

More Than Food

**NORTH
YORKSHIRE &
YORK**
Community Food Bulletin



Scarborough Community Food Providers 'Connect' Event

On the 3rd of October, a brilliant event was held at The Street in Scarborough which brought together motivated organisations working to tackle food insecurity and support stronger individuals and communities in their locality.

The meeting provided a safe and welcoming space for community food provisions, community centres, local charities, churches, funding organisations, and local support services to share experiences, strategies, and visions for a more food-secure Scarborough.

The conversation highlighted a unified commitment to local collaboration, resource sharing, and addressing the systemic causes of food insecurity. We may be witnessing the birth of a community food collective!

"Everyone is in the same mindset – we want people to have food security."

Key messages:

Urgent needs & disparities

- There are high levels of unmet need, especially among carers and children ineligible for Free School Meals (FSM) for example 25% of school children in North Yorkshire are eligible for FSM, yet 70,000 children in poverty across the region (North Yorkshire & York) are not eligible.
- There are gaps in existing support systems currently for example, £23 billion in unclaimed benefits (UK) could assist those facing food insecurity.
- Rural food access remains a challenge, particularly during weekends when few services are available.

"Everything fits together but doesn't join up!"

In this newsletter:

**Scarborough
Community Food
Providers**

Interview with Trussell

Your Local Pantry

**Food Ladders Launch &
Toolkit**

Funding opportunities

**Household Support
Fund**

**Community of
Practice Recordings**

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- Collaboration & sharing resources – better than competition!
 - Participants discussed the benefits of joint purchasing, shared resources, and collective strategies to reduce operational costs and improve service reach.
 - Organisations such as Fareshare Hull & Humber and Trussell emphasised co-ordinated distribution and community engagement as critical steps forward.

“I feel so excited about this!”

Moving from crisis to prevention

- Concerns were raised from food providers of the sustainability of food aid services, limited funding, and the rising demand for support due to ongoing economic struggles.
- Funding partners advocated for preventive, sustainable approaches rather than crisis-only models. Proposals include longer-term funding (3+ years) and linking food insecurity with broader social issues like mental health and unemployment.

Food alone does not solve underlying issues. Collaboration between food providers and other community services (mental health, housing, education) can address the broader challenges of insecurity and deprivation and this group aim to shift from emergency response to addressing root causes, and building a community where everyone has access to nutritious food year-round.

Plans going forward include a directory of what's available locally, a continued informal network, visits to each other's sites to encourage more confident signposting and referral amongst each other and identifying and engaging absent voices from the current discussion.

A co-ordinator role and the use of tools like the 'Joy' app were also proposed to streamline services and encourage partnership working locally.

The group decided for themselves that this conversation was worthwhile and there will be a second event held at Gallows Close Centre in Scarborough **Friday 6th December.**



Photo credit: Andy Deighton

Does your place want to do a community food provider ‘connect’ event of its own? If you are a community food provider and think that there would be value in getting together in person with other organisations in your area that are part of the local landscape to support healthy and resilient communities ‘through food’ and would like some support (with space/venue hire, hosting/facilitation) to get this organised in 2025, please contact: Adele.Wilson-Hope@northyorks.gov.uk

An interview with Trussell



What is the vision that drives your work?

Laura: Our ultimate goal is to end the need for emergency food aid. We want to see a future where no one has to rely on food banks to get by. To achieve this, it's crucial that we improve collaboration between organisations and focus on prevention, so we address the root causes of food poverty instead of just treating the symptoms. We know that people come to food banks because they don't have enough money for the essentials. Needing food is just a symptom of that. Hunger in the UK isn't really about food.

Why is it so important for organisations to come together on this issue?

Laura: We are far more effective together than we are apart. Tackling poverty in isolation isn't enough—when we work together, we can make lasting change, especially across communities like Scarborough. Food aid providers are the cornerstones of their communities. They have established trust, so their voices carry weight. A combined voice only amplifies that trust and credibility, making it even more influential locally. There's a shared understanding among us that food alone won't solve underlying issues like poverty or housing insecurity. By joining forces, we can share ideas both strategically and operationally, work smarter, and pool resources to achieve our common goal: reducing the need for emergency services in the long term.

Can you share any examples of groups that have successfully come together to make a difference?

Laura: Absolutely! One great example is the [Leeds Food Aid Network](#) (LFAN). They have done amazing work, like:

- Collaborating to create signposting resources to guide people in need toward available services.
- Influencing the local welfare assistance scheme by advocating for a "cash first" approach, ensuring people have direct access to funds for essential needs.
- Providing wraparound support and advice, even though each organisation has its own model.



We want to give special thanks to Laura Chalmers for her ongoing time, advice, and insights in the area of food insecurity. We caught up with Laura just recently and asked her how collaborative working could help to tackle the huge demand in emergency food aid we see at the moment.

- Developing a strategic document to ensure accountability and comprehensive coverage.
- Offering joint training and hosting guest speakers to build collective knowledge.
- Involving council representatives to strengthen working relationships.

Another example is Feeding Bradford, which has been a pilot area for the [Feeding Britain](#) initiative. They've focused on:

- Facilitating essential communication across the city, which is key for co-ordinating efforts.
- Working jointly to boost the uptake of Healthy Start and Household Support Fund vouchers.
- Building strong relationships with local MPs to support policy change.
- Developing an online platform, "Find Food in Bradford," that helps people locate food banks and low-cost markets in their area, while also helping those who want to contribute support.

These examples show the power of collaboration and the wide-reaching impact it can have across different communities.

Your Local Pantry

Gavin Aitchison

Special thanks to Gavin Aitchison from Church Action on Poverty for providing the following information on Your Local Pantry. We had the pleasure of attending the impact report launch of the Your Local Pantry Network on Wednesday 18th of September.

How do you strengthen your community's food security, without compromising on dignity?
In many neighbourhoods, Your Local Pantries have found a way.

Pantries enable households to consistently access good quality food, typically saving members £21.33 a week on groceries (over £1,000 a year for members who shop every week). What's more, Pantries also build dignity, choice, and hope. The recent [Places Of Hope](https://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/news/stories-from-the-national-network/places-of-hope-report-shows-impact-of-uk-pantries/) report: <https://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/news/stories-from-the-national-network/places-of-hope-report-shows-impact-of-uk-pantries/> showed that members report reduced social isolation, and improved physical and mental health, well-being, diet and community connections. There are already over 120 Your Local Pantries across the UK run by a wide range of local community groups, charities, churches, and local councils - but currently none in North Yorkshire. Could you be the first? If so, we might be the people for you...

Your Local Pantry is looking for two to three partners in North Yorkshire. You don't need to be starting from scratch... some of our strongest partnerships are with projects or community food provisions that had been running for years, and which switched to Your Local Pantries, in order to become stronger and more sustainable. We also have some mobile Pantries, which reach multiple neighbourhoods.

We can offer a full package of training, support, and advice, based on ten years of growing and supporting Local Pantries across the country. Funding may also be available to help with set up costs.



Support ahead of opening a Pantry includes:

- At least three days' dedicated support and training from a YLP development worker
- Support from the wider YLP team by phone, email, or online meetings, including support with media
- Access to the custom-built Pantry Portal membership software
- Access to the Pantry Operations Manual, giving step-by-step instructions and guidance.
- Access to all Pantry procedures and template documents for day-to-day operations
- Access to a shared resources library and opportunities to visit other Pantries
- A custom digital marketing package
- Pantry management training, volunteer training and software training.

Ongoing annual benefits then include:

- Access to the network training programme, which includes coordinator catch ups, regional meetings where possible, and monthly volunteer training
- Ongoing support and training from the YLP Central Team
- Free access to the YLP conference
- Ongoing access to the shared learning library and educational materials
- Regular updates and tips from the central team and the network, via WhatsApp group, email, and Pantry Portal
- Regular innovations to the Pantry Portal, led by the network
- Updates to Digital Marketing Package
- The Pantry Portal Salesforce licences and update training sessions
- Ongoing access to the Pantry Portal and training for new staff / volunteers
- Website Maintenance and updates.

Your Local Pantry is driven by the values of dignity, choice, and hope. Choice is a key distinctive feature. Pantries are laid out like shops and feel like shops: members choose their own items, and there's always a wide range of fresh, frozen, and ambient food.

We all have things we do or don't like in our shopping and are all accustomed to being able to make those choices. The Pantry approach recognises how important that is. The big savings mean Pantries soften the blow of high living costs, but also create the conditions for communities to grow and thrive together. In our recent report, one coordinator said: "While people value the affordable food, it is the community that keeps people coming back."

We've repeatedly seen Pantries becoming springboards for new ideas that boost the community. Seeing the same people week after week, getting to know one another, and discussing local issues, generates real power, camaraderie, and togetherness. Pantry members have gone on to join local or national campaigns, to form groups, to speak up in the media, or to take part in new activities together.



Interested in Your Local Pantry?

Depending on demand there may be funding support available for 2-3 early adopters for this model of community food provision in North Yorkshire.

Please contact: Adele.Wilson-Hope@northyorks.gov.uk

Food Ladders Launch & Toolkit

Food Ladders is an approach to building community resilience and enhancing food security. It is based on Megan's research with community organisations, local authorities, national charities, and food alliances across the UK.

On October 1st, Sustainable Food Places hosted an online food ladders toolkit launch event. The Toolkit can be accessed here:

<https://geofoodie.org/food-ladders-toolkit/flt-understanding/food-ladders-toolkit-anatomy-of-the-food-ladder/>

We recommend everyone watched the wonderful short 3 minute animation as a bare minimum if you can and share this with your volunteers, Trustees, and others in your local area.

We hope the toolkit inspires you to connect the different 'rungs' of the ladder known as 'catching,' capacity building' and 'self-organising.' All three rungs need to exist at once and people may be on all rungs at the same time and go up and down the ladder depending on their circumstance.

Our conversations in North Yorkshire have very much been about trying to work through whether intervention and investment is required for those rungs that are 'weak' or in some cases don't exist much at all.

It is a fantastic resource for framing local conversations if you are a community food provider and discussing not only what is happening now but what the future could look like by working together. It is also useful for any funders thinking about how to invest appropriately in communities together, in a coordinated way across the different rungs.



We would like to thank Dr Megan Blake and the Food Ladders Team, particularly Isaac Tendler for their ongoing support of the food insecurity work we have been exploring in North Yorkshire & York.

For anyone interested in viewing the 3 minute animation to better understand Food Ladders please find it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9hbTXeBZjU&t=1s>

Funding opportunities



The **National Lottery Community Fund** has committed to at least £3 billion of life-changing funds in England by 2030. The announcement comes as a new survey finds that over half (55%) of UK adults feel proud to live in their local area. However, 45% say that residents have too little say in making their local area better. Of those surveyed, over half (56%) said that local people (residents' associations and other people who live in the area) should help decide how funding in their area should be used. 42% said local charities / non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should help make these decisions, and 32% said the same for businesses operating in their area.

Recognising this feedback, The National Lottery Community Fund's latest plans put community agency, power, and control at the heart of its funding in England. This is the latest step in embedding the funder's strategy to 2030, 'It starts with community'.

- £275 million will be invested to support the 'building blocks' of community-led change, with an emphasis on those who feel least empowered. This includes:
- a £100 million, ten-year Community Power Fund to help people influence and change the places they live, the services they use, and decisions that affect their lives across England.
- A new £50 million community leaders programme to support informal community leaders who are making a difference in their area.
- A new You Decide funding stream, worth at least 5% of all funding in England, where communities will decide which good causes funding should support.
- Over £4 million will be available for civil society organisations and communities who would like to take part in the development phase of You Decide and the Community Power Fund.

Recognising the critical value of grassroots funding, The National Lottery Community Fund is also making at least £135 million available per year through its popular National Lottery Awards for All funding programme, up to 2030. Full details of the announcement, including how to get involved, can be found at: [**nlcommunityfund.org.uk/englandplan**](https://nlcommunityfund.org.uk/englandplan).

Funding opportunities



In January 2025, the **Woodsmith Foundation** will be re-opening Community Grants, Young and Talented Grants and Expressions of Interest for larger pieces of work. Our donation from Anglo American and Anglo American Foundation for 2025 and 2026 will be £1m a year. Our focus for the next two years will be improving life chances for those most at disadvantage in our local communities. We will maintain a strong interest in work that focusses on prevention, not just crisis alleviation. We are keen that anyone thinking of applying to the Woodsmith Foundation always gives us a call or email first to chat through their ideas as we find this leads to better applications and less wasted time for applicants who may not be eligible for our funding. And we also love to hear people's ideas and talk them through!

For more information, see www.woodsmithfoundation.org.uk. You can find the contact details of who to speak to in each grant guidance document. Or simply call Leah on 07724832982.



Two Ridings Community Foundation provides small grants to enable vibrant and purposeful community action across North Yorkshire. The Foundation typically funds grassroots and community organisations working to promote health and wellbeing, address poverty and inequality, and tackle social isolation and loneliness.

As part of these grant programmes, support is provided for work to tackle food poverty, along with other aspects of the cost-of-living crisis. For further information about current funding programmes, please visit www.tworidingscf.org.uk.

Interested in joint longer-term bids?

If any organisations are interested in working on long-term joint bids, to benefit their communities please contact Adele.Wilson-Hope@northyorks.gov.uk

Household Support Fund Updates



**Funded by
UK Government**

The Household Support Fund was set up by the Government to help people who are struggling with the increase in living costs and feeling the financial pressures of paying their bills.

North Yorkshire Council will be delivering a sixth phase of the Household Support Fund to help people pay for food and other essentials over the winter months.

We will publish further information about the direct award scheme, including eligibility and voucher amounts, in early January 2025.

The latest round of the Household Support Fund is also being used to supplement other schemes which will help residents with their household costs. This includes support for foodbanks and other schemes providing free or low-cost food across the county, the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund which provides emergency support with food and utilities, and a fund managed by North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre, which helps people struggling to pay their energy bills.

The HSF6 Food Support Grants scheme launched in **November 2024**, please keep your eye out for details!

For more information about the Household Support Fund please visit **www.northyorks.gov.uk/HouseholdSupportFund** .

Community of Practice Recordings

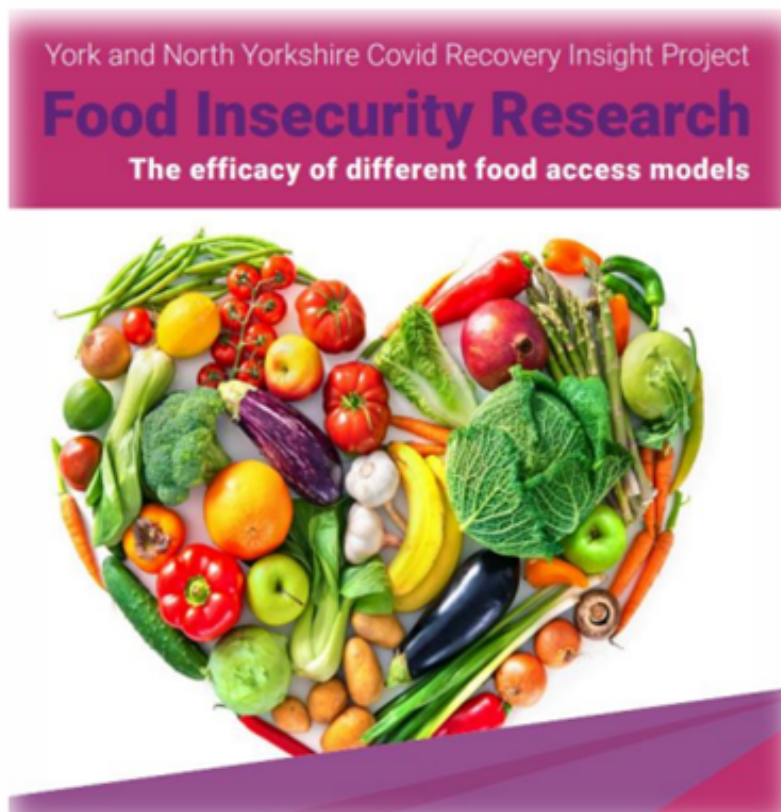
If you have not yet seen our Food Insecurity 'microsite' take a look here:

<https://www.skyblue.org.uk/foodinsecurity/>

We particularly invite you to visit the Community of Practice ('CoP') recordings. These 'CoPs' are conversations that explore key recommendations of the Food Insecurity Project launched at the Food Summit in September 2023 where we investigated ways to address food insecurity in York & North Yorkshire.

Topics so far have included:

- [Place Based Collaborative Models and Food Ladders](#)
- [Cash \(Income\)First Approaches](#)
- [More than Food](#)
- [Mixed Income Models.](#)



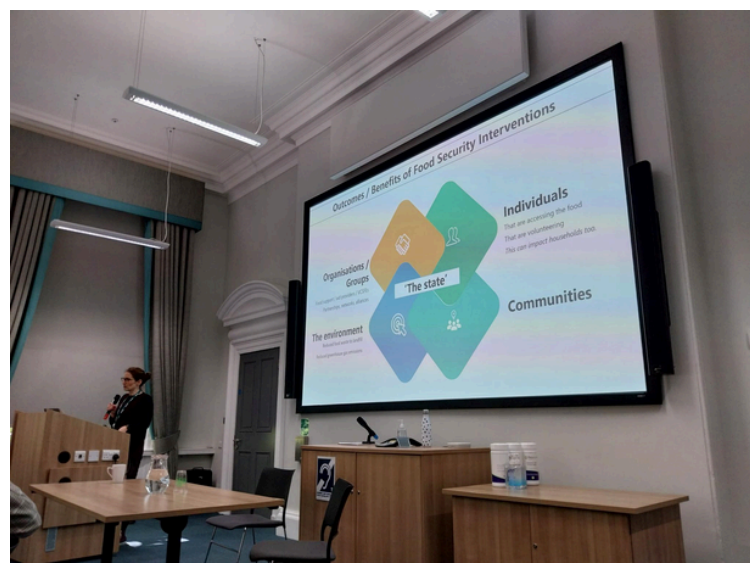
Our next Community of Practice discussion will be held [3rd February 2025](#). Please let us know if you would like an invite to join the online session! They are always well attended and different providers not only benefit from at least two topical and relevant guest speakers but can also share very practical tips and share common challenges in a safe space all about doing things better together. Anyone wishing to speak at a future CoP should simply contact Adele.Wilson-Hope@northyorks.gov.uk.

Coming up!

If you have any news or stories that you would like to share with this network, which comprises community food provisions across North Yorkshire & York as well as other stakeholders interested in supporting the ambition to reduce food insecurity, please email Amber.Graver@northyorks.gov.uk or Adele.Wilson-Hope@northyorks.gov.uk.

Our next bulletin will go out in May 2025 so please have any information to us no later than mid-April.

Photos taken at the North Yorkshire & York Food Summit 2023



Disclaimer: Any opinions or statements expressed in this Bulletin are those of the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of North Yorkshire or City of York Council. Information found in this document is presented in good faith and is deemed accurate at time of publication (November 2024), however, the authors cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.
