I was delighted to be a keynote speaker at the event which launched this project in March 2012, and I am equally pleased to endorse the Strategy and its Aims in this Foreword.

Too much of the food produced in County Durham ends up being consumed out of the region. There is a wonderful opportunity to benefit the local economy, improve environmental performance, and encourage healthier diets by implementing the actions outlined in this document.

In my 2002 Report (The Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food) I recognised the importance of re-connecting people and businesses along the food chain, including connecting eaters to farmers and growers. Whilst there have been some positive developments, there is still a long way to go. Forming a Food Partnership to oversee this work is helping to re-make these connections.

If you would like to demonstrate your support for the Strategy the first thing to do is to add your pledge to the County Durham Food Charter, which you can find at www.fooddurham.net.

I wish everyone involved every success in their efforts to support a more resilient and sustainable food system.

Lord Curry of Kirkharle
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A Sustainable Local Food Strategy for County Durham

Vision Statement

Our vision is to work and advocate for:

a revitalised, viable and diverse local food system that supports the local economy, and makes available to all a wide range of fresh, healthy foods that are sustainably produced in or around County Durham.

Introduction and background

This document is a strategy endorsed by the County Durham Partnership for supporting a move towards a more localised food system in County Durham that provides fresh, healthy, sustainable food for residents and visitors. The introductory section explains the global and local context surrounding the Strategy, describes how the content has been arrived at through the input of many different stakeholders, and makes links to other relevant policies and strategies. The introduction is followed by a statement of Values and Principles that underlie both the process and the agreed actions.

Food is a multifaceted topic that impacts on almost every area of life, and is of vital importance to every person, making food policy-making intrinsically complex and contested. In this strategy it has been simplified into six Strategic Aims that attempt to capture this complexity and mirror to some extent other Food Strategies that have sprung up around the country. ¹ Where applicable, each Strategic Aim is sub-divided into themes and then two questions are addressed: What do we want to achieve? and How will we do it? Each commitment to action is then assigned a lead partner (or partners) and given a weighting code to indicate a hierarchy of priorities. Lead partners will incorporate their commitments into their own action planning documents.

What is a Sustainable Local Food Strategy?

A strategy can be defined as “a high level plan to achieve one or more goals under conditions of uncertainty” (Wikipedia) or “a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim” (Oxford Dictionaries). The emphasis is on achieving goals, which in this case means some demonstrable changes in the way in which Durham feeds its population long-term. The inclusion of conditions of uncertainty is relevant too: many of the factors that affect our food supply and its accessibility are in flux, and this calls for a flexible and open-minded approach that is adaptable and iterative, where we learn as we go. We also need to be aware that in these conditions the connection between intentions and outcomes can be unpredictable. Therefore the

¹ These Strategies focus to a greater or lesser degree on locally produced food, and most are city based (apart from Herefordshire). In contrast, this Strategy has locally produced food at its centre, and considers the wider issues in relation to local production and consumption.
progress of actions implemented from this document should be carefully monitored and changes made where necessary.

To avoid spending too much time becoming embroiled in debates about the meanings of 'sustainable' and 'local food' we adopted a pragmatic working definition of 'local sustainable food' that served the purpose of this strategy:

**Food that is produced and consumed in or near County Durham that is healthy for people and the planet, and supports our local economy.**

There is no agreed definition of local food nationally, and for good reason, as the appropriate definition depends on factors which vary with location and circumstance. What we are concerned with in this instance is not only geographic location, but also other criteria such as the quality of the food (e.g. is it healthy?), its impact on the environment, how the people who produce it are rewarded, and how animals reared for food are treated. We are also concerned about supporting the local economy by protecting jobs and growing the demand for local goods that will in turn create opportunities for new jobs. In other words, Durham local food should fulfil the three pillars of sustainability by having economic, social and environmental benefits.

Because the scope of a food Strategy is so wide ranging there is a place for a diverse range of organisations to be involved in its implementation from large public sector bodies, private businesses and farmers, to smaller voluntary and community sector groups and volunteers. Therefore it is important to adopt language that is easily understood by all parties and not to use terminology that is open to different interpretations. With this in mind you will not find any reference to objectives, tasks, outputs, outcomes, or the like. Instead, we ask two straightforward questions 'What do we want to achieve?' and 'How will we do it?' The detail is left to the lead partner(s) to spell out in their own delivery or action plans.

The emerging Food Partnership will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the strategy and additional forward planning work around all aspects of the food system as it affects County Durham. The Partnership will also be exploring the availability of new resources where these are needed. The Terms of Reference for the Partnership are included in Appendix 1.

**Why is this Strategy needed?**

Any food strategy sits within wider global, regional and local contexts, which can both limit and enable what can effectively be achieved. Much of the food we eat in the UK is part of a highly complex globalised food system where food chains can become long and not always transparent, as evidenced by the recent horsemeat scandal. Food production in developed countries has become industrialised with farms becoming larger, mixed farming giving way to monoculture, and power concentrated in the hands of large multinational companies, notably retailers. Whilst these developments have undoubtedly delivered many benefits it is now widely accepted that there are also many negative outcomes such as environmental harms and the massive rise in diet related non-communicable disease (termed 'negative externalities' because they are usually non-market effects and therefore their costs
are not part of market prices). On a global scale there is enough food being produced to feed everyone but there are still around one billion people who are hungry, another one billion suffering from other forms of mal-nourishment, and around one billion who are over-weight.

There is no doubt that the global food system currently faces an unprecedented confluence of pressures, the results of which are being experienced daily by consumers, most obviously in terms of rising food prices. Combined with the economic conditions imposed by austerity and welfare reform this is causing real hardship for many people who find they are struggling to afford to feed themselves and their families. The perfect storm of rising global population, increasing affluence (causing rising demand for more western type diets in developing economies), climate change, decreasing biodiversity, soil degradation, and a huge pressure on finite resources such as water, energy, and phosphate, is prompting Governments increasingly concerned about food security, to search for solutions. The current UK Government has not adopted the previous Government’s Food 2030 policy and has not as yet taken the route of a comprehensive national Food Policy. The Green Food Project has begun to address some of the issues, but by its own admission does not address the full range of issues that will be relevant and is at this stage an initial focus for dialogue and action (p2). The key idea is that of sustainable intensification defined as yields (that) are increased without adverse environmental impact and without the cultivation of more land. Although there are differing views about solutions, there is a growing consensus that it is no longer an option to continue with business as usual.

This scenario of multiple interconnected issues and the concentration of power is the context in which more localised policies are being developed, with efforts to re-democratise food, and adopt a more joined up approach at local level to develop food systems that are healthier for people and the planet, and where more of the economic benefits can be retained within local economies.

As a region, the north east exports most of its agricultural production and most of the food consumed in the region is imported from outside. Agriculture is predominantly red meat production (beef and sheep), especially on the higher land: 12% of the national production of sheep is from the region. Arable has been dominated by cereal production for the past 30 years, mainly winter wheat, with only a small number of specialist growers in the vegetable, salad and fruit market (Figure 1). This small sub-sector is dominated by potato growing (40%).

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2 Pretty, J., Sustainable Intensification of Agriculture (http://www.julespretty.com/Sustainable_Ecological_Agri.html)
5 Defra, 2012, Green Food Project Conclusions
6 The Royal Society (2009). Reaping the benefits: science and the sustainable intensification of global agriculture
7 Food Ethics Council (2013), Beyond Business as Usual: Towards a Sustainable Food System
The great majority (72%) of primary agricultural production is sold outside of the region and 60% of sheep and 32% of cattle leave the region for finish and/or slaughter. In addition, 71% of purchases (inputs) by food manufacturers are sourced outside of the region and 73% of their sales are outside of the region (ibid).

An important starting point for any move to more participation in decision making around our food is re-connecting eaters with the food on their plate. Following the devastating impact of the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001, the Government commissioned Sir (now Lord) Donald Curry to chair the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food which reported to Government in January 2002. Often referred to as ‘The Curry Report’ it recommended that ‘reconnection’ should be the key objective of public policy, including reconnecting consumers with what they eat and how it is produced (p6). It also stated that ‘one of the greatest opportunities for farmers to add value and retain a bigger slice of retail price is to build on the public’s enthusiasm for locally-produced food, or food with a clear regional provenance’ (p43). Much progress has been made since 2002 but the call to reconnection is still very relevant. In a recent report, the Food Ethics Council noted that ‘Before people can play a serious role in promoting a sustainable food system, they need to value food much more highly than they currently do. One important way of addressing this is by ‘re-connecting’ people with food through community food projects, such as Community Supported Agriculture schemes and food co-operatives’ (p9).

This Strategy attempts to address some of these issues by encouraging actions that enable more people to become directly involved in producing some of their own food, moving to shorter supply chains, providing opportunities for learning for all, promoting healthy diets, and supporting sustainable local food businesses. A local Food Strategy cannot hope to address broader structural issues causing poverty and ill health, but it can make a strong contribution to alleviating food poverty and diet related ill health in the longer term.


How has the Strategy been arrived at?

The project to develop the Strategy and establish a Food Partnership is a 2 ½ year programme hosted by Durham Community Action (previously Durham Rural Community Council), and funded by Durham and Darlington PCT Charitable Trust (the administration of this grant was taken over by the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust when the PCT closed). The project design was based upon the principle that the process would be as important as the end product, by providing opportunities for network development and the forging of new alliances to create a strong platform for the Partnership and future work.

Following a lengthy development stage with a consultation event in March 2010 and dialogue with various partners, a Business Plan was written and funding secured for the project to start in November 2011. An event was held in March 2012 to launch the project (see http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/lets-talk-about-food-launch.html). This was followed by a series of facilitated Workshops where firstly the Values and Principles, and Vision were arrived at, and then issues and actions under the six Strategic Aims were identified. Further work took place with specialist groups around public sector procurement, food and health, and community growing, whilst individuals with specialist knowledge helped with other areas such as animal welfare, food waste, and environmental sustainability. This approach takes time, but results in a document that incorporates the contributions of a wide range of stakeholders who can all take ownership and responsibility for it. All comments received by 31st December 2013 have been taken into account in writing this document.

The project is overseen by a Steering Group including representatives from Durham County Council (Public Health, Spatial Policy, Sustainability), Durham University, Durham Local Food Network, Love Food, Food for Life Partnership, and Groundwork. During the course of the project three groups have formed which meet regularly (Public Sector Procurement, Food and Health, Community Growing) and there is a wider stakeholder group of around 150 members. These structures will form the basis of the emerging Food Partnership.
Links to other policies, strategies and reports

National

There has been much debate and research around issues relating to the future of our food supply over recent years. These national documents are just some of the most recent and relevant examples. Policies relating to the natural environment and healthy diets are also directly relevant.

- Foresight Land Use Futures Project; Government Office for Science, 2010
- The Green Food Project Conclusions; Defra, July 2012
- Sustainable Consumption Report: Follow-up to the Green Food Project; Defra, July 2013
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People Public Health White paper, 2010
- The Benefits of Procuring School Meals through the Food for Life Partnership, nef, 2011
- School Food Plan, July 2013 (www.schoolfoodplan.com)

Regional

Although the English Regions lost powers and investment with the demise of the Regional Government Offices and the Local Development Agencies in 2011 the North East continues as a constituency for the European Parliament and retains a strong local identity. Local food does not recognise administrative boundaries and it is important that we maintain close links with other areas in the region. Listed here are some of the relevant documents in these areas.

- Gateshead Rural Economic Strategy 2012 - 2015
- Newcastle Food Charter, July 2013
- The North East Farming and Rural Advisory Network (NEFRAN) Rural Growth Prospectus 2013-14, September 2013
- North East Rural Growth Network programme of activities

Local

At the county level there are many examples where this Strategy complements and supports existing policies and strategies. At the highest level, the Sustainable Community Strategy envisions a robust local food sector: ‘The local food economy

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11 http://foodnewcastle.org/newcastle-food-charter
13 http://www.nelep.co.uk/north-east-rural-growth-network/
is flourishing so that food security is not a worry for County Durham and rural and agricultural jobs have benefitted (p75); The low carbon economy was at the heart of everything that the County achieved. A range of local food initiatives reduced food miles, improved health, and supported the local economy (p77). This Strategy will play a key role in achieving these aspirations.

**Health**
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2012
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2017
- CVD Plan (forthcoming)
- Healthy Weight Framework (forthcoming)

**Environment**
- Durham Biodiversity Action Plan
- Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan (forthcoming)

**Economy**
- County Durham Regeneration Statement 2012-2022
- Revitalising Markets: A Strategy for Supporting the Growth and Enhancement of County Durham’s Street Markets 2013

**Planning**
- County Durham Plan
- Green Infrastructure Strategy

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14 Altogether Better: The Sustainable Community Strategy for County Durham 2010-2030; County Durham Partnership. www.countydurhampartnership.co.uk/Pages/CDP-Home.aspx
15 http://durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=6622
16 http://durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=8873
17 http://www.durhambiodiversity.org.uk/biodiversity-action-plan/
18 http://www.durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=7604
20 http://www.durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=856
**County Durham Food Charter**

A Charter summarising the Strategic Aims of the Strategy was launched at Durham City Town Hall in September 2012, and a new website went live on the same day ([www.fooddurham.net](http://www.fooddurham.net)), where the Charter can be signed up to online. It has been signed by partners and supporters who each make a pledge to take an action in support of the Aims. Copies are displayed at various locations across the County including some restaurants, Durham University, and Durham County Council. The Charter and a list of organisations and individuals who had signed at the time of writing can be found in Appendix 2.

The Food Partnership will continue to promote the Charter widely and encourage yet more people, businesses and organisations to sign it online. It is a vehicle for spreading information about the Strategy and the issues it raises and allows many people to demonstrate their support.
Statement of Values and Principles

FAIRNESS

1. Everyone in County Durham should have access to affordable, good quality local food.

2. Food should be produced and processed sustainably, and traded ethically and fairly: a fair price for a fair product.

   This is about fairness for those involved in food production, who should receive a fair return for their labour. It is also about food producers and processors minimising any negative environmental or social impacts.

3. People have a right to the skills and knowledge required to grow some of their own food, and a right to access to space and facilities to do so.

CO-OPERATION

4. In developing this Strategy we acknowledge a diversity of views and seek to encourage transparency, honesty, open-mindedness, respect, and a willingness to learn from others. The Strategy will remain adaptable and flexible.

5. We value co-operation and collaboration in the development of the Strategy and across all parts of the local food chain.

QUALITY

6. Food should be safe, nutritious, of good quality, and environmentally sustainable. In this document we call this ‘good food’.

LEARNING

8. People have a right to information and opportunities to develop the skills, understanding and knowledge to be able to recognise and choose ‘good food’.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

7. Food production should support and enhance biodiversity and allow for sufficient space and resources for non-human life to flourish.

ANIMAL WELFARE

8. Where animals are used for food production they should be cared for in ways that meet or exceed UK animal welfare standards.
Strategic Aims

1. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

   To support and develop a local ‘good food’ sector that is flourishing, competitive and contributing to the local economy of County Durham.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

   To encourage and support a local food system that protects biodiversity and ecosystems and minimises its environmental footprint.

3. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

   To support and encourage all residents of County Durham to adopt diets that are both healthy and sustainable, and to provide more opportunities for building closer connections with the source of their food.

4. RESILIENT AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

   To enable all communities across the County to have access to land, knowledge and skills in order to grow some of their own food.

5. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

   To provide opportunities for all to learn about ‘good food’ growing/rearing, cooking, preserving, marketing and selling it.

6. FOOD FAIRNESS

   To improve access to ‘good food’ for all, regardless of income or place of residence; to ensure that this food is produced with high animal welfare standards, and that producers are fairly rewarded.
Strategic Aim 1: Supporting the Local Economy

To support and develop a local ‘good food’ sector that is flourishing, competitive and contributing to the local economy of County Durham.

Theme A: Local Supply Chains

The majority of the food we eat today travels through a complex web of global and national supply chains involving multiple stages from production to the point of purchase by the end user. Although regulations abound regarding traceability and provenance it is not always clear to the end consumer where their food actually comes from. Even food that is sold as local through larger retailers sometimes gets caught up in these longer food chains, for example by travelling many miles to be packaged in a central distribution centre before returning for sale in its place of origin. Food that is grown and consumed within a smaller geographical area can be marketed via much shorter supply chains by direct selling (e.g. farmers’ markets, farm shops, roadside stalls, community supported agriculture), or through local retailers, hospitality businesses, local food hubs, public sector contracts etc. It is not always easy for producers to access these supply chains or for consumers to find a regular and easily accessible supply of good local food. If local supply chains can be made more efficient and accessible local producers will have more confidence to supply the local market and consumers, organisations and businesses will have easier access to locally sourced produce.

CASE STUDY: Embleton Hall Dairies

Embleton Hall Dairies (www.embletonhalldairies.co.uk) is a family-run dairy company based near Wingate, Co. Durham, supplying fresh milk, cream and award-winning yogurt to north east shops, hospitals, universities, local authorities and food manufacturers. Following the demise of the Milk Marketing Board, the decision was taken to source as much milk as possible from local farmers and the dairy is proud of the unique fact that all milk sold comes from within a 25 mile radius of the dairy, from farmers the dairy knows and trusts to provide the highest levels of quality and animal welfare.

The growth and success of the business is directly attributable to the policies of putting quality above all other considerations, sourcing locally and the employment and development of dedicated local people. These policies have been central in gaining local authority contracts and a supply into Durham University, who have also been instrumental in helping develop the yogurt business, which started 6 years ago with a capacity of 3000kgs a week, into its current capacity of 7000kgs a week.

What do we want to achieve?

1. Cross Sector support for the development of localised short food supply chains.
2. Improved access for all residents to a diverse range of local foods.
**How will we do it?**

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<tr>
<td>1. Identify resources to research and test models for short supply chains in County Durham. One example of such a model would be a wholesale hub allowing smaller producers to achieve economies of scale and share risk by working co-operatively.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
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<td>2. Hold networking events (e.g. ‘meet the supplier’) and online networks/forums to bring together producers and potential local customers (retailers, hospitality sector, restaurants and cafés etc).</td>
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<td>3. Work with key stakeholders to develop a ‘County Durham’ brand.</td>
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<td>4. Encourage and support local food buying cooperatives, community cafés, and independent retailers to use local food.</td>
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<td>5. Investigate ways to increase the sustainable production of vegetables and fruit in the County.</td>
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<td>6. Support and enable farmers to supply produce for the local market at competitive prices.</td>
<td>Food Partnership, DPSPG Business Support network</td>
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<td>7. Assist local food businesses by:</td>
<td>DCC Business Support network</td>
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<td>▪ Developing Planning policies that encourage and support local food.</td>
<td>DCC Business Support network</td>
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<td>▪ Tailored business development support</td>
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<td>8. Work with organisers of local markets, food festivals, and other food events to facilitate participation of local suppliers, including new start-ups and smaller enterprises.</td>
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<td>9. Identify gaps in the market for specific products and services (this to be done with mapping projects, see SA1/Theme B/para 6).</td>
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Theme B: Public Sector Procurement

The major public sector procurement bodies in Co Durham are the NHS, Durham County Council (DCC), Durham University, the Police, and the Prison Service. The total value of food procured by DCC, the University and the Police for the financial year 2012-13 amounted to £5.7m. Contracts won by local producers support local employment and retain money within the local economy. Local contracts may also reduce transport and therefore help towards environmental targets.

These organisations have agreed to work together to enable local suppliers to be more able to meet the criteria required to successfully win contracts.

CASE STUDY: Durham University Procurement Strategy

The university has been working on improving the sustainability of its food procurement and catering operations for 5 years. Current annual spend is just under £3 million and activity on food extends across:

- 13 catered College Halls
- 2 self-catered colleges
- 6 retail outlets
- 2 shops

In common with all organisations the University is under pressure to keep costs down whilst maintaining/improving quality and dealing with increasing costs.

The University decided to implement a Procurement Strategy to ensure a sustainable source from local growers for its fruit and vegetable commodity. However, it could not source sufficient quantities and quality to fulfill this need. The University catering team worked with J.R. Holland Food Services to identify a group of local fruit and vegetable growers. Seasonal produce including potatoes, strawberries, broccoli, carrots and other vegetables are sourced within 25 miles of the University.

J.R. Holland Food has now become a hub for local artisan producers identified by the university to supply bread, milk, yoghurt and free range eggs. The University now sources milk and yoghurt from Embleton Hall Dairies (County Durham). The partnership between Embleton Hall and the University has increased their supply into other organisations. This has been achieved by University Catering providing tasting sessions, advice on size, pot design and recyclability.

Overall benefits to the University have been better provenance, sourcing locally, reduced carbon footprint (assisting in a reduction of 42 thousand kilos of carbon from the University’s delivery miles) and economic support to our region.
What do we want to achieve?

1. Establishment of a County Durham Public Sector Procurement Group (DPSPG) (sub group of Food Partnership) to facilitate collaboration and sharing of good practice.

2. A more consistent approach to sustainable food procurement across the whole public sector in the County.

3. New ways of creating a more level playing field for smaller suppliers to be able to bid for contracts.

How will we do it?

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<th>What we will do</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Hold regular meetings of the DPSPG to share best practice and lessons learnt on an on-going basis, and to develop cross-sector working within the County to complement existing regionally based single sector collaborations.</td>
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<td>2. Share policy and other documents to aid cross sector learning and identify areas for improved collaboration e.g. when developing specific criteria and policies for food procurement within each organisation.</td>
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<td>3. Ensure food sustainability and locality criteria are included within organisational food procurement policies.</td>
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<td>4. Agree specific sustainability and locality clauses within contracts.</td>
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<td>5. Exchange information on local suppliers and seek to improve knowledge and understanding about the existing local food system in and around the County.</td>
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<td>6. Identify resources (e.g. staff time, finance) to undertake a comprehensive mapping exercise to identify what food is grown and processed within the County (and neighbouring areas where appropriate) and the capacity and interest in new public sector contracts.</td>
<td>Durham University and DCA</td>
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<td>7. Research and learn from public sector organisations in other locations who have achieved high levels of local and sustainable food procurement.</td>
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<td>8. Agree on a commitment to work towards standardisation of criteria in the longer term.</td>
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Theme C: Tourism

County Durham has much to offer the visitor in terms of landscape, heritage and culture (see www.thisisdurham.com) and the tourism sector is important to the local economy, contributing £738m (2011). Between 2003 and 2012 this has grown by more than £71m and the number of overnight visitors has increased from 1.3m to 1.5m in the same period. Food and drink accounts for 50% of the total visitor expenditure. This represents 11,308 jobs, of which 9,026 are directly employed in tourism, 47% of which are in the food and drink sector.

Many regions in the UK, including the North East, promote their distinctive locally produced food as part of the mix of attractions and experiences for visitors. Food tourism, whereby visitors choose a destination in order to sample local specialities, or choose to visit Farmer’s Markets, Food Festivals, and eateries specialising in local food as part of a visit, has become a recognised phenomenon. A Toolkit for tourism businesses in the North East claims that local food can:

- add value to your business
- add visitor appeal
- reflect your commitment to supporting the local and regional economy
- reflect your commitment to sustainability
- celebrate great local produce and help keep local and regional producers in business, and
- add marketing and promotional potential.

(http://www.tourismbusinesstoolkit.co.uk/business-support/going-green/local-food-and-drink)

**CASE STUDY: Dowfold House B&B, Crook**

A Gold Green Tourism Award, and a Breakfast Award from the English Tourism Board are just two of the many accolades won by Jill and Rupert Richardson’s B&B business. They are strong supporters of local food and local food businesses and make a special effort to source as many ingredients as possible for their breakfast menu from local producers. They also grow what they can themselves in their garden, using their own tomatoes, herbs and fruit when available. They promote their suppliers in a leaflet and on their website (www.dowfoldhouse.com). Their stated policy is to “go first for quality, then for local, then for organic, then for fair trade (for non-local stuff)”.

Their many awards and positive feedback from guests is an excellent demonstration of how sourcing locally can add value to a tourism business.

Research would seem to support the positive links between local food and tourism, and that the benefits work both ways, supporting both tourism and sustainable local food businesses. Simms (2009)\(^\text{21}\) found that local food and drink products:

can improve the economic and environmental sustainability of both tourism and the rural host community through encouraging sustainable agricultural practices, supporting local businesses and building a brand that can benefit the region by attracting more visitors and investment ... local food initiatives are able to achieve these benefits because they offer an enhanced visitor experience that can connect the consumer with the people and places involved in food production. By telling the story of food production in this way, it is possible to use the tourist’s desire for authenticity to encourage the development of products and services that will boost sustainability and benefit rural regions for visitors and residents alike.\(p\)322

The rural landscape is largely created by the agricultural systems that are present. For example, the sheep that graze most of the land in the upland areas of the Durham Dales are vital to the retention of a much loved landscape that provides a tourist attraction for lovers of the outdoors. Linking high value landscapes (such as the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to local food has been found to be a helpful tool in promoting local food.\(^{22}\)

This Strategy seeks to strengthen these links to maximise the economic, environmental and cultural benefits that can accrue from a strong tourism industry that champions food from Durham.

**What do we want to achieve?**


2. Start to develop clear routes for buyers (e.g. hospitality and retail businesses with strong visitor economy links) to connect with local food suppliers/ producers.

3. An increase in the percentage of local food offered by ‘Taste Durham’ branded eateries/food outlets.

4. Grow County Durham as a Food Tourism location where visitors can experience food that is a unique product of our landscape, soils, climate, cultural traditions, and culinary and creative skills. Support the development of food and drink in the county that will respond to the needs of visitors.

**How will we do it?**

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<tr>
<th>What we will do</th>
<th>Lead Partner(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Build upon and develop the Taste Durham Award (Restaurants, Cafés, Pubs) for marketing to tourists and visitors, including targets for increasing the number of establishments awarded Local Food Champion status.</td>
<td>Visit County Durham</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Recruit and build membership of good quality food and drink producers through a nationally respected and independent award - The Guild of Fine Foods' Great Taste Award. This will also help to provide quality products to attractions, accommodation providers and retailers to showcase good quality producers.</td>
<td>Visit County Durham Food Partnership</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Encourage the hospitality and visitor-facing retailers to connect and buy from local producers. The tourism conference in Durham in autumn/winter 2013 will help start this process. A by-product from this will be the development of a database/directory of what is available throughout the county, to support the visitor industry and local producers.</td>
<td>Visit County Durham</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Continue to promote and develop monthly Farmers' Market in Durham.</td>
<td>Durham Markets</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Promote and help develop two or three products as Durham signature dishes?</td>
<td>Business Support network Durham University</td>
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Strategic Aim 2: Environmental Sustainability

To encourage and support a local food system that protects biodiversity and ecosystems and minimises its environmental footprint.

Theme A: Low input/sustainable production

It is widely recognised that due to the multiple pressures on food production from rising populations, climate change, and resource depletion, food production systems will need to change and adapt to meet these challenges. There has been much research and debate into how to do this, and the current Government initiated the Green Food Project to address the question of how to reconcile the goals of improving the environment and increasing food production (p2). Food production entails environmental costs including Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, high water requirements, and heavy reliance on non-renewable energy sources, particularly oil.

The loss of biodiversity on intensively farmed land in the past 60 years is well known. A report published in 2012 recorded huge losses of farmland birds across Europe, and the UK was one of the worst affected nations, with some species showing losses of 80% - 90%. Farmland butterfly species also declined by 39% between 1990 and 2009, and arable plants are the most threatened group of flora in the UK. Even in the less intensively farmed uplands there have been serious losses, such as flower-rich hay meadows, although the North Pennines and upper Durham Dales boasts some of the best examples of these in the country.

There is also an economic imperative to reduce input costs and move towards more sustainable production methods. Commodity prices of key agricultural inputs such as artificial nitrogen fertiliser (that requires oil to produce) and phosphate (a finite resource that is under increasing demand) have risen rapidly and show no signs of falling.

Some people also have concerns about the health impacts of exposure to agricultural pesticides by farm workers and those living in close proximity to intensively farmed land. Others have concerns about pesticide residues on crops and possible ill effects of imbibing a mix of pesticide residues. Reflecting public concern on this issue, the Food Standards Agency produces guidance on pesticide minimisation for specific crops.

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23 Defra (2012) Green Project Conclusions
24 http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/may/26/eu-farming-policies-bird-population (accessed 08/05/13)
25 Defra (2012) op cit
This Strategy supports a local food system that is continually exploring ways of reducing non-renewable inputs and protecting biodiversity and natural ecosystems.

This might be through promotion and support for accreditation schemes and campaigns such as Organic certification, the Campaign for the Farmed Environment, or the LEAF Marque that includes such practices as:

- Carefully managing hedgerows to provide habitats and food for wildlife
- Using pesticides and fertilisers only when absolutely necessary
- Leaving a strip of land between hedgerows and crops to act as a habitat for wildlife
- Recycling on-farm waste and conserving energy
- Improving water efficiency and quality

or by other means such as training and building knowledge and trust in local producers. Information about the main schemes can be found at Appendix 3.

**CASE STUDY: New Close Farm and Farm Shop**

New Close Farm is a small family run farm at Sacriston near Durham. Their ethos, both in farming and in running the farm shop, is 'to grow, produce and rear what we can, and when supply or climate intervene we work with local producers, breeders and organic suppliers to fill the gaps.'

At their on-farm shop they sell fresh, local and organic fruit and vegetables, rare breed meat, organic milk, cheese and butter, and their own very free range slow grown poultry. They have an on-farm butchery and have provided a workspace to a local baker as well as handing over poly-tunnels and raised beds to a local food activist who produces seasonal, vegetables and salads for the Farm Shop. Everything grown or reared on the farm is sold through the farm shop. They also stock a wide range of organic groceries.

The family recognise that they can only continue to grow sustainably by also becoming an outlet for other, local producers. These range from hobby producers of preserves and honey to seasonal gluts of fruit from orchards and allotments, start-up businesses and commercial producers who have diversified into other markets or, for example, want to continue to support heritage varieties and breeds. Often, producers will source their ‘raw materials’ from New Close Farm Shop before returning their products to the Farm Shop for sale - for example, bakers or jam producers will source seasonal fruit from the Farm Shop which was itself sold to the shop in the first instance by a local producer. The Farm Shop has become a hub for the sale and marketing of locally produced and seasonal foods.
What do we want to achieve?

1. Local food producers learning about and implementing more sustainable methods of production.

2. Supporting and encouraging cooperation amongst farmers to develop systems for sourcing more animal feed locally and from UK.

3. A rise in the numbers of food producers who have gained sustainability accreditation such as LEAF, Organic, and Conservation Grade.

4. Better utilisation of agri environment schemes to help achieve more sustainable methods of production.

How will we do it?

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<tr>
<td>1. Encourage and support farmers and growers to access training on sustainable production methods, including reduction of input costs, and potential impacts of climate change.</td>
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<td>NFU</td>
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<td>2. Provide guidance and support for County Durham food businesses to enable them to become more energy efficient and lower their energy costs.</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Encourage and support the development of farm networks that will enable farms to collaborate on issues such as sourcing local feed for stock, local marketing, sharing equipment and labour.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
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<td>DCC Rural Working Group</td>
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<td>UTASS</td>
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<td>NFU</td>
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<td>4. Support and encourage existing enterprises that are operating sustainably and facilitate sharing of expertise and knowledge.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Provide information in different formats (written, video, social media) for consumers on the added value of local sustainable food and the meaning of the various accreditation standards.</td>
<td>Food Partnership; DLFN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Businesses/Caterers</td>
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<td>6. Promote and encourage the take up of standards such as FFL and LEAF to both customers and producers. Encourage large organisations to request these standards.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Utilise Environmental Stewardship data for farmers to demonstrate the existing contribution farmers are making to the natural environment and guide additional management for sustainability.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Natural England</td>
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Theme B: Reducing Wastage, Packaging and Transport

The environmental impacts of the food system include the vast amounts of edible food that are wasted at all points in the food chain, the packaging that is used to keep it fresh or in conveniently sized portions, and the energy, infrastructure damage, and pollution associated with transport for distribution.

Wastage can occur at all points in the food chain and globally it is estimated that between 30-50% of all food produced is never consumed.27 How and where this wastage occurs differs across countries and commodities, with less developed nations wasting more at the bottom end of the supply chain due to poor infrastructure, whilst in more developed nations, loss is often a result of behaviour at the retail and customer end of the chain (ibid). Reasons for wastage can appear trivial and completely avoidable in some cases; for example, the rejection of crops by large retailers on the grounds of standards for size and appearance. It is estimated that up to 30% of the UK’s vegetable crop is not harvested for reasons like this (ibid). Post purchase waste is also considerable and in the UK 17% of edible food purchased by households is wasted. This includes 32% of all bread purchased and 24% of vegetables. It is estimated that households spend an average of £480/year on this wasted food. Catering and hospitality businesses are another point of loss. For example, it is estimated that the hospitality sector could save £6.6m/year if their wasted food was used for anaerobic digestion rather than going to landfill.

When food is wasted it also includes the loss and unnecessary use of all the many resources that go into growing, processing, and distributing it. For example, food that is wasted is responsible for GHG emissions and wasted water: the water footprint of avoidable household waste is around 4% of all our water requirements.28

Modern supply chains are complex, efficient and involve advanced logistical practices such as just in time ordering. However they are also responsible for significant environmental impacts via transportation and energy use. Transport accounts for around one third of all the oil (20.6m tonnes) used in the UK food chain annually.29 Apart from energy use, food transport also produces other negative impacts including contributing towards congestion, GHG emissions, and damage to transport infrastructure. Food transport is responsible for 25% of all HGV miles.30 Although working out the comparative environmental impact of food from different areas is complex, choosing seasonal, locally produced food grown in gardens, allotments etc, or purchased direct from the producer, or from a local independent retailer can minimise or even eliminate transport costs.

Many foods that are purchased come in some form of packaging, which has various functions including improving keeping quality, and complying with legal labelling requirements. Reducing unnecessary packaging and using recycled and recyclable materials where packaging is necessary, can reduce costs and GHG emissions, as well as reducing what ends up in landfill and saving resources. Around 50% of the

30 AEA Technology (2005) ‘The Validity of Food Miles as an Indicator of Sustainable Development: Final report’ Defra
packaging that ended up as waste in the UK in 2006 came from food and drink.\[^{31}\]

Because local food can be purchased closer to where it is grown or reared the need for some packaging can be reduced. There is also room for working with suppliers and consumers to minimise usage and waste of packaging.

**What do we want to do?**

1. Create systems and services that help to reduce waste at every stage in the local food chain.
2. Encourage the elimination of the use of unnecessary packaging, and the re-use and recycling of other forms of packaging.
3. Reduce the transport mileages associated with local food production and distribution wherever possible.

**How will we do it?**

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<th>What we will do</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Encourage household composting and extend Master Composting Scheme into more communities.</td>
<td>DCC (Strategic Waste Management)</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Must do" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research feasibility of setting up a web based network for providing a clearing house for suppliers with contract rejects, seasonal gluts and surplus food to be accessed by variety of tiers from voluntary services, small business and local families/public.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Should do" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Research demand for a web-based freight sharing hub for local food businesses to reduce empty and part-loads.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Want to do when possible" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Promote the reduction of packaging during the manufacture and transportation of food (e.g. by using fewer materials, recycled materials or materials which are recyclable/reusable.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Achieved" /></td>
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[^31]: [www.foodethicscouncil.org/topic/Packaging](http://www.foodethicscouncil.org/topic/Packaging) (accessed 08/05/13)
5. Promote smart shopping to consumers and retailers:
   - Re-use bags.
   - Re-use containers
   - Buy Products less or no packaging e.g. fruit and vegetables.
   - Buy products with packaging that can be recycled or reused, e.g. glass jar.

   | DCC (Strategic Waste Management) |

6. Promote the national campaign Love Food Hate Waste. Raise awareness of food waste and provide information to County Durham residents so they can make the most of their food and reduce the amount being thrown away.

   | DCC (Strategic Waste Management) Food Partnership |
Strategic Aim 3: Health and Wellbeing

To support and encourage all residents of County Durham to adopt diets that are both healthy and sustainable, and to provide more opportunities for building closer connections with the source of their food.

The connections between health and diet are undisputed. Food-related diseases (cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes) account for 125,000 premature (<75yrs) deaths each year. This is about 2/3 of all premature deaths. Poor diet contributes to 30-40% of cancers, and eating the recommended five or more daily portions of fruit and vegetables helps in preventing Coronary Heart Disease. Apart from the human suffering, there is also a high financial burden on the NHS, with food-related ill health costing the UK NHS at least £6 billion annually. The most pressing problems are caused by the rise in the numbers of people who are either over-weight or obese. In 1993 13% of men and 16% of women in England were obese; in 2011 this had risen to 24% for men and 26% for women. Obesity levels are also rising for children. The causes are complex but can be summarised as a result of the ‘nutrition transition’ with diets having become increasingly high in sugar, salt, processed foods and saturated fat.

Health statistics for County Durham suggest that an improvement in consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables is very desirable. Estimated levels of adult healthy eating and obesity in County Durham are both significantly worse than the average for England as a whole. Figures from the 2013 County Durham Health Profile show 28.6% of adults as obese (average for England 24.2%), and only 21.4% of adults eating healthy diets (average for England 28.7%). The situation for children is no better, with 22.7% of children in Year 6 classified as obese (average for England 19.2%). The 2011 County Durham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) states that tackling this problem requires a multi-agency and partnership approach. There is evidence that physical activity and diet combined are effective interventions.

This strategy supports guidance from the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and focuses on how a more localised food system can help deliver improved diets and general well-being. Education, for example, the Change4Life project, has been successful in getting over some clear messages about healthier diets. However, behaviour change is more difficult to influence. There is some evidence that when people become more closely connected with the food

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34 Department of Health (2000) The NHS Plan
39 Services for the prevention of cardiovascular disease: Commissioning guide, NICE, 2012
system and the food on their plate they are more likely to make changes in their eating habits, such as increasing consumption of fresh vegetables and fruit when they have some involvement in their production.

CASE STUDY: Healthworks Food Coop

Healthworks is a health and community centre based in Easington Colliery which offers a wide range of health and community information, services and activities to anyone who lives or works in County Durham and Darlington. It is a partnership project led by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, Northumbrian Water and Durham County Council.

One of the projects is a food co-op where people can buy good quality, healthy produce at affordable prices. It supports local communities and local farming, ensures produce is fresh, and reduces the impact on the environment. This service is run by volunteers every Thursday between 11.00 and 13.00. Average monthly use for the period January to October 2013 was 40 people, with an average monthly spend of between £40-50.

What do we want to achieve?

1. Residents in County Durham eating a healthier and more sustainable diet, contributing to a reduction in diet related ill health.

2. All residents in County Durham having better access to nutritious, affordable, sustainable food, including through opportunities for direct or closer involvement in food production.

How will we do it?

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<th>What we will do</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Deliver education programmes across all communities to assist people to choose healthy, nutritious and sustainable food.</td>
<td>Educational establishments at all levels; OASES, Voluntary Sector, Caterers</td>
<td>Must do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adopt a life stage approach to preventing and reducing obesity and other diet related diseases in children and adults.</td>
<td>Sure Start, Schools, social workers</td>
<td>Must do</td>
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</table>
3. Nurture and support community food initiatives in deprived communities working with local residents. | Food Partnership Public Health

4. Provide opportunities for children, young people and families to take part in practical food experiences (including cooking and growing) and to learn about food and food choices. | Food Partnership Public Health

5. Develop an understanding of residents’ access to food supplies (physical access, quality and price) and work with them to improve access in any ‘hotspots’. | Food partnership Public Health

6. Promote and support existing agricultural/horticultural schemes that provide therapeutic environments and assess demand for new projects. | Food partnership

7. Monitor the impact of restricting the siting and numbers/opening hours of takeaways. | Trading standards Public health

8. Explore the procurement of dietetically appropriate food choices (eg low salt, low fat products) in settings such as schools, care homes, hospitals and workplaces. | Procurement (DCC and other bodies)

9. Explore schemes that provide free or discounted fruit and vegetables as a means of guiding choice by incentives. | Public health

10. Advocate and lobby for the provision of space for community food growing. | Planning
Strategic Aim 4: Resilient and Active Communities

To enable all communities across the County to have access to land, knowledge and skills in order to grow some of their own food.

Community based food production can take many forms such as allotments, community gardens, city farms, garden sharing, ‘pop up’ gardens (e.g. on land earmarked for development in longer term), ‘incredible edible’ schemes, and community supported agriculture. Projects and activities can be located in cities, market towns, villages or remoter rural areas. Community food production strengthens food security and access to ‘good food’ and it can assist people on low incomes to reduce their food costs through partial self-provisioning. Involvement in such activities can improve mental and physical health, social inclusion, and contribute towards crime reduction. Projects can offer formal and informal training and be a stage on the route to employment. At grassroots level it re-connects eaters with the food on their plate and can lead to healthier and more sustainable lifestyles. County Durham benefits from a strong history of allotment gardening and smallholder production associated with former mining communities. There is also an abundance of under-used land, although access can be a barrier. Durham County Council owns 164 allotment sites across the county comprising of 3,700 individual plots, and there are many others in private ownership or run by Town and Parish Councils. Many of these sites have considerable waiting lists, indicating an unmet demand for further growing sites.

CASE STUDY: Veg Out In Barney

Veg Out In Barney was launched by the Rotary Club of Barnard Castle in March 2013. The aim being that the community could avail themselves of free and fresh vegetables and herbs.

The goals of the scheme are as follows:

- To grow free, organic vegetables and herbs in public places for community use.
- To promote healthy eating and lifestyles through education.
- To support and enable people to ‘grow their own’
- To provide a role model for healthy living.

Deerbolt HMYOI is within the boundaries of Barnard Castle and therefore is part of the Barnard Castle community. The Prison Governor was interested in the involvement of the prisoners in the scheme and to this end they have:

- Invented the title ‘Veg Out In Barney’
- Designed the schemes logo
- Propagated seeds
- Printed T Shirts and signage

The project now has 20 sites in the town comprising raised beds and plots of land and people are now helping themselves to the produce. Seventeen apple trees have been planted in the central area of the town which have been sponsored by individuals and businesses.

Future aspirations include a Veg Out Farm on land forming part of the ‘Hub’ our young people’s community resource centre, and cookery and ‘green’ exercise classes.

The Rotary Club of Barnard Castle gained the 1030 Rotary District award for the best community project 2012/13 recognising the value of the scheme.
What do we want to achieve?

1. Establishment of a Community Growing Group (sub group of Food Partnership) to share expertise, improve coordination, and help with implementation of actions.

2. Increased opportunities for people to participate in growing their own food close to where they live or work.

3. Improvement in the coordination of local resources and unmet need.

4. Increased use of publicly owned land for food production.

5. Wider promotion of sources of help and advice, both national and local skills exchange.

How will we do it?

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<tr>
<td>1. Set up regular meetings for a Community Growing Group (CGG) with community and statutory organisations represented.</td>
<td>DCA</td>
<td>Must do</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Undertake a mapping exercise of all allotments in the county, to be publicly available online at <a href="http://www.durhamlocalfood.org.uk">www.durhamlocalfood.org.uk</a>.</td>
<td>Durham Local Food Network (DLFN) website team</td>
<td>Must do</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Identify potential new sites for community food growing projects, taking into account existing waiting lists for allotments.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Must do</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Research demand for a model of a system enabling redistribution of excess produce from allotments and other community food projects.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Should do</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Establish a web based scheme for linking available land to people wanting access to land for food production.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Should do</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Encourage and support new community based food production by sharing of knowledge and skills, promoting sources of support, information and funding.</td>
<td>DCA DLFN website team CGG</td>
<td>Should do</td>
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<td>7. Assess feasibility of establishing bulk purchasing for County Durham allotments and community gardens.</td>
<td>Food Partnership CGG</td>
<td>Should do</td>
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<td>Establish some workplace allotment schemes for private and public sector employees.</td>
<td>FCFCG CGG</td>
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<td>Make links between school food growing activities and the surrounding local community, including building on experience from Farmers' Markets in Schools project (East Durham).</td>
<td>Schools CGG</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Advise communities on providing land for local food production.</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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Strategic Aim 5: Education and Skills development

To provide opportunities for all to learn about ‘good food’ – growing/rearing, cooking, preserving, marketing and selling it.

Sixty or seventy years ago it would have been commonplace for many people to learn the skills involved in food production and cooking from scratch simply from their experiences in the home and community. As lifestyles have changed, more processed food is eaten and food has become relatively cheaper and therefore occupies a smaller proportion of a family’s expenditure. One consequence of these changes is that these skills have been lost to many families and individuals. With more people now becoming interested in growing some of their own food and the benefits of doing so being more widely documented, there is a need to embed these skills in both schools and communities.

There are many excellent examples in both schools and the wider community where people with no prior experience are learning to grow and cook more of their own food. The importance of these skills is increasingly been recognised through initiatives such as Master Gardeners, and the Food for Life Partnership, and from 2014 cooking is being re-introduced into the national curriculum for both primary and secondary schools. This strategy seeks to support and expand these opportunities for everyone.

CASE STUDY: Growing Healthy and Fruit-full Schools

OASES (Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists) is a partnership between a regional charity; NEEN, and Durham County Council. It supports schools across the region with sustainability education; learning outside the classroom and global learning.

Two of its funded programmes are Growing Healthy and Fruit-full Schools. Growing Healthy is supported by Durham County Council’s Education Development Service working with 5 primary schools across County Durham to develop growing areas in schools; provide professional development for school staff and support the development of after school growing clubs with support from the local community. A short film highlighting the impact of this project will be released in the spring.

Fruit-full Schools is a Big Lottery funded national programme coordinated in England by Learning Through Landscapes. OASES coordinated and delivered the project in the North East through 5 hub schools across County Durham and Sunderland.

The programme focussed on working with secondary and special schools. The programme worked with the schools over four years developing their understanding of orchards and local fruit; developing their skills in planting and grafting and using the produce to develop tasty food that they cooked and distributed within school or the local community.

For more information visit: www.oasesnortheast.org.uk; 03000 260535

40 http://mastergardeners.org.uk/
41 Cookery lessons back on the school menu, Daily Telegraph, 10/02/13
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/9859474/Cookery-lessons-back-on-the-school-menu.html
What we want to achieve?

1. A variety of affordable and accessible training opportunities for residents at different levels.
2. Every school in County Durham to become a food growing school and for food to be integrated into lessons and part of whole school policy (including involvement of parents and carers).
3. An increase in school food growing projects that create links with the wider community.
4. Clearer links between school food growing and career development in agriculture and horticulture, catering and the wider food industry.

How will we do it?

| WEIGHTING CODE |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Must do         | Should do       | Want to do when possible | Achieved        |
| Public Health   | OASES           | Food Partnership   |                 |
| Other partners  | Other partners  | OASES             |                 |
| Other partners  |                  |                 |                 |
| Resource        |                  |                 |                 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will do</th>
<th>Lead Partner(s)</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Consider commissioning a programme providing a comprehensive, whole school approach for schools as recommended by the National School Food Plan.</td>
<td>Public Health Other partners (to be identified)</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Establish Growing Food Hub to provide help and support to schools across the county, building on the Growing healthy and Eco schools model.</td>
<td>OASES Other partners</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provide networking opportunities for schools and community groups and businesses to explore potential collaborations.</td>
<td>Food Partnership OASES</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Undertake audit of food procurement in all schools (including Academies) across the County and set targets to increase % of local food used.</td>
<td>King James Academy/DCC School Meals Catering Team</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Develop a whole school approach to food at King James Academy and establish as a demonstration Academy for food.</td>
<td>King James Academy Food for Life</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Encourage schools to create pathways to career development in agriculture and horticulture through sharing of experience and collaboration with East Durham (Houghall) College, other FE colleges and Universities in the region.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Identify resources to provide training opportunities within communities (e.g. growing, composting, poultry/bee keeping, preserving, marketing, food safety etc).</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategic Aim 6: Food Fairness

To improve access to ‘good food’ for all, regardless of income or place of residence; to ensure that this food is produced with high animal welfare standards, and that producers are fairly rewarded.

Theme A: Access to Affordable, Fresh, Local Food For All

There are many reasons why some people might not have access to fresh, local food. It may not be readily available at convenient retail locations, it may be too expensive, or perceived as too expensive, or it simply may not be available at all in some locations or at certain times of the year. The issue of price and affordability is highly political and contentious at any time, but especially in the current situation when welfare reform, rising unemployment, low wages, and rising food prices are resulting in many more households finding themselves in real financial difficulties. Latest research suggests that in the UK there are around four million adults and children who are not properly fed by today’s standards (said to be in food poverty). 42

Some statistics 43 illustrate how the affordability of food in general has decreased over the past five years. Food prices have risen by 12% in real terms, although this does follow a long period of falling prices:

UK trend in food prices in real terms January 1980 - July 2012 44

![Graph showing UK trend in food prices in real terms January 1980 - July 2012.](source)

The impact has been much greater on low income households, who naturally spend a larger proportion of available income on food than average. In 2011, the average spend on food was 11.3% (0.8% higher than in 2007), whereas for households in the lowest 20% (by income), expenditure on food rose by 1.4% to 16.6%. There is also evidence that the total amount of food purchased has fallen and that the poorest households are buying less fresh fruit and vegetables: in 2011, the lowest 10% of

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42 Gordon, D. et al, 2013 The Impoverishment of the UK PSE UK first results: Living Standards. PSE UK. There is no agreed definition of ‘food poverty’ as such; this study uses recognised and robust criteria.

43 Defra 2013 Food Statistics Pocketbook 2012 – in year update

44 Excludes alcoholic drinks and catering
households by income purchased 14% less fruit and vegetables than in 2007 and this only amounted to an average of 2.9 portions of the recommended 5-a-day. The relationship between changes in income and food prices for the lowest 10% of households by income is illustrated by the following graph:

Income decline after housing costs, low income decile (UK)

Median income (after housing costs) between 2002/3 and 2010/11 rose for all income groups apart from the lowest 10%, where there was a 12% decrease. The combined effect of falling incomes and rising food prices resulted in a 20% reduction in food affordability for this income group.

This issue has been highlighted by the recent rapid growth in the number of food banks and people using them. In May 2013 the number of people being fed each month by Durham Food Bank rose to 1,000 for the first time. Food poverty is a feature of wider structural issues of poverty and inequality. The dilemma faced by policy makers is how to solve the apparent conflicting objectives of providing affordable food and paying a price for food that reflects the true social and environmental costs.

In this Strategy we seek to facilitate and encourage practical actions at the local level that can enable people to take more control over their food supply either by direct involvement in production, or by collective purchasing, and by learning how to use inexpensive ingredients that are healthy.

What do we want to achieve?

1. Increased opportunities for all to be involved in growing their own food (see Strategic Aim 4: Resilient and Active Communities).

2. The establishment of more diverse community food projects, especially in areas where access to affordable, fresh, local food is poor.

3. Support and expand projects that develop skills in purchasing and cooking with cheaper but healthy ingredients.

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E.g. see: Cooper, N. and Dumpleton, S. 2013 “Walking the breadline: the scandal of food poverty” Church Action on Poverty and Oxfam
### How will we do it?

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<tr>
<th>What we will do</th>
<th>Lead Partner(s)</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify and facilitate the identification of local plots of land for community gardens or allotments.</td>
<td>DCC&lt;br&gt;Land owners&lt;br&gt;Town and Parish Councils&lt;br&gt;CGG</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explore potential for working with local Garden Centres to run workshops on growing vegetables and fruit, and supplying affordable start-up kits for new growers.</td>
<td>Local Garden Centres&lt;br&gt;Food Partnership</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Research food cooperatives or other community food outlets across the country that could be used as models to pilot in areas of County Durham where access to affordable good food is poor.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td>Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>Run a seminar / day to showcase these ideas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Research food projects that enable the development of skills to source and cook healthy food on a low income. Facilitate pilot projects in County Durham.</td>
<td>Food Partnership&lt;br&gt;DCA</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Encourage and support the establishment of Community Supported Agriculture in the County.</td>
<td>SA&lt;br&gt;FCFCG&lt;br&gt;Food Partnership</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Explore how Social Housing providers can improve access to local food, growing and cooking skills for their residents.</td>
<td>SH providers&lt;br&gt;Food Partnership</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Encourage communities to consider including land for community food production as an option in Neighbourhood and Community Plans.</td>
<td>DCC (Spatial Policy)&lt;br&gt;DCA</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme B: Animal Welfare

According to the RSPCA 48% of people in Britain say that animal welfare is either 
 extremely or very important to them when choosing what food to buy.

The welfare of all farmed animals is protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal. The Act also contains a duty of care to animals - anyone responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to make sure the animal’s welfare needs are met. The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 set minimum standards for all farm animals.

Compassion for World Farming campaigns for better animal welfare and is opposed to factory farming.

Some common issues of concern around animal welfare are:

- Battery cages for laying hens: about 50% of British hens that lay our eggs still live in battery cages. They are now enriched battery cages, but can still give each bird no more usable space than an A4 piece of paper. Cages seriously restrict their movement and ability to behave naturally.

- Some beef and dairy cattle housing may have inadequate space, poor lighting, and poor ventilation, which can cause health and welfare problems.

- The welfare of pigs in the UK is generally better than in the rest of Europe. The UK has banned the use of sow stalls (also known as gestation crates) that limit the ability of pregnant sows to move. Higher standards have led to many UK pig farmers going out of business as they cannot compete with cheaper imports.

CASE STUDY: Durham County Council bans eggs from caged birds

In 2008 Durham County Council decided that they would no longer purchase eggs sourced from hens kept in cages. From August 2008 only eggs that meet the Freedom Food* free-range egg standard have been used in all council establishments. Sunnyhill Eggs were awarded the first contract for free range eggs. JR Holland agreed to collect the eggs when their vans were empty on the way back to the depot and deliver the eggs as part of the fruit and vegetable deliveries, thereby also creating an efficient distribution system. When the Council joined the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) contract in 2013 they continued to get regional free range eggs from Lindz Hall Farm, delivered by JR Holland.

Councillor Michele Hodgson, who was Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources at the time, said:

“Pledging to use free range hen’s eggs reflects the Council’s support for buying and selling ethical and sustainable products and is an important contribution to improving standards in animal welfare."

*For more information on Freedom Food, see Appendix 1.
In County Durham there are many examples of excellent animal welfare practice, and DCC Trading Standards, who are responsible for visiting farms and enforcing the legislation, report that standards are on the whole very good. Accreditation schemes (see Appendix 2) can provide some level of assurance to consumers. However, small local producers cannot usually afford the annual fees necessary to gain an accreditation and this was an issue raised in our consultation events. DCC Trading Standards will be addressing this with a local registration scheme that will not involve any additional inspections or costs for farmers.

What do we want to achieve?

1. High standards of animal welfare to be the norm for local food in County Durham.

2. A farm to be considered “compliant” at the time of inspection by officers of Durham County Council in relation to Animal Welfare legislation.

How will we do it?

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<tr>
<td>What we will do</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. A registration scheme initiated by Animal Health Officers for small businesses.</td>
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<td>2. Marketing and publicity campaign to promote new standard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Publicity and education of public, including farm visits, to build trust between producers and consumers.</td>
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</table>
Theme C: Fair Trade

This theme refers to fair trading conditions for the people who grow and rear our food: they should receive a fair return for their labour. The language of Fair Trade is more familiar in the context of products that we import from developing countries, such as coffee, bananas, and dried fruits, but there are also many examples in the UK where those involved in growing and rearing our food are poorly rewarded. Farmers and growers selling to the global market or to supermarkets are subject to global price fluctuations and binding contracts. Food produced for sale to a more local market is open to local price negotiation. Some models, such as Community Supported Agriculture, offer active support to farmers by entering into a partnership agreement with consumers.

What do we want to achieve?

1. Fair Trade criteria to be included in food branded as Durham local food.

2. Establishment of more Community Supported Agriculture initiatives, where consumers commit to purchasing a share of the harvest from specific growers/farmers at a mutually agreed price.

3. Improved publicity and promotion of existing direct selling outlets such as Farmer’s markets, Durham market, Farm Shops.

How will we do it?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Research feasibility of developing a Durham brand including criteria that ensures a reasonable return for producers.</td>
<td>Food Partnership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Engagement with interested farmers/growers to promote establishment of CSAs.</td>
<td>Food Partnership Soil Association FCFCG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Joint marketing campaign to promote direct selling outlets in the county.</td>
<td>NEEFM Farm Shops Box Schemes Durham Markets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 1: County Durham Food Partnership Terms of Reference

Purpose
To work together for a more equitable, sustainable, fairer food system for County Durham that is providing food that is healthy for people and the planet and providing access to good food for all.

Functions
- Advocacy – influencing and contributing to policy formation
- Fostering collaboration and coordination between different parts of the food system
- Developing programmes for action and overseeing where appropriate

Responsibilities
- Secure funding and resources to run programmes and administer the Food Partnership
- Oversee the implementation and development of the Sustainable Local Food Strategy
- Respond to relevant local and national consultations
- Identify priorities and set a work programme
- Establish robust monitoring and evaluation systems
- Promote learning and dialogue about food system issues, both within the Food Partnership and more widely
- Act as a forum for networking, coordination, and information sharing to ensure best use of resources
- Work with relevant bodies locally, regionally and nationally to further the purpose of the Food Partnership
- Produce an Annual Report

Structure and Membership
The Partnership is run and managed by a Management Committee. Members are nominated from named bodies/key stakeholders. Additional members can be co-opted as deemed necessary to fill gaps in expertise. The Management Committee will appoint a Chair.

Sub-committees will deal with specific areas and report to the Management Committee. These groups are self-selected.

A wider general membership is open to all who are invited or sign up via the website.

Meetings
Meetings of the Management Committee will be held no less than four times a year.

Decision making at Management Committee meetings will be by consensus and a quorum is deemed to be operating when 50% of the membership is present.

The Agenda will be circulated to members at least three working days before each meeting.
Minutes will be circulated to members no more than two weeks after the date when the meeting is held.

The first Annual Gathering will be held no later than 15 months after the first meeting of the Partnership, and at no more than 14 month intervals after that. The Annual Gathering will be open to members from all categories and will be for the purpose of reporting the year's progress, networking, and sharing information and expertise.

These Terms of Reference were agreed by a project Steering Group meeting held on 20th August 2013.

To be reviewed annually.
APPENDIX 2: Food Charter and List of Signatories

COUNTY DURHAM FOOD CHARTER

We pledge to support:

A Strong Local Food Economy
1. A flourishing, competitive local ‘good food’ sector, providing gainful employment for local people.

2. Public and private sector caterers sourcing ‘good food’ from local producers and suppliers, keeping value within our local economy.

3. An economically viable supply chain for sustainable local food.

Environmental Sustainability
4. A local food system that protects biodiversity and ecosystems and minimises its environmental footprint.

5. Food that is processed, distributed and disposed of in ways that increase composting and recycling and reduce the need for transport, energy use, packaging and waste.

Health and Wellbeing
6. The creation of environments and infrastructure that make it easier to adopt and maintain healthy and sustainable diets.

7. Food-related activities (e.g. growing, cooking) to improve physical and mental health for all, and which are available in our communities.

Resilient and Active Communities
8. All our communities to have access to land, knowledge and skills in order to grow some of their own food.

Education and Skills Development
9. Opportunities for everyone to learn about ‘good food’ – growing/rearing, cooking, preserving, marketing and selling it.

Food Fairness
10. Improved access to ‘good food’ for everyone, regardless of their income or where they live.

11. Food produced with high animal welfare standards, and producers being fairly rewarded.

FOOD CHARTERS
A few cities around the world have adopted Food Charters to set out how organisations and individuals will work together to develop and promote sustainable, healthy local food systems.

They recognise that food can be a powerful driver of positive social, economic and environmental change, improving lives and protecting the planet.

In County Durham we are taking a countywide approach and this Food Charter forms the backbone of a Sustainable Local Food Strategy for County Durham.

The success of the Charter and Strategy depends on the active support of a wide range of institutions and individuals. As a start, sign up to this Charter and display it in your organisation, and make a commitment to doing one new thing in support of the stated aims.

Sign up Now!
1. Sign and display the Charter in your workplace or home.
2. Sign up online & make a commitment to do one new thing to support the aims.

www.fooddurham.net
For more information on how you can get involved contact:
info@fooddurham.net

What we mean by ‘sustainable local food’: ‘food that is produced and consumed in or near County Durham that is healthy for people and the planet, and supports our local economy’

What we mean by ‘good food’: ‘food that is safe, nutritious, of good quality and environmentally sustainable’

Name ..........................  Organisation ..........................  Date ..........................
WHY DO WE NEED A FOOD CHARTER?

In the 21st Century the food system faces multiple challenges:

- Climate change
- Diet related ill health
- Population growth
- Soil degradation
- Complex food chains
- Depleted finite resources
- Biodiversity loss
- Food commodity trading
- 30 - 50% of food produced is wasted
- Lack of food democracy

Food consumers have also become increasingly distanced from food production, with accompanying loss of skills in food production and preparation. Most people agree that ‘business as usual’ is not an option. This Charter and the accompanying Sustainable Local Food Strategy, together with similar activities across the UK, are creating a movement for a more sustainable food system.

Examples of how you can help:

**Individuals**
- Buy more locally produced food
- Grow some of your own food at home or in an allotment or community garden
- Try to waste as little food as possible
- Compost food waste, recycle packaging
- Cook more meals from scratch using seasonal, local, fairly traded, sustainably produced ingredients
- Support high standards of animal welfare by choosing e.g. free range eggs, responsibly sourced seafood

**Businesses/Organisations**
- Procure as much ‘sustainable local food’ as possible for employees and customers. You may start by e.g.:
  - increasing the amount of fresh seasonal produce
  - checking that fish is MSC certified
  - using eggs from free range hens
- Provide opportunities for staff to grow food at or near their workplace
- Provide the opportunity to compost tea bags and food waste
- Reduce access to unhealthy processed food, such as snacks from vending machines

For more ideas and advice, contact us at: info@fooddurham.net
List of (online) Signatories 19/09/13 – 20/02/14
(in reverse order)

1. Julie Morgan Dodds
2. Melanie Campbell
3. Mohit Jain
4. JR Holland Food Services Ltd.
5. Geordie Bakers
6. Darren Leason
7. Angela Whiting
8. Dr Rachel Pain
9. Dr Ilan Zvi Baron
10. Jo Atkinson
11. Jane Johnson
12. Sandra Almeida
13. Flemming Schiøtt Hansen
14. Bethany Swash
15. Keith Bond
16. Wilf Richards
17. Fruitful Durham
18. Durham Community Food Writers
19. Durham Local Food Network
20. David and Dianne Nichol-Brown
21. Newlands Hall B&B
22. Sue Jackson
23. Sarah Pybus Franklin
24. Judith Pressley
25. Hazel Coppack (Love Food)
26. Doug Chapman
27. Evenwood Church of England Primary School
28. The Bowes Museum
29. Councillors Lucy Hovvels and Eddie Tomlinson
30. Dr Ann Barmby
31. Neil Aykley Consulting; Durham
32. Taylor Shaw Durham
33. Durham Wildlife Trust
34. Woodcraft For Landscapes Ltd
35. Stephen Beresford
36. Sarah James
37. Roger Clubley
38. Jo Laverick, Durham Community Action
39. North Pennines AONB Partnership
40. Rupert Richardson
41. Paul Thompson, Embleton Dairies
42. OASES
43. Bill Oldfield, Oldfield’s Restaurant
Others have signed hard copies but not yet online, including:

44. Durham University
45. County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
46. Durham Markets
47. NFU
48. Claypath Deli
49. Moody Baker
50. Bradley Burn Farm Shop
51. Gala Theatre
52. Broom House Farm
53. Lowfield Farm Shop
54. Robinson’s of Wingate
55. Dropwell Farm Shop
56. Homer Hill Farm Shop
57. IK Fish
58. Teesdale Game & Poultry
59. Westholme Farm
60. Mellanby’s vegetables
61. New Close Farm Shop
62. Alyson Wearmouth
APPENDIX 3: Accreditation Schemes

Organic
Organic certification covers all aspects of food production, including animal welfare.

The main bodies for accrediting organic production in the UK are the Soil Association (http://www.soilassociation.org) and Organic Farmers and Growers (http://www.organicfarmers.org.uk).

Smallholders selling to the local market can self-certify by using the Wholesome Food Association local symbol (http://www.wholesome-food.org).

Demeter certify biodynamic production (http://www.demeter.net).

LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) Marque
LEAF promotes sustainable food and farming by helping farmers produce good food, with care and to high environmental standards, identified in-store by the LEAF Marque logo. See: http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/home.

Freedom Food (RSPA)
Freedom Food is the RSPCA's farm assurance and food labelling scheme, which inspects farms to strict RSPCA welfare standards. See: http://www.freedomfood.co.uk.

Red Tractor
Red Tractor covers all aspects of the supply chain. This includes food safety and traceability, animal welfare, and environmental protection. Standards must be met at every critical link in the food supply chain. The Union Jack in the logo indicates food has been farmed, processed and packed all in the UK. See: http://www.redtractor.org.uk/home

Campaign for the Farmed Environment
This is not an accreditation scheme but is a voluntary campaign aimed at encouraging better land management for wildlife. Information can be found at: http://www.cfeonline.org.uk/home.
Many organisations and individuals have contributed towards this document and it is impossible to list them all. The project Steering Group would like to express their thanks to everyone who has contributed to the development of this strategy and they look forward to working together to achieve the shared vision.

All Workshop attendees (60)
Community Growing Group

Dawn Phillips (Public Health)
Elaine Scott (Visit County Durham)
Emma Pallister (North East Procurement Organisation)
Esther Mireku (Public Health)
Geradine O’Connor (NHS Health Improvement Manager)
Helen Holmes (DCC Procurement Team)
Ian Bousfield (DCC Animal Welfare Team)
Jamie Bond (New Close Farm Shop)
Jamie Thomas (DCC Procurement Team)
Jim Cokhill (Durham Wildlife Trust)
Maggie Babington (King James’ Academy)
Rachel Gatland (DCC Strategic Waste Management)
Richard Hirst (Outdoor and Sustainability Education Service)
Ruth Stanton (Smallholder, Wear Valley)
Simon Wilson (North Pennines AONB)
Stuart Wray (County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust)

Project Steering Group

Stephen Beresford (DCC Sustainability Team)
Graham Black (DCC Spatial Planning Team)
Hazel Coppack (Love Food)
Natalie Connor (Groundwork)
Amanda Donnelly (Food for Life Partnership)
Josephine Ellis (DCC Planning Policy)
Richard Graham (Helmepark)
Amy Mycock (Durham Local Food Network)
John Turner (Durham University)
Tim Wright (DCC Public Health i formerly PCT)

The document was written and compiled by Dr Liz Charles, Durham Community Action and responsibility for any errors are entirely hers.