



Good Food Lewisham Network Meeting

Winter Warmth and Building the Good Food Network in Lewisham

24th Wednesday January 2024: 12.30 – 3.30pm

Discussion activity one

Visioning everything as how it should be in the food system in Lewisham in 3-5 years' time:

growing

- Growing our own food, not just a crisis response, to share with community or cook ourselves
- Learning about food sources is default
- Normalise growing! Fundamental, not something for the middle classes
- Public spaces are being used for growing – 1 per street
- Private spaces to be accessible for growing
- Sharing networks!
- Planning for estates should include growing spaces
- Rearing own animals for dairy, eggs, meat - sustainability
- Everyone can trace where their food comes from
- Joint composting – supporting community gardens and fatmers – distribution

- Urban farms around buildings, for example in Ladywell park
- Incredible edible
- Fruit trees (at St Lukes, downham and whole borough)
- Nut trees- building a legacy to pass on for future generations
- Flowers sewn around all the trees
- Wheat fields in Beckenham Place Park, and sheep (maybe at schools too)
- Seed saving, to keep growing
- Protect allotments and spaces by law – implement Right To Grow
- Every allotment is well used and maintained
- Maximising allotments so that everyone benefits (e.g. social events/sharing veg/fruit/seeds)
- More green spaces to grow- seed to plate
- People coming together to grow food
- Growing on roofs and more traditional spaces
- All allotment spaces used – (currently 4 year waiting list)
- Locally grown, seasonal produce
- Right to grow on disused land

processing

- Regain lost arts, for example, move away from processed e.g. potatoes
- Joint pickling and storage
- Music to increase productivity

- Communal ovens and baking and granaries

Societal

- Autonomous democracy
- Increased community interaction
- Building connections – exchange between growers and buyers
- People coming together to share food
- Community spaces
- More food sharing events/ festivals
- More agency for people to make their own choices

Capacity building /policy/education

- Needs management and coordination
- Implementation of rules – for example for community composting
- Training
- Tackling the difference between fresh grown and shop bought, organic and unadulterated
- Better promotion and more promotion of good food and less or no ads for unhealthy foods/drink
- Better education and advice about healthy food for young people
- Stricter environmental and welfare standards
- Food for life accreditation in schools

nutrition

- Seasonal nutritional
- Eating more naturally
- Picking wild herbs for health
- Eating the rainbow – access to diversity of fruit and veg
- Healthy foods available at markets
- Lots of food products available

sale

- Supermarkets have no space here!
- Markets with less packaging, some popups
- Artisan food/markets, available and affordable for all

Access

- No-one left behind – if anyone struggles there is community support
- Doctors prescribing fruit and veg
- No foodbanks!
- Mobile veg van to places with limited access to healthy foods
- More community pantries
- Community kitchens/canteens
- Utilising school kitchens/spaces for cooking and communal social events

- Availability of locally grown food
- Community kitchens and gardens
- Concessions for people on a low-income
- Open access to food security without impediment
- Culturally sensitive and understanding of focus

Group table discussion questions

a. What areas of work and actions would you like to see Good Food Lewisham prioritise over the next three years in relation to the local food system?

- School food growing projects to cooking (full cycle)
- Levelling the playing field to healthy food/other projects and funding (NRPF, asylum seekers) food justice- Alexandra Rose Vouchers
- Better/more focus on building up existing growing projects, seed banks, transport support, materials infrastructure, community spaces
- Grow more organic (food as community)
- More food hubs – hyperlocal, integrated food hub – Felix facilitate
- More people growing their own food
- Support re-funding, e.g. greenhouses/tools
- Engaging schools
- More classes
- More community kitchens, volunteers
- More community events
- Collaborating with key partners to improve procurement
- Supporting community groups so that they can reach their capacity
- Food grown goes to canteens to make the meal more special
- Organising exchanges of food growing
- Reduce need for foodbanks, support foodbanks to transition into social supermarkets where there's less stigma asking for help
- Educating people to make more nutritious meals to feel more enabled

- Networking
- Better land use
- Using sides of building for food growing
- Using buildings themselves, i.e. shops
- Requiring developers to include food spaces – give motivation to make this happen
- Collaboration e.g. building
- More of the same – networking and fostering relationships
- Connect spaces with food groups (e.g. warm welcomes)
- Lobbying government
- Ambassadors around the borough
- Community fridges
- Work to disrupt the supermarket standard- get people to choose local
- Use people with influence
- Bring in housing associations
- Disrupt the system
- Connect with other boroughs
- Connect food producers and projects

b. Based on the ideas shared above, what could you/your group do to help make them happen?

- Phoenix – promotion, community, audience- residents
- Join the dots- procurement- influence the next procurement strategy that LBL write so that food is included (PH Lewisham?)
- Set up a working group with key stakeholders and involve school catering providers
- Forster Park can host wild food seasonal walk for health
- Effat and Kitchen Buddy teaching down to earth nutrition
- Use our influences
- Focus on connecting resources
- Word of mouth
- Share info
- Get into NHS PCNs

- Get out and about to see projects
- Space sharing
- Join up infrastructure
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c. What are the biggest challenges that we face in our local food system. Who's needs aren't being met?

- Funds and capacity and volunteers
- Inhibiting policies/vested interests
- Situation is worsening, demand for services rising, cost of living and councils in crisis
- Lewisham Council – letting allotment plots (individual) and community allotments
- Influencing people/education
- Low-income families, cheap food, not 'good food'
- 'working poor'
- People with NRPF/refugees/asylum seekers
- Focus on elderly – no meals on wheels currently
- Access to water- during day and night- better promotion of Lewisham Refill scheme, more water fountains on high sts like Bellingham
- Farmstead Allotments and Coco Collaboration re-fill growing and sales to sell excess crops and food
- Brambles on growing spaces- need volunteers to help clear spaces for growing including allotments
- Increase demand for foodbanks
- Attitudes, those who aren't impacted don't care
- Lack of transportation for food. Community gardens find it hard to get food to those who need it
- High petrol prices
- Cost
- Climate
- Waste due to not having people to harvest the food at farmer level and event at community gardens
- Price of local food – people go where they can afford

- Funding
- Scarcity mentality – there is enough
- Time
- Knowledge
- Skills in growing and confidence
- Should be part of the agenda regardless of cost of living crisis, not just emergency

d. Where do you see the biggest opportunities for us to make a difference over the next 3 years?

- Consider the Alexandra Rose voucher scheme locally
- Lobby government to extend Healthy Start scheme to people with NRPF
- Expand the Lewisham Donation Hub across the borough
- Work better with schools to utilise school kitchens for community use
- Learn how to grow, working in the community
- Youth – untapped potential,
- training
- appreciation and inputting into the community
- us!
- Not just growing but the connectors
- Schools and education
- Grow your own dinners at school
- Resident connections – housing associations
- Our connections
- Skills to grow