive and integrated approach to addressing food-related challenges.

2. Food Plan

- 2.1 The Plan, attached in Appendix 1, identifies the significant role of food in people's lives, encompassing its social, cultural, and economic importance. It strongly emphasises the need for sustainable and healthy diets whilst acknowledging the challenges posed by cost-of-living pressures. The plan is centred around improving health and wellbeing, recognising the impact of food choices on individuals and the environment. Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic have shaped its development, reinforcing the commitment to a thriving and sustainable local economy.
- 2.2 The Plan is structured to provide a focused approach within the Health and Wellbeing Plan, specifically addressing the relationship between healthier diets and achieving healthier weights. It aims to raise awareness about the impact of food choices on personal health and the environment, empowering individuals to make informed decisions. The Plan's comprehensive approach includes initiatives to improve access to good quality food and enhance community nutrition.
- 2.3 The Plan, developed in partnership with Livewell Chelmsford, is aimed to inform and engage the community. It focuses on three fundamental areas: Healthy Eating, Food Poverty, and Sustainable Food. It is hoped that the Plan will empower individuals to make healthier food choices, improve access to affordable and nutritious food, and encourage sustainable diets that play a role in tackling the climate and ecological emergency. Through this approach, the Plan seeks to promote overall wellbeing, address food poverty, and foster a sustainable food system within the District.

- 2.4 An Action Plan contained within the Food Plan has been developed to support the implementation of the Food Plan. This Action Plan has been approved by Livewell Chelmsford, demonstrating its alignment with the objectives of the Food Plan. It will serve as a roadmap, outlining a collaborative approach that spans across the District to raise awareness on the three main focus areas of the plan. The Action Plan builds upon the existing commendable work and seeks to integrate the efforts of the Council with the broader community initiatives carried out by partners. Through this coordination, the Action Plan will facilitate collective action in pursuit of the Food Plan's goals.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 The development of the Food Plan involved a thorough three-stage consultation process. In the first stage, engagement was initiated with local food aid organisations across the district to gain insights into their needs and identify existing gaps. Building on this initial feedback, the second stage of consultation focused on gathering input on the vision, aims, and objectives of the Food Plan. This stage commenced in January 2023 and involved soliciting feedback from both internal and external stakeholders. These stakeholders included provider organizations, the NHS Mid Essex Alliance, Primary Care Networks, Essex County Council, EPUT, Essex Wellbeing Service, and voluntary sector organizations within the district. The consultation process aimed to elicit valuable perspectives, encourage stakeholder participation, and gather information about existing initiatives and activities aligned with the Food Plan's objectives.
- 3.2 After the second stage of consultation, a draft copy of the Food Plan was produced. This draft was used to reconsult with organisations that had actively participated in its development. In addition, partners interested in contributing to the Action Plan were invited to engage in one-on-one discussions to explore collaboration opportunities aligned with the plan's objectives. Based on the outcome of these discussions, a draft Action Plan was formulated and shared with the partners who took part in the third stage of consultation. Their feedback and review were sought before presenting the finalised Action Plan to Livewell Chelmsford. On July 18th, 2023, the Action Plan was reviewed, approved, and endorsed by Livewell members.
- 3.3 Overall, the consultation process received a positive response from partners, indicating broad agreement on the ambition and objectives of the Food Plan. Partners enthusiastically expressed their commitment to supporting the plan's goals and outlined specific ways their organisations would contribute to their achievement.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Food Plan represents a significant step towards establishing a healthier and more sustainable food system in Chelmsford. It will serve as a catalyst, uniting various stakeholders to align and amplify efforts aimed at promoting healthy eating and sustainable lifestyles. By actively engaging with the community and fostering partnerships the Plan will support the Council's overarching objective

of empowering individuals to enhance their health and wellbeing. Through collaboration facilitated by Livewell Chelmsford and Mid-Essex Alliance, partners can pool their collective expertise and resources. This collaborative approach will maximise the potential for residents to lead healthy lives while fostering improved health outcomes.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Food Plan

Background papers:

None

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: Increasing the uptake of sustainably produced local food will reduce food miles

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: N/A

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Livewell Chelmsford Delivery Partners

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Chelmsford Health & Wellbeing Plan



CHELMSFORD

FOOD PLAN

2023



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

THE AMBITION OF THE CHELMSFORD FOOD PLAN

Food is central to our lives; socially, culturally, and economically. Ultimately, food affects every part of society and can have immediate, long-term effects on our health as well as our local and global environment. From quality and appeal to general nutrition, food is a subject on which everyone has experience and an opinion.

The way we respond to food, and our everyday food choices, are inextricably linked to our social, cultural, and emotional experiences. Our physical and mental wellbeing, including behaviour, concentration, ability to learn, memory, and effectiveness in our daily lives, are all affected by what we consume. We all make food choices many times a day, regardless of our background or culture, where we grow up or where we live, and these choices can significantly impact our lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of resilient food systems and raised public awareness of the connections between food, health, poverty, consumption, supply chains and purchasing patterns.

Chelmsford City Council and Livewell Chelmsford are committed to achieving the best possible environment for the health of residents and a thriving, sustainable local economy.

We want Chelmsford, including the large urban areas of Danbury and South Woodham Ferrers and rural communities, to be a place where everyone can find healthy and affordable food that supports their health and wellbeing and that of their families, the environment, and the local economy.

The Food Plan (the Plan) aims to raise awareness across the district about healthy eating and sustainable diets to help Chelmsford become a healthier and more sustainable food city. Achieving this for all sectors of our society will be challenging. To reach its goal, the Plan must be meaningful and resonate with the people it is intended for: residents, communities, businesses, and local organisations. To be sustainable, the Plan must positively support and influence a sustained cultural change in attitudes to food. The Food Plan underpins the Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan, a partnership plan with a shared set of aspirations for health improvement through collaborative partnership working, that Livewell Chelmsford and other key stakeholders support. The development and implementation of the Food Plan will be overseen by Livewell Chelmsford. However, we want and need all Chelmsford communities to take ownership of the document and help achieve its aims in the best ways they can. A consultation process supported the development of the Plan, with partners contributing towards its understanding of what is happening in the district and where opportunities lie in its broad focus areas.

To advance the plan's vision, an action plan is in active development. This comprehensive

action plan, detailed in Appendix 1 of the Plan, will provide a structured roadmap for translating the Plan's aspirations into tangible actions. This strategic approach will ensure a systematic and effective means of realising the Food Plan's objectives. This effort underscores a commitment not solely to envisioning change but to actively support positive transformation in Chelmsford's food landscape and enhancing the overall wellbeing of its vibrant community.

The Food Plan encompasses three broad focus areas:

- 1) **Healthy Eating:** Help people to make better food choices across the life course for better health.
- 2) **Food Poverty:** Improving access to healthier food for all
- 3) **Sustainable Food:** Promoting healthy and sustainable diets that contribute to addressing the climate emergency.

The Food Plan serves a number of functions:

- To help provide a focus for the Health and Wellbeing Plan relating to how healthier weight might be achieved through healthier diets.
- To give people access to information about how their food choices impact not only their health, but also the environment.
- To capture all linked activity that helps people get better access to better-quality food, or improves the nutrition of our community.

Our principles:

The Food Plan adopts the principles and ways of working outlined in the Health and Wellbeing Plan, which underpin all health and wellbeing work in Chelmsford:

- 1) **Partnership working:** Commitment to a holistic and collaborative approach to improving the health and wellbeing of people in the district, enabling statutory and voluntary sector organisations to work collaboratively and build on existing assets (A Mid Essex Asset Mapping report has been produced to support health and care partners in an Asset Based Community Development approach).
- 2) **Prevention and early intervention:** Focus on improving the social determinants of health that contribute to the causes of ill health, poor life choices and health conditions.
- 3) **Increase communication and make use of technology:** Ongoing and effective communication, co-production and engagement with people and health and care partners about health issues. We will raise awareness of local activities and events by using the Livewell platform for information and guidance to help communicate positive health and wellbeing messages.

The Food Plan also adds the following principle:

- 4) **Enabling:** We want to ensure it is possible for residents, communities, businesses, and local organisations to develop and implement programmes that contribute to the ambitions of the Food Plan.

CHAPTER 2

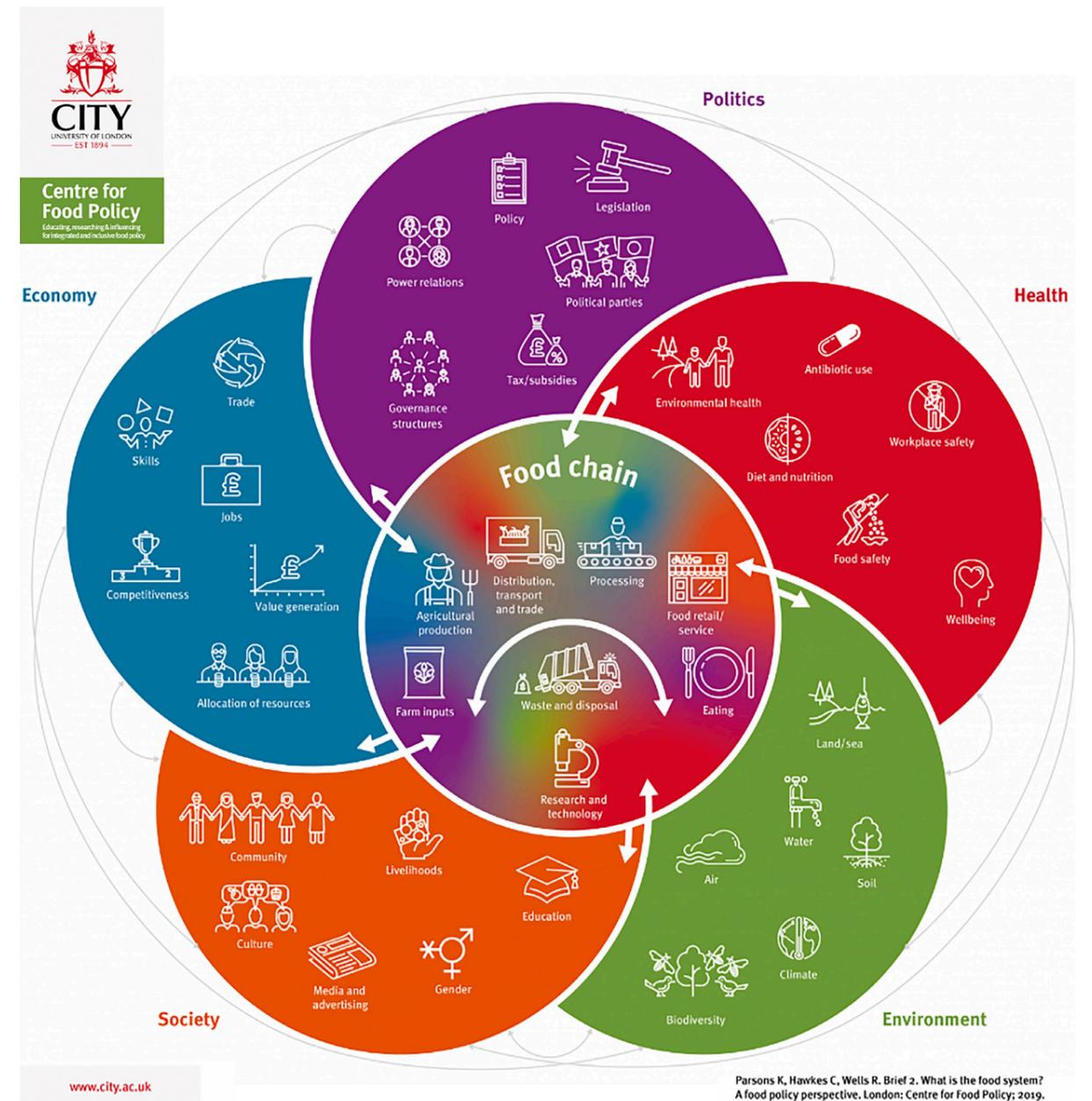
WHAT IS A FOOD SYSTEM?

In developing the Food Plan, it is important to provide a basic overview of the elements that comprise a food system. The production, processing, transportation, and consumption of food are all part of the intricate web of operations that make up a food system. The governance and economics of food production; its sustainability, the amount of food wasted, how food production impacts the natural environment, and the effects of food on both individual and population health are examples of issues that relate to the food system, as shown in the accompanying food system diagram.

Population health is a key area of consideration in food systems, particularly considering that diets are major contributors to the global burden of diet-related conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

The following model from the Centre for Food Policy displays the various interconnecting dimensions of the food system. These include:

- **Economics:** A food system is an economic system, as the food chain makes a significant contribution to most national economies.
- **Politics:** Food is political, in that there are policies which affect the food system and what people eat.
- **Environment:** Food production needs optimal environmental conditions, such as the air and climate, the sea, land, and the diverse flora and fauna which thrive on them. However, the modern food system is a major contributor towards the deterioration of the natural environment.
- **Health:** A food system influences diets, nutrition, and food safety and well-being. However, the modern food system is also associated with many health issues. Malnutrition and diet-related disease are among the world's largest causes of ill-health and early death.
- **Society:** Food can act as social glue, create community cohesion, and contribute to the regeneration of socially deprived areas. Food forms parts of people's identities and social aspirations, and links to important traditions and cultural representation.



Source: The Food System, Centre for Food Policy, 2019: depicting the interconnecting dimensions of the food system.

CHAPTER 3

THEME 1: HEALTHY EATING

HEALTHY EATING: WHY IT MATTERS

A healthy and balanced diet is the foundation of good health. Our diets can help us feel our best and make a big difference to our long-term health. The Food Plan aims to raise awareness across the district about healthier eating and accessing healthier diets, with the aim of reducing excess weight and obesity in children and adults. It is estimated that 58.1% of adults (18+) are classified as overweight or obese. The prevalence of excess weight and obesity among children in reception year is 21.7%. National levels of excess weight and obesity are still increasing and by 2050, foresight modelling indicates that 60% of adult men, 50% of adult women, and 25% of children under 16 could be obese.

Poor diet and obesity are leading causes of premature death and mortality and are associated with a wide range of diseases including cardiovascular disease and some cancers. In 2019, The Global Burden of Disease, noted diet as the fourth-highest risk factor for premature death.

Evidence also indicates that harmful diets which pose the highest risk are low in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds, fibre, and calcium. They are also high in sodium, red meat, sugar, processed meat, and trans-fat. Research shows that eating a healthy and balanced diet can optimise short and long-term health, and reduce the risk of many health conditions. The Institute for Health Metrics states that healthier diets can save one in five lives every year.

Research also shows that most people in the UK do not meet government dietary recommendations. It is estimated that on average, an adult's diet contains 200 to 300 more calories each day than are recommended. Meanwhile, children who are already overweight eat up to 500 more calories per day than required. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey, (NDNS), which is designed to collect information on the general population's food consumption, nutrient intake, and nutritional status, continues to show that overall, people consume too much saturated fat, added sugars and salt, and not enough fruit, vegetables, and fibre.

The main findings of the NDNS data, taken from 2016 to 2019, show:

- Free sugars intake exceeded the government's recommendation of providing no more than 5% of the total energy intake in people aged 2 years and over. The average intake was 9.4% for adults aged 65 and over, and 12.3% for children aged 11 to 18.
- Saturated fatty acids (saturated fat) intake exceeded the government's recommendation of no more than 10% of total energy intake in all relevant age groups. The average intake was 13.1% for children aged 4 to 10, 12.6% for children aged 11 to 18, 12.3% for adults aged 19 to 64 and 13.3% for adults aged 65+.
- Fibre intake was below the government's recommendations for all age groups.

This data underpins the government's call for the UK population to lead a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet; based on the Eatwell Guide which shows the different types and proportions of food and drink needed for a healthy and balanced diet. Guidelines include eating a minimum of five portions of varied fruit and vegetables per day, choosing lower fat and sugar options, and drinking six to eight glasses of water each day. The Eatwell Guide can also be used to make healthier choices when deciding what to eat; whether cooking at home or eating out in a restaurant.

It is also important to understand that the relationship between food and health is very complex and there are many interrelating and personal factors to consider when supporting people to make healthier food choices. Among others, they include sociocultural norms, the local community, individual choices, and family environment. Understanding how to address inequalities and diet disparities in the focus area is also important, as adults and children living in lower-income households are more likely to have diets which are high in sugar but low in fibre, fruits, vegetables, and fish. Children from the 20% of least well-off families consume around 29% less fruit and vegetables, 75% less oily fish, and 17% less fibre than the most well-off 20%.

DATA INSIGHT: Chelmsford District Profile

-  **21.7%** of children in **reception year** are overweight or obese
-  **31.1%** of children in **year 6** are overweight or obese
-  **65.1%** of **adults** are classified as overweight or obese
-  **35.2%** of adults aged 16 and over meeting the **'5-a-day'** fruit and vegetable consumption
-  **67.2** per 100,000 (density of fast-food outlets in 2017)

RESIDENT INSIGHT:

What helps you make better food choices?

"Knowing what is healthy and monitoring my weight"

"Meal planning"

"Cheaper healthy food"

"Trying new things once then decide"

"Labelling, prices, nutrition info, availability"

"Parents and school"

SOME OF THE EXISTING INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE HEALTHY EATING INCLUDE:

Bags of Taste	A mentored course which facilitates life-long dietary and financial change by proving that cooking affordable, healthy meals can become a habit.
Livewell	A campaign shared across all 13 local authorities in Essex, supporting residents to improve their health and wellbeing.
The Eatwell Guide	A pictorial summary of government recommendations on eating healthily and achieving a balanced diet.
NHS Better Health	A national campaign to motivate and enable people to lead active and healthy lives. Better Health offers free tools and support to residents who want to plan towards healthier eating habits.
Introducing Solids Workshop	An Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service for people with babies aged 4-6 months. This two-hour workshop provides NHS-approved nutritional information and advice about how to introduce solid foods to babies.
My Weight Matters	A 12-week programme that focuses on healthy eating, portion management, and keeping active.
Essex Wellbeing Service (EWS)	EWS provides Essex residents (excluding Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock) with access to health checks, stop-smoking services, weight-management courses, and emotional health and wellbeing support. EWS also offers information about how to maintain a healthy weight to improve overall health and wellbeing.
C.H.I.M.P.S	A child weight-management programme that aims to change children's, parents', and carers' behaviour by increasing their skills and knowledge in nutrition and physical activity.
The BDA Food Fact Sheets	Downloadable resources written by dietitians, providing information on dietary best practices in order to stay healthy.
D.E.A.L.	A free, informative, and supportive programme for children at secondary school and their families.

FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE OUR EFFORTS IN SUPPORTING HEALTHY EATING INCLUDE:

Schools	Support schools to promote awareness of nutrition, increase cooking and gardening skills, and increase positive healthy eating behaviours.
TuckIN project	Increase uptake of the healthier eating project TuckIN by food businesses throughout the district.
Livewell Development Accreditation	Enhance the use of Health Impact Assessment on forthcoming strategic developments through the Livewell Development Accreditation.
Food Charter and Pledge	Develop a Food Charter, whereby organisations and local businesses can sign up to support one or more of its aims.
School Food Standards Pilot Project	A school standards compliance pilot led by the Food Standard Agency, designed to help children develop healthy eating habits, with knowledge about how to access healthier and more nutritious food.

CASE STUDY: BAGS OF TASTE

Name of project	Bags of Taste Home Mentored Cooking Course
Name of organisation	Bags of Taste
Project aims	To identify local residents who are struggling with their food budgets and show them how to cook delicious meals for less than £1 a portion.
Description of project	Local organisations including schools, social prescribers, and family support are contacted and asked for referrals.
	Students are interviewed and if accepted, receive a FREE bag of ingredients. They are then mentored via WhatsApp or phone over a two-week period while they cook three meals in their own time. They are then asked for feedback.
Key outcomes	To show people how to reduce their food budget, by encouraging them to cook low-cost, delicious meals using fresh ingredients that are easily available.
	To support them while they cook the meals. To offer ongoing support in a Facebook group when they have completed the three dishes.
Anything else to note?	The success of this method has been well-documented over the past three years.



CHAPTER 4

THEME 2: FOOD POVERTY

FOOD POVERTY: WHY IT MATTERS

The Food Ethics Council states that food poverty means: “an individual or household isn’t able to obtain healthy, nutritious food, they have to eat what they afford and not what they choose to.”

Food poverty is the inability of individuals and households to secure an adequate and nutritious diet. It can affect those living on low incomes, with limited access to transport, and poor cooking skills. Food poverty is also often described as food insecurity, which includes the practical and emotional struggle people can experience when they do not have enough money for food. An understanding of food poverty, its cause, and how it affects health, is an important part of the Food Plan.

Since the pandemic and the rising cost-of-living crisis, there has been an increase in food insecurity and poverty, with people on a low income being disproportionately affected. The Food Foundation highlights the prevalence of this, particularly in households with children. National research on the impact of the cost-of-living rise shows that two-thirds of UK households are cutting back on essentials, selling items or dipping into savings to cover essential shopping. There is also a significant increase in the number of people who are turning to food banks.

Recent findings by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) show that the proportion of consumers who could not afford to eat a healthy balanced diet has increased significantly. Additionally, the proportion of consumers using cheaper cooking methods e.g., slow cooker, instead of an oven to heat or cook food has significantly increased.

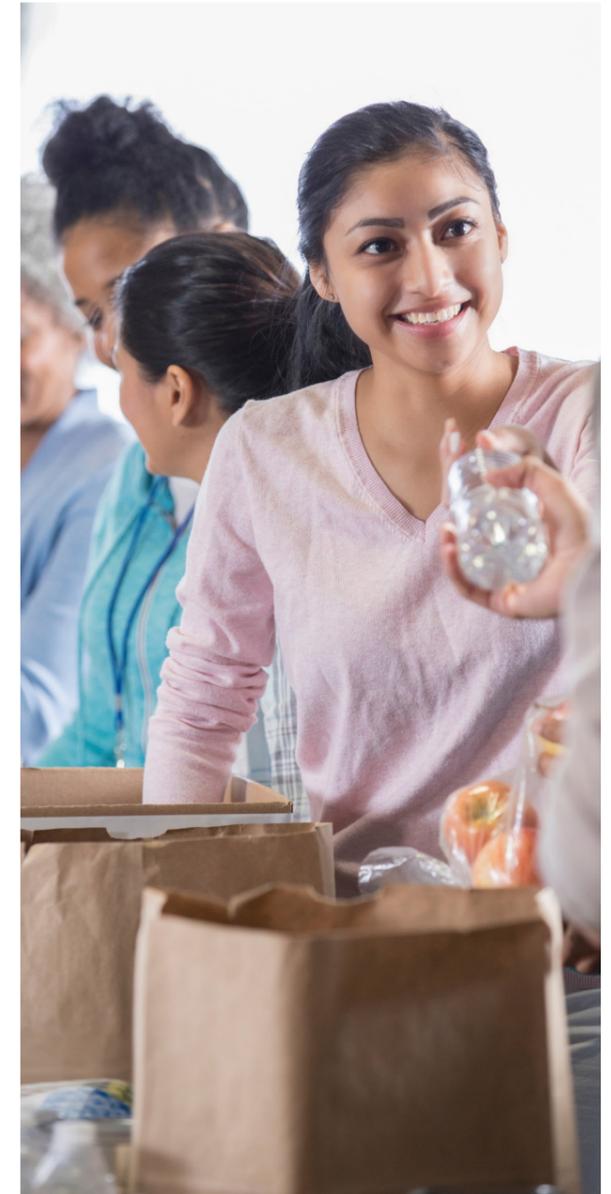
Evidence shows that price and affordability are major determinants of the food people choose to buy, especially for people on a low income. The Broken Plate Report (2022) indicates that healthier food options are nearly three times more expensive per calorie compared with less healthy options. The poorest fifth of UK households would need to spend 43% of their disposable income on food to meet the government’s recommended healthy diet.

The causes of food poverty or insecurity are complex. When a crisis in finance or personal circumstances hits, food budgets, are frequently the first to reduce to make room for other essential living expenses such as rent or fuel. Food poverty has a number of negative effects on people’s health and wellbeing, including an increased risk of dietary deficiencies because healthy and nutritious food is often more expensive than food high in fat, salt and sugar.

The latest Family Resources Survey shows that around five million people in the UK lived in food poverty between 2019-20. In 2020 this was 8% of the population, and data from The Food Foundation suggests food insecurity levels rose to affect 9% of the population in January 2021. The Trussell Trust has also seen an increase in food bank use of 123% over the past five years.

The above national figures show an increase in food poverty, and that anyone can be affected. Children who are unable to access free school meals during the holidays, individuals using food banks for the first time following a job loss, low-income parents who skip meals so their children can eat. All these instances are symptoms of inadequate and/or insecure incomes, increased living costs, rising debt, and financial problems for households living with disability and mental health issues.

Such symptoms, however, do not affect everyone equally. National figures show household food insecurity rose from 8% to 19% for ethnic minority households and 41% for households with three or more children. A 2020 study revealed that two out of every three households referred to a Trussell Trust food bank included one or more disabled people; a disproportionate impact that has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 outbreak. Bangladeshi (43%) and Black British (38%) groups, for example, were the most likely to report a loss of income since Covid-19, making them vulnerable to household food insecurity.



DATA INSIGHT:

Key issues impacting food poverty in Chelmsford



10.8% children live in poverty

3,484 children in the district



167 out of **312** Chelmsford ranked 167th least unequal local authority in England for income



Between 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023 Trussell Trust distributed a total of

7,455 food parcels to **4,208** adults and **3,247** children.



21% of residents with less than **£125** discretionary income per month



8.3% of older people in poverty (income deprivation)



15% of residents in receipt of any working age benefit



67.2 per **100k** population Density of fast food outlets

RESIDENT INSIGHT:

Does anything impact your ability to buy healthy food?

"Cost"

"Price and availability"

"Money and other financial obligations, increased energy bills"

"Cost, availability, supermarket locations"

"Money and cost"

"Deals on bad foods"

SOME OF THE EXISTING INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS FOOD POVERTY INCLUDE:

Food Banks	Providing emergency food and support for Chelmsford residents.
Chelmsford Food Alliance	An open collaboration between partners who provide meals, food parcels, and other assistance to hundreds of residents.
Holiday Hunger (Essex ActivAte)	Holiday activity sessions that support families with healthy meals; also promoting the importance of eating well and moving more.
Cooking Skills	An Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS) cooking booklet that aims to support low-income individuals and families with healthy eating.
NHS Healthy Start Vouchers	A scheme that helps eligible families to buy healthy food and milk.
Chelmsford Connects	A local activities website that helps residents get in touch with local charities, voluntary groups, and community sector services.
Chelmsford City Council	Planning policies seek to enhance and protect community facilities and explore ways in which important spaces could be used for valuable functions including education, food banks, and community supermarkets.
Community Fridge	A CHP initiative at Parkside Community Hub that helps local residents gain access to good food, donated by the local community and businesses, that would otherwise go to waste.
Sanctus	A community space where individuals with complex needs can access food and support, while also promoting collaboration with key service providers to offer an integrated assistance approach.

FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO ENHANCE OUR EFFORTS IN ADDRESSING FOOD POVERTY INCLUDE:

Social Supermarket	Launch of a social supermarket for Chelmsford offering discounted groceries to residents who are most in need.
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CASE STUDY: CHELMSFORD FOODBANK

Name of organisation	Chelmsford Foodbank
Project aims	We provide at least three days of emergency food to local people in crises. We are part of the Trussell Trust, whose vision is to see an end to hunger and poverty in the UK and we are working with them to see an end to the need for foodbanks.
Description of project	<p>People in need of food are referred to us via partner agencies who work with those who may be at risk of food poverty. The referral system works well to support people through their crisis, and voucher codes are issued immediately on an electronic system so there is no need for a delay between expression of need and access to food.</p> <p>When people come to our Foodbank centres – we now have seven open at a variety of times and across the city – they are welcomed, accepted, and treated with dignity, value, and respect. Each person has the opportunity to talk with a volunteer ‘Signposter’ who listens and will try to signpost people to further help and support as is required. In addition to the three days’ worth of food, people are able to pick up our available toiletries and household goods.</p> <p>All the food is donated by the public; churches, schools, businesses, and individuals have all got behind the project and the generosity that we witness is outstanding. The food is all collected at our warehouse on Beehive Lane, sorted, stored and made into boxes of nutritionally balanced food for around three days. These boxes are then transported by our van to the centres where they will eventually be decanted into bags for those accessing our service.</p> <p>We have recently started an initiative with Citizen’s Advice to offer Cost of Living Advisers in our centres so that people have the opportunity to gain some free advice and support towards positive change in their situations.</p> <p>We also house Peabody advisers at two of our centres and are developing a Community Money Advice centre to provide support with issues surrounding debt.</p>
Key project outcomes	Success for us would look like demand decreasing to the point where we feed fewer people. However, unfortunately, we have seen need rising over the last year, and particularly over the last few months. This year (Apr 2022 – Feb 2023) we have fed 6373 people; when last year during the same period we fed 4423. Previously, demand was only that high during the pandemic, when we fed 6200 from April 20-March 21.



CHAPTER 5

THEME 3: SUSTAINABLE FOOD

SUSTAINABLE FOOD: WHY IT MATTERS

The United Nations (2010) defines sustainable diets as: “dietary patterns that promote all dimensions of individuals’ health and wellbeing, have low environmental pressure and impact, are accessible, affordable, safe and equitable, and are culturally acceptable.”

Current evidence suggests that 15-30% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the UK come from food. Most occur from agriculture, food manufacturing, and transport, with meat and dairy consumption responsible for over 50% of emissions. More than a fifth of the food purchased by UK households (7.1 million tonnes annually) is reportedly wasted; most of which is avoidable fruit and vegetable waste.

Avoidable food waste has a significant effect on climate change and in the UK, 5-10% of GHG emissions come from food waste. In Chelmsford alone, 350 tonnes of food are thrown away every week. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations body responsible for evaluating the science related to climate change, has identified food waste reduction as one of the key responses that can significantly contribute to climate change mitigation. Additionally, food waste has a notable financial impact on households, which is crucial in the context of food insecurity: on an annual basis, the cost of purchasing food that has not been consumed amounts to £470. Families with children may lose up to £700, and the average UK resident £200.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), EAT-Lancet, Fischer and Garnett from the Food Climate Research Network (FRCN) and The Association of UK Dietitians (BDA) Sustainable Diets Specialist Group, sustainable diets must be nutritionally adequate for the health of a population. Sustainable diets can be synonymous with healthy diets, which means as well as improving health, there is a significant opportunity to reduce GHG emissions from food systems.

However, caution is required. Not all healthy eating patterns are guaranteed to be sustainable, and a diet that has a low environmental impact may not be nutritionally adequate. For example, sugar has a relatively low environmental impact, whereas perishable fruits and vegetables can have a high environmental impact due to their high wastage, greenhouse energy use, and air freight.

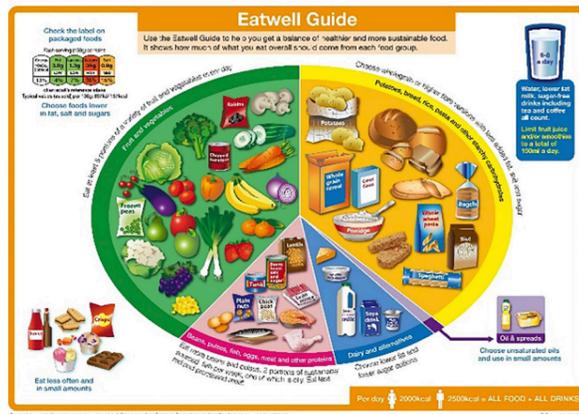
Overall, evidence consistently highlights similarities between sustainable and healthy diets. In general, less reliance on livestock products - particularly beef and dairy - is favoured, with a shift to more plant proteins such as whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds, and less consumption of pre-packaged or highly processed foods, particularly those high in fat, salt, and sugar.

Red meat 	Red meat < 70g of cooked red meat/day or <500g/week 	Processed meats 
Plant proteins 	Prioritise beans and lentils, soya (beans, mince, nuts, tofu), mycoprotein (Quorn™) nuts and seeds. 	
Fish 	From sustainable sources and follow oily fish recommendations.	
Dairy 	Moderate dairy consumption. Use calcium fortified plant-based alternatives where needed. 	
Potatoes, bread, pasta, rice and other starchy carbohydrate foods 	Recommend wholegrain. Recommend tubers such as potatoes. 	
Fruit and vegetables 	Seasonal + locally produced vegetables/fruit or use tinned/frozen. 	Air freighted, pre-packed and prepared fruit and vegetables. 
Portion control 	Animal proteins  Dairy produce 	High Fat, Sugar and Salt (HFSS) foods 
Hydration 	Tap water and unsweetened tea or coffee over soft drinks 	
Reduce food waste 	Especially perishable fruit and vegetables. 	Any food waste should be recycled 

 Avoid  Reduce  Moderate  Increase

Source: Sustainable diet recommendations, One Blue Dot – the BDA’s Environmentally Sustainable Diet Project

According to the Carbon Trust report (2016), the Eatwell Guide is an example of a sustainable and healthy diet that produces environmental benefits. Following the Eatwell Guide recommendations could result in 31% reduction in GHG emissions, 17% reduction in water use, and 34% reduction in land use, thus increasing life expectancy if all recommendations are met and energy requirements are not exceeded. It may also prevent 17.9 million disability-adjusted life years over the current population's lifetime due to lower rates of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and colorectal cancer.



Source: Sustainable diet recommendations, One Blue Dot – the BDA's Environmentally Sustainable Diet Project

Another universally-recommended diet for adults that is good for both people and the environment is The Planetary Health Diet, which is based on the EAT-Lancet findings. A planetary health plate should contain roughly half of the plate's volume in fruits and vegetables, with the other half made up mostly of whole grains, plant protein sources, unsaturated plant oils, and (optionally) minimal amounts of animal protein.

This 'diet', which is based on health considerations and is compatible with many traditional eating habits, does not suggest that everyone in the world should consume the same foods. It merely suggests food groupings and intake ranges that, when integrated into a diet, would optimise human health. Local interpretations and adaptations of The Planetary Health Diet are required to account for variations in culture, geography, and demographics.



Source: The Planetary Health Diet, the EAT- Lancet Commission on Healthy Diets From Sustainable Food Systems.

The concept of 'food miles' is frequently used as a guiding tool for sustainability, with the common view that reducing food miles will have a positive environmental impact. However, without also considering other indicators, food miles may fall short of providing the most detailed picture of what's going on behind the scenes. About 50% of the food consumed in the UK is produced abroad; food can even travel hundreds of miles within the UK to get to the consumer. Although transportation does have an impact on the environment, it often makes up a relatively small amount of overall GHG emissions (as little as 11%), with production making up a far greater portion.

According to DEFRA, importing food from regions with lower production impacts can be less harmful to the environment. For example, tomatoes grown in Spain have a much lower GHG output, even after accounting for transportation, than tomatoes grown in heated greenhouses in the UK. How we get our food also has an impact on the environment. It is estimated that car trips taken by UK consumers when purchasing food account for 48% of all vehicle miles and 13% of all GHG emissions associated with food transport. Therefore it is critical to eat not only locally, but also to consider which produce is currently in season.

For that reason, to reduce our environmental and social impacts, we must understand the distances, methods, and alternatives to our food choices.

DATA INSIGHT:

-  **15-30% of UK greenhouse gas emissions come from food**

-  with most of these occurring in **agriculture (45%), food manufacture (12%) and transport (12%)**

-  **meat and dairy consumption is responsible for over 50% of emissions**

-  **5-10% of UK greenhouse gas emissions come from food waste. 11.5 tonnes of food are wasted every year with 60% coming from households**

RESIDENT INSIGHT:

- What is a sustainable diet and why do you think we need it?
- "To reduce carbon emissions"
 - "Eating seasonally and locally"
 - "Good for the environment"
 - "Food that doesn't destroy the environment"
 - "Natural foods, sourced as locally as possible, less meat and fish, more fruits and vegetables, ideally in season"
 - "Plant-based, local produce, no food waste. We need to stop global warming and conserve resources."

SOME EXISTING INITIATIVES TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE DIETS INCLUDE:

Love Essex, Love Food	An Essex campaign that promotes ways to reduce, reuse and recycle food waste.
Love Food, Hate Waste	A campaign by the international climate action charity WRAP, raising awareness about the impact of household food waste with tips and advice to reduce avoidable food waste.
Love Your Chelmsford	A point of reference for 'all things green' in Chelmsford supporting residents to eat more sustainably.
Chelmsford City Council (The Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration)	Focus on reducing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions and on developing plans to create a more sustainable future for the area.
Tree and Woodland Planting	A greening programme to significantly increase the amount of woodland and tree coverage in Chelmsford.
Community Allotments	Promotion of several allotment sites (public, managed privately or by parish councils) to give residents the opportunity to grow their own fresh fruit and vegetables.
Growing Project	An Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service growing project at Chelmsford West family hub, supported by RHS.
Chignals & Mashbury Jubilee Community Orchard	A community focal point that brings local people of all ages together to plant and cultivate local varieties of fruit trees.
FareShare	A UK-wide charity that fights hunger and food waste by redistributing food that would otherwise go to waste to the food aid network in Chelmsford, supporting vulnerable people.
Too Good To Go	An app that helps reduce food waste by selling unsold food from businesses to nearby residents. Unsold food can be purchased for as little as £2.

SOME OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO FURTHER ENABLE SUSTAINABLE DIETS INCLUDE:

Grants	Award small grants to community groups and schools to support food-growing activities
Green Spaces	Promote healthy placemaking principles such as access to green spaces and community facilities.
Built Environment	As part of the Review of the Local Plan, an Open Space Assessment update will be undertaken to help inform future needs for new allotment sites
Food Procurement	Raising awareness across the district, about the provision of healthy and sustainable local food in retail, catering, work, and public places.

CASE STUDY: LOVE YOUR CHELMSFORD

Name of project	Love Your Chelmsford [LYC] – Eating Green
Name of organisation	Chelmsford City Council
Project aims	To encourage people in Chelmsford to live more environmentally sustainable lifestyle, specifically in relation to their diet choices and food origins.
Description of project	<p>Currently, the global food system is one of the most damaging activities on our planet. This activity can be broken down into three key areas: how we grow our food, how we transport our food, and how much food waste we produce.</p> <p>Food takes vast amounts of water, land, and labour to produce, so we need to repair our relationship with food by enjoying and making the most of every piece.</p> <p>The LYC Programme has an ongoing campaign to encourage residents to 'Eat Green' by following more sustainable food habits. These include reducing our use of high-carbon foods, growing our own food or purchasing locally-grown.</p>
Key project outcomes	The campaign is ongoing and is a permanent fixture on the LYC website. We have had particular success with our Recycling and Sustainability Film, which features a section on 'Eating Green' and has received 70,000 views on social media. We've also received positive engagement from leftover Christmas food recipes.
Anything else to note?	<p>The most carbon-intensive food by a country-mile is beef. This is due to the land space required to keep cattle and because they belch methane [a gas more than 20 times more damaging to our environment than carbon dioxide]. It has been stated that the single best thing we could each do is to completely cut meat from our diets.</p> <p>This can make discussing 'eating green' challenging with some audiences, as diets are personal and the healthiness of a meat-free diet is still contested. However, choosing to eat locally-produced organic food not only cuts the carbon from transportation, but also clear positive health benefits.</p>



Source: Love Your Chelmsford

CASE STUDY:

FOODCYCLE CHELMSFORD

Name of project	FoodCycle Chelmsford
Name of organisation	FoodCycle
Project aims	<p>Connect communities: help strengthen and build resilient communities by bringing people together to share healthy, delicious meals.</p> <p>Support mental health, wellbeing and reduce loneliness: enhance the health and mental wellbeing of all by creating welcoming spaces for people from all backgrounds and walks of life to have conversations together.</p> <p>Nourish the hungry: improve nutrition and reduce hunger by cooking healthy meals for those in need, leading to improved food knowledge and changes in behaviour.</p> <p>Promote sustainability: change attitudes to food and society's impact on the environment by cooking with surplus ingredients.</p> <p>Inspire change: share the virtues of our community dining model and the voices of our guests to gain greater support and speed our expansion, enabling us to help more people and more communities.</p>
Description of project	<p>We are FoodCycle, and our vision is to make food poverty, loneliness, and food waste a thing of the past for every community.</p> <p>We connect communities to reduce loneliness and food poverty – working with thousands of volunteers and surplus food to help everyone who needs us. By creating welcoming spaces for people from all walks of life to meet, eat, and have conversations, and by offering a weekly telephone Check-in and Chat, we are supporting people's health and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>By cooking with surplus ingredients, we promote healthy, sustainable attitudes towards food and its impact on the environment and help people to learn more about healthy food.</p> <p>We aim to inspire greater change by sharing the impact of our community dining spaces and the voices of our guests to encourage more people to join and support FoodCycle, so we can help more people and more communities.</p>
Key project outcomes	Served 628 guests, gave away 81 takeaways, and saved 1,970kg surplus food in the last year.
Anything else to note?	We run every Thursday serving at 5:30pm at Springfield Park Baptist Church.



Source: FoodCycle

FOOD MAP

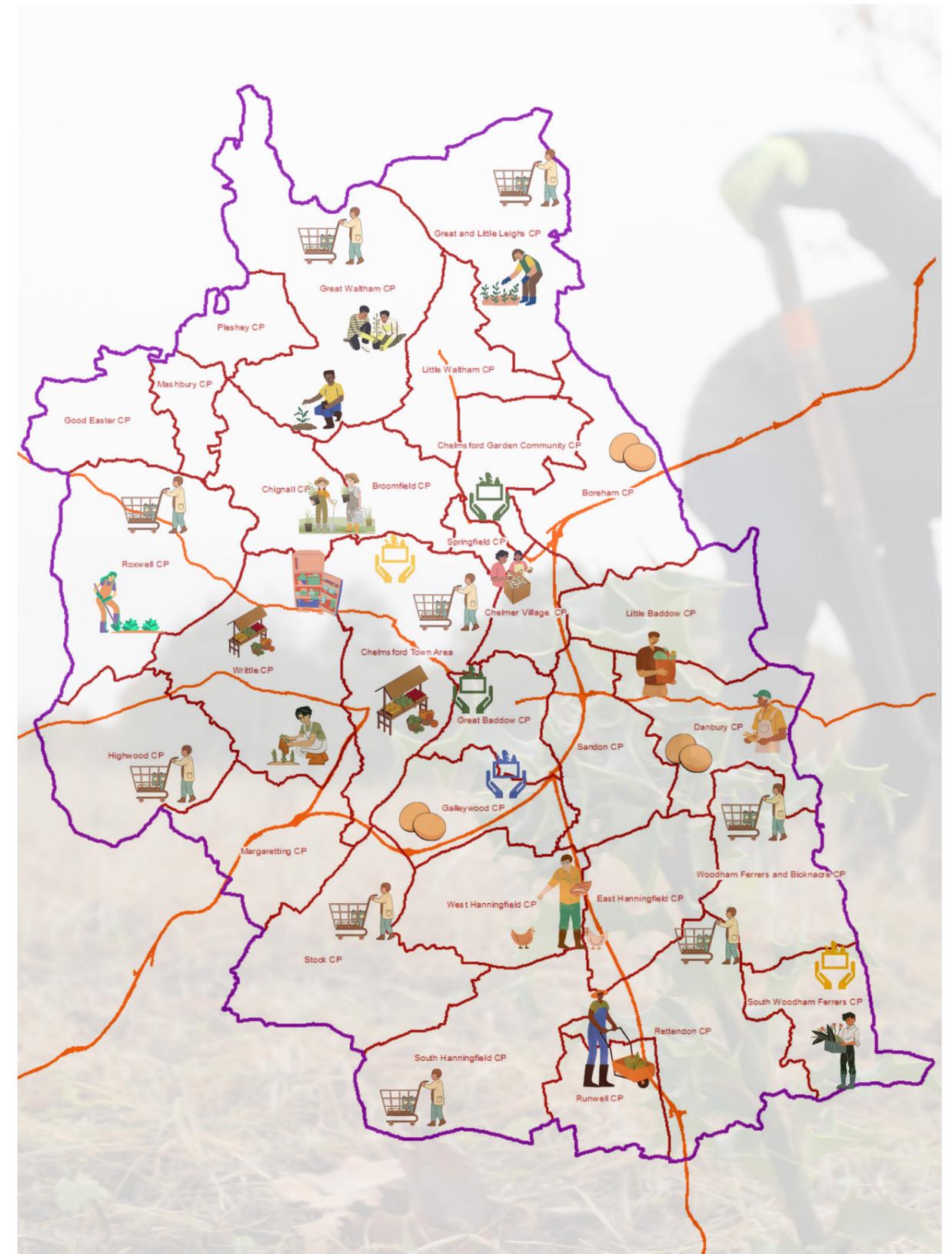
A local food map is being developed to capture community food resources for residents.

Categories will include:

- **Grocery stores** – supermarkets and convenience stores.
- **Allotment sites** – spaces where residents can come together to grow their own fruits and vegetables.
- **Markets** – places where residents can choose from a wide variety of fresh food support small, local, family-run businesses.
- **Farms** – where residents can experience how food is raised.
- **Free-range eggs** – local grocery stores that sell only free-range eggs.

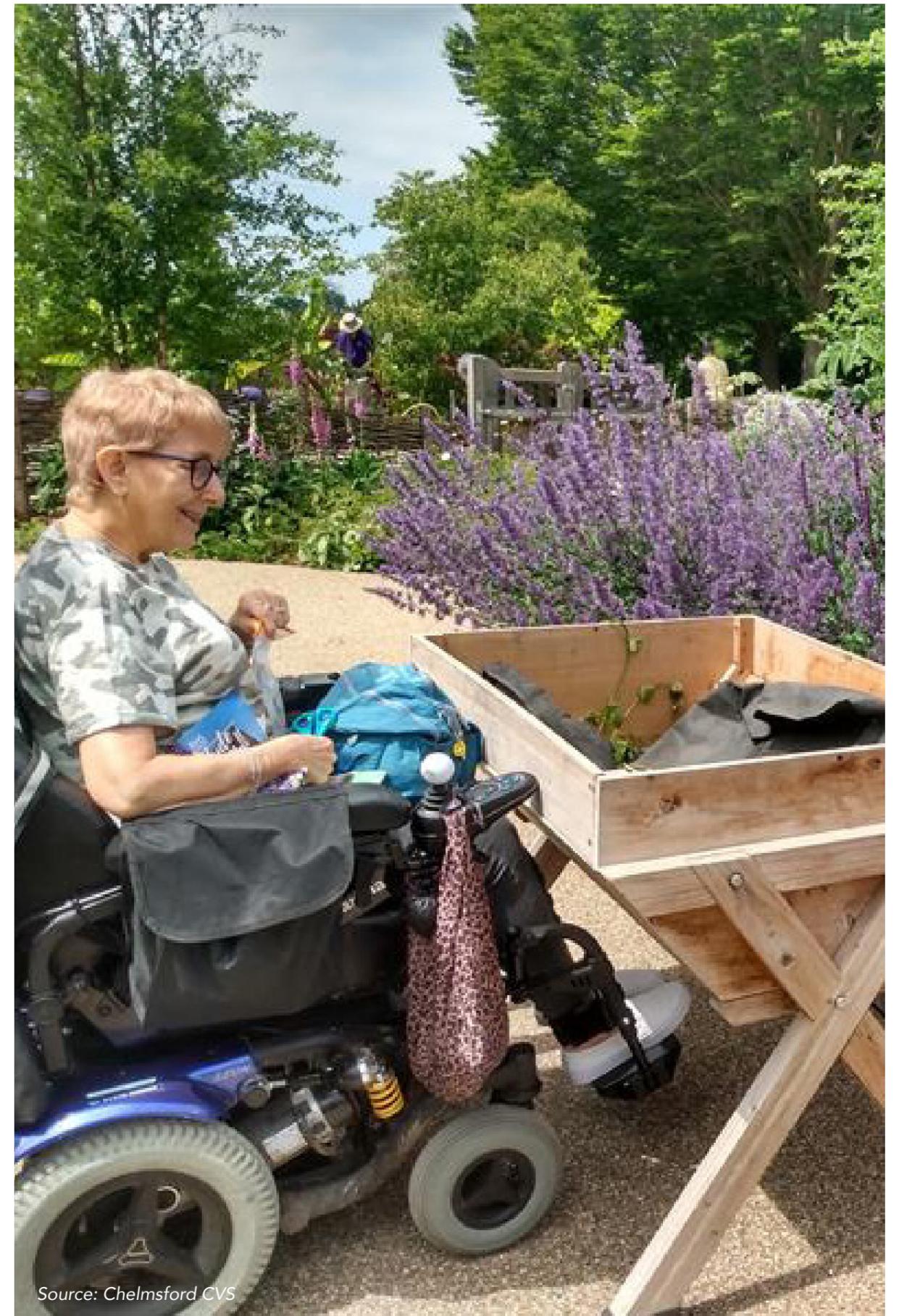
- **Food banks** – resources for individuals in need as well as those who want to help. A valid foodbank voucher is usually required to claim food.
- **Community meals** – locations providing free meals to residents in need and/or a chance of social interaction.
- **Community cafés** – locations that provide free meals to residents in need and/or a chance for social interaction.
- **Community fridges** – public spaces where residents and businesses can donate excess food to the local community: a resource both for those in need and who want to help.

Click on the relevant point in the map for more information and contact details.
You can view the map full-screen here:
<https://rb.gy/eigt7j>



GLOSSARY AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1 The Global Burden of Disease**
The Global Burden of Disease is a tool that provides a comprehensive picture of mortality and disability across countries, time, age and sex.
- 2 The Eatwell Guide**
The Eatwell Guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.
- 3 The Food Standards Agency**
The Food Standards Agency is a government department responsible for food safety and food hygiene in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 4 The Trussell Trust**
The Trussell Trust is an NGO and charity that works to end the need for food banks in the UK.
- 5 Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
Greenhouse Gas (GHGs) are gases in the earth's atmosphere that trap heat.
- 6 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)**
DEFRA is a ministerial government department supporting our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries.
- 7 National Diet and Nutrition Survey**
An annual survey designed to assess the food consumption and nutritional status of a UK representative sample of 1,000 people per year (500 children, 500 adults) aged 18 months upwards, living in private households.
- 8 Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan**
The Plan provides information on the health and wellbeing of residents, the contributions of Chelmsford City Council, services, key priorities, and collaborative efforts with partners to address these priorities.



Source: Chelmsford CVS

APPENDIX 1 - CHELMSFORD FOOD PLAN

OUR VISION: A Thriving Community with Nourishing, Accessible, and Affordable Food, Promoting Health, Sustainability, and Economic Growth.

In the pursuit of effectively implementing the Food Plan, an Action Plan has been developed. This Plan has been formulated to serve as a strategic roadmap, outlining a collaborative approach that spans the entirety of the district with the overarching aim to increase awareness across the three key focus areas of the Food Plan.

Built upon a foundation of commendable ongoing efforts, the Plan is designed to seamlessly integrate the Council's initiatives with the broader array of community-driven initiatives led by valued partners.

Aims	Outcome	Impact
1. Promote a preventative approach to healthy eating for residents' health and wellbeing	Healthier diets and reduced diet-related illnesses	Healthier diets
2. Encourage and support Individuals in adopting healthier food behaviours	Reduced risk of diet-related diseases	Healthier lifestyles
3. Encourage and guide the development of a Food Charter	A shared vision for a healthier and more sustainable food system	Sustainable food practices
4. Support food and nutrition education	Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables	Improved dietary knowledge
5. Promote and expand access to nutritious food in the district, celebrating its importance	Increased availability of nutritious food outlets	Long term wellness
6. Support collaborative approaches to addressing food poverty	Enhanced support services	Strengthened partnerships
7. Supporting healthy food accessibility for those in need with low-cost options	Reduced health disparities	Enhanced community wellbeing
8. Build Food Security	Access to adequate and nutritious food	Stronger community resilience
9. Coordinate food and climate efforts: integrating actions for a sustainable future	Enhanced sustainable practices	Enhanced environmental sustainability
10. Provide advice on the climate implications of food-related projects, promoting sustainability in council initiatives	Reduced carbon footprint	Community awareness
11. Support the development of food growing across the district	Sustainable land use	Healthier lifestyles
12. Provide information on sustainable food choices to the public	Reduced environmental footprint	Informed decision making
13. Local and seasonal food promotion	Empowerment of local farmers and producers	Reduced carbon footprint
14. Support residents to minimise, recycle and compost food-related waste	Reduced food waste	Community engagement

HEALTHY EATING

Help people make better food choices across the life course for better health.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS ACTION PLAN:

- CCC: Chelmsford City Council
- ECC: Essex County Council
- CSAW: Community Sport and Wellbeing

1 Preventative approach (Support our residents by fostering knowledge about nutritious food choices across different environments, including schools and workplaces.)

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
1.1	<p>Identify potential opportunities for incorporating advice and support on diet and nutrition into the work carried out with individuals with disabilities and those living with long-term mental and physical health conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid Essex Recovery College (Provide) - provision to offer cooking sessions that focus on healthy eating, aiming to promote mental wellbeing as a crucial component of a robust recovery process and overall wellness maintenance. ECC Public Health – work with Provide to increase the accessibility of tier 2 weight management services and materials. 	<p>CCC Public Health, Mid Essex Recovery College (Provide), Chelmsford CVS, Mid Essex Alliance, ECC Public Health</p>
1.2	<p>Promote food preparation and cooking knowledge and skills in diverse settings, including schools, communities, and early years programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health - explore the potential of commissioning additional projects, like the Bags of Taste initiative, to enhance cooking skills and to promote the adoption of affordable and healthy recipes. Encourage local schools to participate in the Bite Back program, scheduled to launch in September 2024, with the goal of improving the food environment within these educational establishments. Mid Essex Alliance - support promoting and disseminating healthy eating meal planners. Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service – promote family wellbeing through valuable guidance on infant feeding and affordable, healthy cooking (Infant Support group, Healthy Cooking booklet). Carers First - support cooking skills training sessions on topics such as meal planning, budget-friendly cooking, food storage, reducing food waste, and informed purchasing of locally sourced, healthy food by allocating a portion of the Carers group session for organisations to discuss nutrition and healthy eating. 	<p>Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, Active Essex, Mid Essex Alliance, CCC Public Health, Carers First</p>

1.3	<p>Identify opportunities to engage frontline staff working with vulnerable communities, in training around food and nutrition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service – Introducing Solids workshop specifically designed for parents with babies aged 4-6 months providing NHS-approved nutritional information and expert advice on introducing solid foods to infants. 	<p>CCC Public Health, Action for Family Carers, Chelmsford CVS, Carers First, Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service</p>
1.4	<p>Promote impactful healthy eating campaigns that target diverse audiences, encouraging the adoption of healthier eating habits and positively impacting individuals' dietary choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECC Public Health - provide practical nutrition tips in ECC premises, e.g., ECC café. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Comms</p>
1.5	<p>Support food education and school engagement through holistic programmes encompassing various activities (such as growing opportunities, cooking, raising awareness on allotment sites and enhancing meals and dining culture).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC CSAW – explore using the smoothie bike as a fun and interactive way to promote events centred around the consumption of fruits and vegetables, encouraging healthy habits among students. Active Essex – in partnership with other organisations, organise cooking workshops for children, teaching basic cooking skills, healthy meal preparation, and the use of local and seasonal ingredients, with guidance from professional chefs, nutritionists, and local food experts. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC CSAW, Active Essex, Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service</p>

2 Encourage and support individuals in adopting healthier food behaviours

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
2.1	<p>Further promote services, which support people to change their lifestyles including healthy eating advice, weight management support, physical activity sessions, health walks and smoking cessation support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid Essex Alliance (NHS Integrated Care Board team) - provide local weight management service providers or commissioners with the opportunity to present at Mid Essex primary care forums, enabling them to promote their services and raise awareness among healthcare professionals. ECC Public Health – collaborate with Provide and EWS to efficiently promote current commissioned tier 2 weight management services to ECC staff, referring agencies, and Essex residents, aiming to increase engagement, particularly in areas with limited uptake and health disparities linked to deprivation. 	<p>CCC Public Health, EWS, ECC Public Health, Livewell Chelmsford, Mid Essex Alliance (NHS Integrated Care Board team)</p>

2.2	<p>Promotion of the Sugar Smart Campaign that is aligned with the national campaign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health – raise awareness about the risks associated with excessive sugar consumption and promote healthier choices within the community. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Comms</p>
2.3	<p>Promote culturally relevant and accessible healthy eating options, actively engaging with and supporting ethnic minority communities in adopting and maintaining healthier dietary habits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health – collaborate with community leaders, influencers, and organisations in ethnic minority communities to promote healthier eating habits through information dissemination, events, and success stories. Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service – in school-age drop-in clinics, provide advice on healthy eating and weight management that consider the traditional food preferences, cooking methods, and cultural practices of diverse ethnic minority communities, ensuring the information is easily comprehensible and applicable to their specific dietary needs. Chelmsford CVS – foster peer support networks: Facilitate the formation of peer support networks or cooking clubs within ethnic minority communities. 	<p>Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, CCC Public Health, Chelmsford CVS</p>
2.4	<p>Explore the potential of fruit and vegetable stalls in areas of the city with little or no access to fresh food.</p>	<p>CCC Economic Development</p>

3 Encourage and guide the development of a Food Charter

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
3.1	<p>Develop a comprehensive food charter that embodies the Food Plan's vision for the district and encourages organisations to take action in making it a reality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health – encourage organisational commitments: encourage organizations to sign on to the charter and outline their commitments, resources, and timelines for implementation. Consider developing a system to recognise and celebrate the commitments made by organisations. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, CCC Environmental Health</p>
3.2	<p>Investigate and promote quality, healthy, sustainable and ethical food accreditations.</p>	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, CCC Environmental Health</p>

4 Support food and nutrition education: create opportunities for learning about healthy eating habits

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
4.1	<p>Increase public understanding of food, health and sustainability through campaigns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love Your Chelmsford – provide practical tips and resources: offer practical tips, guidelines, and resources that help individuals make informed choices related to food, health, and sustainability. Signpost to step-by-step instructions, recipes, meal plans, shopping guides, or online tools that facilitate behaviour change and make sustainable practices more accessible. CCC Comms – support in designing campaigns that encourage active participation and action from the audience. Create compelling and engaging content that captures attention, sparks curiosity, and encourages action. CCC Public Health – measure campaign impact: use surveys, and interviews, to assess changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours Livewell, CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, ECC Public Health, Mid Essex Alliance, Love Your Chelmsford related to food, health, and sustainability. Monitor engagement levels, reach, and feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign and make improvements for future initiatives. ECC Public Health – offer practical nutrition tips at ECC premises, such as the ECC café. Collaborate with weight management providers to develop nutrition education campaigns, that direct to local weight management services. 	<p>Livewell, CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, ECC Public Health, Mid Essex Alliance, Love Your Chelmsford</p>
4.2	<p>Provide free or low-cost cookery courses, encourage family cooking and dining, and offer cooking skills training to residents, schools, and community groups, focusing on locally sourced and healthy food.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health – secure funding and resources to support the provision of free or low-cost cookery courses. Support schools in setting up cooking clubs or organising cooking competitions to engage students in hands-on learning experiences. South Woodham Ferrers Health and Social Care Group – promote community participation by advertising cookery courses and family cooking session opportunities through various channels, such as community newsletters, and social media. · Carers First - support cooking skills training sessions on topics such as meal planning, budget-friendly cooking, food storage, reducing food waste, and informed purchasing of locally sourced, healthy food by allocating a portion of the Carers group session for organisations to discuss nutrition and healthy eating. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, CCC Environmental Health</p>

5 Promote and expand access to nutritious food in the district, celebrating its importance.

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
5.1	<p>Identify processes to engage with food eateries to develop good practices on food, health and sustainability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Environmental Health – promote the adoption of healthier choices by independent local takeaways, cafes, restaurants, and sandwich bars through the TuckIN pledge. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Leisure, CCC Environmental Health</p>
5.2	<p>Encourage the inclusion of healthy food options and the reduction of food waste and packaging at district-wide festivals and events, collaborating with organisers to integrate a 'healthy food' offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Leisure – introduce a commitment to healthy options provisions in leisure centre cafes and provide healthier catering guidance to support food businesses in providing healthier options to customers. Active Essex - In partnership with other organisations, explore the inclusion of new food tastings and cooking courses in holiday programs, focusing on the educational aspect of healthy nutrition and offering workshops on healthy cooking. ECC Public Health – implement a healthy advertising policy. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC Leisure, CCC CSAW, Active Essex, ECC Public Health</p>
5.3	<p>Keep up-to-date information on where local and sustainable food can be purchased and make it available to the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health/ CCC GIS Team – establish a system to regularly update the Chelmsford Food Map to reflect any changes in the community food resources; encourage community feedback to help maintain the accuracy and relevance of the information. 	<p>CCC Public Health, CCC GIS Team, Chelmsford CVS</p>

FOOD POVERTY

Improving access to 'healthier food' for all.

6 Support collaborative approaches to addressing food poverty

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
6.1	Foster partnerships to pool resources, share expertise, and coordinate efforts towards addressing the issue collectively; collaborate with community organisations, food banks, non-profit organizations, and charitable foundations working in the field of food poverty.	Chelmsford CVS, FoodCycle Chelmsford, CCC Public Health, Chelmsford Foodbank, Active Essex, Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, Mid Essex Alliance
6.2	Foster collaboration and cooperation among various organisations and initiatives to ensure the efficient and effective provision of services, preventing duplication of efforts and promoting equitable distribution of resources throughout the community.	Chelmsford CVS, CCC Public Health, ECC Public Health
6.3	Identify and leverage existing community assets, such as community gardens, or local food aid organisations and initiatives to enhance food security and promote self-sufficiency.	Chelmsford CVS, CCC Public Health, CCC GIS Team

7 Supporting healthy food accessibility for those in need with low-cost options

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
7.1	Engage with community members, organisations, and relevant stakeholders to gather insights, identify gaps in existing services, and develop a shared understanding of the local context.	CCC Public Health, Mid Essex Alliance, South Woodham Ferrers Health and Social Care Group, Chelmsford CVS
7.2	Support the implementation and development of social supermarkets aiming to provide a more sustainable, longer-term provision of low-cost, healthy food. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECC Public Health – Link with community supermarkets to support increased availability of healthy food. 	CCC Economic Development, Chelmsford CVS, ECC Public Health

7.3	Facilitate the sharing of best practices, resources, and knowledge among organisations and initiatives working on food poverty to maximise the impact of interventions through the exchange of successful strategies, program models, and innovative approaches.	Chelmsford CVS, FoodCycle Chelmsford, CCC Public Health, Chelmsford Foodbank, Active Essex, Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service
7.4	Explore the potential of establishing a collaborative network involving local organisations, community groups, non-profits, and stakeholders to collectively enhance food access through collaboration, resource sharing, and joint funding applications.	Chelmsford CVS, FoodCycle Chelmsford, CCC Public Health, Chelmsford Foodbank, South Woodham Ferrers Health and Social Care Group
7.5	Promote and support local food redistribution initiatives that collect surplus food and distribute it to people in need.	Chelmsford CVS, CCC Economic Development, CCC Public Health

8 Support collaborative approaches to addressing food poverty

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
8.1	Support the community to develop social eating, food growing and/or cooking skills in community provision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC Public Health – engage with local farmers and producers by facilitating connections between the community and these stakeholders, organising activities such as farm visits, farmers' market trips, and collaborations to raise awareness about local food sources, seasonal produce, and the significance of supporting local food systems. Action for Family Carers – help disseminate resources and training materials to young people, including cookbooks, recipe cards, and online resources that emphasise healthy eating, seasonal cooking, budget-friendly meals, and sustainable food practices. Active Essex – explore the idea of incorporating cooking workshops into the holiday program, where children and families can learn basic cooking skills, nutrition education, and meal planning, while also gaining hands-on experience in preparing healthy and budget-friendly meals using locally sourced ingredients, guided by skilled instructors. CCC CSAW – partner with other organisations to explore the inclusion of basic cooking techniques sessions and nutrition education within Play in the Park, by collaborating with local culinary experts, nutritionists, chefs, or cooking instructors who possess expertise in working with children and families. 	CCC Public Health, Action for Family Carers, Active Essex, CCC CSAW

8.2	<p>Map out existing social eating opportunities in the city (those run by faith organisations/ community groups) and ensure that these are promoted to those most in need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chelmsford CVS – through Chelmsford Connects shares local activities on healthy eating and facilitates connections with local charities, voluntary groups, and community sector services that provide community food resources. • CCC Public Health/ CCC GIS Team – enhance the Chelmsford Food Map by including additional information about each community food resource that would assist users in making informed decisions. • CCC Public Health – actively engage with local community organisations, businesses, and residents to actively seek their feedback and input on the food map, gathering valuable insights to ensure its comprehensiveness and usefulness by including additional resources or information based on their recommendations. 	Chelmsford CVS, CCC Public Health, CCC GIS Team
8.3	Promote the uptake, knowledge, and awareness of Healthy Start vouchers, which are designed to support access to nutritious food and essential vitamins.	CCC Public Health, CCC Comms
8.4	<p>Identify opportunities to engage frontline staff working with vulnerable communities, in training around food and nutrition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – collaborate with local community organisations, social service agencies, healthcare providers, and non-profit organizations that work directly with vulnerable communities to identify training needs and develop tailored programs for their frontline staff. 	Chelmsford Foodbank, Chelmsford CVS, Mid Essex Recovery College (Provide)

SUSTAINABLE FOOD

Promoting healthy and sustainable diets that contribute to addressing the climate emergency

9 Coordinate food and climate efforts: integrating actions for a sustainable future.

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
9.1	<p>Carry out processes to identify actions on food and sustainability to feed into either the council's Climate Emergency Action Plan or the Food Plan and ensure the Plans are complementary and properly integrated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – engage with council departments, community organisations, environmental groups, food-related businesses, farmers, and residents to gather input and perspectives on bridging the gap between the two plans and ensuring integration, fostering a cohesive and comprehensive approach. • ECC Public Health – engage with climate and sustainability colleagues to align efforts and plans between obesity and climate change e.g., joint ambition to increase consumption of plant-based products. 	CCC Public Health

10 Provide advice on sustainability for council projects.

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
10.1	<p>Provide advice on the climate implications of decisions around food-related projects and programmes to inform work across the ambitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love Your Chelmsford – offer comprehensive guidance on climate-friendly alternatives and best practices for food-related projects and programs, including suggestions for sustainable sourcing options, waste reduction strategies, and other measures aimed at mitigating climate impacts while simultaneously maintaining or enhancing project outcomes. 	CCC Public Health, Love Your Chelmsford

11 Support the development of food growing across the district

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
11.1	Identify opportunities to develop food growing strategically including linking across the district.	CCC Public Health, Love Your Chelmsford
11.2	Provide opportunities to increase knowledge, skills and food growing in schools through programmes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – collaborate with schools to establish and maintain school gardens, fostering garden-based learning, nutrition education, and hands-on experiences in food production, while encouraging partnerships with local farmers or community organisations to enhance learning opportunities. 	Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, Active Essex, Mid Essex Alliance, CCC Public Health, Carers First
11.3	Promote the benefits of allotment sites and provide support for sites through the process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health/CCC Comms – develop targeted awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of allotment sites. Highlight the advantages of community ownership, increased access to fresh produce, physical activity, mental well-being, and social connections. 	CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, Love Your Chelmsford
11.4	Promote and encourage community involvement in grass roots and food related activities through improved access to support networks, and resources, through the promotion of assets and allotments for community use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Economic Development – allocate funding to support ecological and green initiatives, aiming to promote environmentally friendly practices and projects. 	CCC Public Health, Love Your Chelmsford, CCC Economic Development

12 Provide information on sustainable food choices to the public.

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
12.1	Utilise council communication channels to disseminate messages promoting the advantages of reduced meat and dairy consumption, as well as seasonal eating, incorporating campaigns that are linked, where applicable, to Sustainable Food Places initiatives.	CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, Love Your Chelmsford, ECC Climate team, ECC Public Health

13 Reducing food waste and packaging waste.

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
	Identify opportunities for reducing food waste in businesses and raising awareness about the importance of minimising food waste and promoting sustainable practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – facilitate partnerships between businesses and local food recovery initiatives to ensure safe and efficient food redistribution. 	CCC Public Health, Love Your Chelmsford, CCC Economic Development
13.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love Your Chelmsford – provide information on the benefits of composting, guidelines for setting up composting systems, and connections to local composting facilities or service providers. • CCC Economic Development – support the dissemination of educational materials through the business e-bulletin, highlighting the importance of minimising food waste, provide practical strategies for waste reduction, and outline the environmental implications of food waste. 	
	Foster a reduction in food wastage among residents by raising awareness of sustainable food practices and promoting the adoption of food waste reduction apps like “Too Good to Go”. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers First – educate carers about the “Too Good to Go” app during carer group sessions, highlighting its benefits in reducing food waste and providing cost-effective food options. 	CCC Public Health, Carers First, Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, CCC Comms
13.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health/CCC Comms – develop educational materials to inform residents about the environmental impact of food waste and the benefits of sustainable food practices. • CCC Comms – utilise various communication channels, such as community newsletters, websites, and social media platforms, to disseminate messages and tips on reducing food waste and introduce the “Too Good to Go” app. 	
	Signpost residents and businesses to guidance on reducing the environmental impacts of their packaging choices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – gather educational materials from reliable sources that offer guidance on reducing the environmental impact of packaging choices, including fact sheets, guidelines, toolkits, infographics, and case studies that highlight sustainable packaging options and practices. 	CCC Public Health, Love Your Chelmsford
13.3		

13.4	<p>Promote local recycling and composting programs, engage residents and businesses in national campaigns like WRAP's Love Food, Hate Waste, and support efforts to distribute surplus food, encouraging sustainable waste management practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love Your Chelmsford – disseminate information to residents and businesses regarding local recycling and composting programs, offering comprehensive details on accepted materials, collection schedules, and drop-off locations, while emphasising the significance of adhering to proper disposal and recycling practices for packaging waste. • CCC Public Health – promote national campaigns through various channels including social media, websites, and local media outlets, sharing campaign materials, videos, and tips to raise awareness and encourage residents and businesses to actively participate in adopting sustainable food management practices. 	Love Your Chelmsford, CCC Public Health
13.5	<p>Develop links with the food industry to improve the redistribution of surplus food to reduce unnecessary waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – partner with local food banks, charities, and community organisations to facilitate the collection and distribution of surplus food, while promoting donation programs for businesses to redirect excess food and reduce waste while supporting food security initiatives. 	CCC Public Health, FoodCycle Chelmsford, Chelmsford Foodban

14 Local and seasonal food promotion

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
14.1	<p>Provide support to producers within and around the city by increasing awareness of local and seasonal products and promoting their utilisation among the general public, food businesses, and institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health/CCC Comms – collaborate with local media outlets to feature stories, articles, and interviews highlighting local producers, seasonal products, and successful initiatives, aiming to showcase the value and diversity of local food and encourage media coverage of related events. 	CCC Public Health, CCC Comms

15 Reducing food waste and packaging waste.

Aim	Actions	Key Actors
15.1	<p>Promote sustainable practices by encouraging residents to purchase food with minimal packaging and the recycling of food containers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love Your Chelmsford – raise awareness about the environmental benefits of reducing packaging waste and provide practical tips on sustainable purchasing choices through public awareness campaigns, specifically highlighting the importance of buying food with minimal packaging. • CCC Public Health – support community-led initiatives focused on reducing packaging waste and promoting recycling by encouraging residents to participate in zero-waste or plastic-free challenges. 	Love Your Chelmsford
15.2	<p>Support businesses with dedicated resources containing advice on waste reduction to promote zero waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Public Health – signpost businesses to waste management resources, including links or downloadable guides, templates, and tools such as waste sorting guidelines, waste reduction checklists, recycling signage, and waste tracking spreadsheets, to support effective waste management practices. • Love Your Chelmsford – inform businesses about local recycling and composting programs, including collection services, facilities, and material-specific recycling guidelines, to promote proper waste management. • CCC Economic Development – facilitate the distribution of educational materials via the business e-bulletin, providing businesses with advice and resources to comprehend and implement effective waste reduction strategies. 	CCC Public Health, CCC Comms, Love Your Chelmsford, CCC Economic Development



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