

Motion Tracker Information for Lesley Jones (01.06.2022)

Further develop our Food Plan for Bury to identify local food insecurity challenges and put in place steps to tackle them.

Bury Council have fully endorsed the launch of the Bury Food Strategy (January 2021) and the work of the Bury Food Partnership, both of which are cited in the Let's Do It Strategy.

Within the scope of the **Bury Food Strategy, section 2: Bury's food plan – accessible to all**, key steps have been identified to tackle food insecurity including:

- Improving access to Healthy Start Vouchers among families that are eligible, through knowledge sharing of changes to the scheme (digital and eligibility)
- Promoting breakfast clubs and holiday camps in schools in more deprived areas
- Improvement in uptake of Free School Meals among eligible families, through developments to school catering offer
- Continue to support the work of the Bury Community Support Bury Network across all areas of activity including sustainability, funding, transition of foodbanks to the food pantry model, and the gathering data and information
- Ensure effective signposting linking welfare support to those accessing food banks as part of a trajectory towards food security

Healthy Start

In Bury there is 60% uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers, worth £442 per year to the average family. The national scheme digitised in March 2022, increasing the range of retailers where this entitlement can be used (local markets etc). Healthy Start developments are a standing item on the Bury Food Partnership agenda, and changes to the scheme are promoted via the early years networks to maximise uptake. We are also connected to the GM Healthy Start task force meetings.

Holiday Camps

Fit & Fed and HAF are delivered across Bury. Fit & Fed is a huge collaboration involving in 2021: 14 external providers, 4 internal providers (libraries, museums etc) 11 schools, and 3 companies. Fit & Fed involved directly inviting 3,346 families eligible for Free School Meals to fun sporting, creative and cooking activities, alongside providing nutritious lunches. A booklet was sent directly to families and added to the council page <https://www.bury.gov.uk/holiday-activities>. Thanks to multiple communications via the food banks/pantries/community centres/hubs, activities were fully booked.

Improvement in uptake of Free School Meals

The School Catering Service work hard building confidence and interest, encouraging families to take up this offer. The service has developed a digital portal to improve perceptions of school meals, reduce waste and support communication. The School Catering have committed to working towards the Food For Life accreditation.

Support the work of the Bury Community Support Bury Network

10% of Bury households are living in food insecurity. The Bury Community Support Network (B.C.S.N) chaired by the VCFA, regularly meet to focus on food insecurity, funding, resource-sharing and importantly supporting each other and their communities. There are 18 food banks/pantries within this network directly supporting people experiencing poverty. The B.C.S.N secured £40,000 funds (2021) for food, packaging, and training to be shared via this network.

All food banks/pantries within the network are listed on the Bury Directory, and help with financial hardship is listed on Bury Council pages.

The Bury Food Partnership provides direct opportunities to share inspiration, ideas and resources, working together on food initiatives. Representation from the B.C.S.N is a key element of the Partnership, and indicative our aim of inclusivity.

[The Bury Good Food Charter](#) encapsulates our food vision, principles, and ambitions. The charter asks individuals, businesses, and communities to commit to actions that will help to achieve good food for all, across the food system.

Lastly, Bury has been successful in our application for the Bronze Sustainable Food Places Award June 2022. This is a fantastic recognition of the all the work of the Bury Food Partnership in its first year and of all the stakeholders across Bury, with new award achievers invited to the Houses of Parliament this summer to promote their work at a national level.

Food Support and Security

Bury Food Partnership members proactively signpost to supporting services/activities such as cooking and growing skills.

Bury Adult Learning delivers education courses for parents within schools. Despite Covid challenges, these courses are now back in schools. The new Family Learning officer successfully runs What's Cooking - Healthy Eating on a Budget courses, accessed by 40 families. Many are low income and half are from BAME communities. Family budgeting courses are now being initiated in community food banks leading to additional cookery courses.

Health Improvement Funds (Dec 2021) were provided to assist with covid recovery, improve health behaviours and reduce inequalities. Grants enabled communities to deliver health and wellbeing projects to local people. £35,839 has been allocated to grass roots groups, including cultural cookery classes, community cookbooks, bee education, social prescribing of nature and food growing activities.

Bury Council launched a Community Climate Action Fund in December 2021. Bury is fortunate to have various green spaces that are utilised by local voluntary action groups. These groups engage the public through food growing, production and cooking. A quarter of the fund bids received were related to food action.

B.C.S.N members use multiple channels to source food from organisations such as FareShare and Neighbourly. They also redistribute surplus food from local supermarkets, or source vouchers for use in store. Produce is also purchased directly to supplement stocks.

Food is key in bringing communities together. The food pantry model is more sustainable than a food bank approach, with an increased fresh food offer, allowing for greater choice and dignity, as well as cooking, growing, budgeting skills and wider support.

Trust House are one of the first established pantries in the network who are keen to support others who wish to move towards this model. Katie Jenkinson is a trusted member of the network with a wealth of expertise on food pantries. Katie is exploring different forms of support; from a project action toolkit to peer mentoring, exploring the steps to enable the transition from food bank to food pantry. The action project looks to capture key learnings, reflections, and simple solutions within a local tool kit, which can be referenced by the whole network beyond the project timeline.