



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We wanted to understand the lived experience of people accessing community food services in York.

So we talked to people that use them about **choice, dignity, reliance, self-sufficiency** and so much more...



[21st September York & North Yorkshire Food Summit Follow Up \(alchemer.com\)](https://www.alchemer.com)

From the responses received regarding what participants learnt at the York / North Yorkshire Food Summit, several key points and themes have emerged:

Importance of Collaboration:

Many participants expressed the need to understand where organisations are based and how they can work together without competing locally. They emphasised the importance of bringing providers together to continue learning, challenging one another, and fostering connections. Participants stressed the importance of a coordinated response to food-related challenges and a common sentiment was that there are many dedicated individuals and organisations doing valuable work in the field of food support in the local area.

Diverse Approaches to Food:

Participants acknowledged the diversity in methods, approaches, and values in addressing / underpinning food insecurity and insufficiency. The significance of exploring practicalities was raised. Several participants mentioned learning about the "Cash First" initiative as an alternative to traditional food parcels. They expressed curiosity about its potential implications. Some participants were impressed by the potential of place-based and mixed-income food models, highlighting their importance and one attendee learned about arts-based social activism related to food in Whitby, which was seen as fascinating and inspiring.

The idea that different models of food provision can complement each other and that there are opportunities to facilitate collaboration to ensure efficiency and inclusivity was starting to come through.

Regional Food Insecurity:

Participants identified areas in North Yorkshire with the greatest food insecurity, such as Craven, Selby, and Scarborough.

Clearly, collaboration and coordination among various organisations and individuals involved in food support and addressing food insecurity is important. Many respondents mentioned the need to work together, share knowledge, and connect different food models to make the overall effort more efficient and inclusive. This theme is reflected in statements about "bringing providers together," "opportunities to facilitate some joining up," and the recognition that "there is no wrong model as such; they all complement each other."

Participants were asked if they would be interested in follow up webinars / discussion on the following 6 core topics:

'More than food' models	Collaborative place-based models	The convening power of food	Cash first approach	Lived experience	Mixed income models rooted in communities
16	16	14	11	10	7

Responses show a demand for More than Food and Collaborative Place-Based Models, but less for Mixed-Income Models. This is possibly due to understanding. However, positively there was appetite for follow up engagement across each area from participants.

From the responses about what people have done since the meeting, several key actions and themes can be identified:

Networking and Collaboration:

Many respondents mentioned making connections with individuals or organisations they met during the conference. These connections are seen as valuable for learning from others and continuing discussions.

Information Sharing and Knowledge Dissemination:

Several individuals have shared the information, research findings, and reports they obtained during the meeting with their colleagues and partner organisations. This indicates a commitment to spreading awareness and knowledge.

Some have sent the information to their Trustees, which may inform future decision-making and discussions.

Professional Development:

A few participants have taken specific actions to enhance their professional knowledge and skills. For example, one person signed up for a webinar on evaluating the impact of food hubs, demonstrating a commitment to ongoing learning.

For another delegate, the recognition of the need to develop additional income streams, as inspired by the "Mixed Income Models" discussed at the conference, is being incorporated into management team meetings.

Action Planning and Strategy Development:

Some responses indicate a focus on future actions and strategies. One individual mentioned preparing a briefing for colleagues, while another expressed the intention to search for partnerships for funding.

Community Engagement and Awareness-Building:

Several respondents indicated an increased awareness of the issues discussed at the conference and are considering actions to create more community-based initiatives or reporting.

Overall, the responses demonstrate that participants have begun taking various steps to apply the knowledge and insights gained from the conference to their work, whether through networking, knowledge dissemination, professional development, or strategic planning.