

the jellied eel

Capital Eats Out

How sustainable is dining out in London?

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London Food Link runs a network of organisations and individuals with members as diverse as farmers, food writers, caterers and community food projects. Both London Food Link and its members run projects that help to:

- increase the availability of sustainable food in London
- tackle the barriers preventing access to healthy and sustainable food for all Londoners
- celebrate and protect London's diverse food culture

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Editorial

Now that we're able to fit back into our clothes after all those second helpings, we thought we'd better get out the next issue of the Eel. Fortunately we don't go in for diets and that kind of thing here at London Food Link, more because we're running around London so much to keep on top of all the amazing food work that's being done, than anything to do with healthy food! (Although I am pleased to see that we've received our box of apples and pears from Demes farm, a must for any London office).

As you flick through this issue (or consume every word surely!) you may notice there's a bit of a restaurant theme. Fear not, we are not about to rebrand ourselves London Dinner Link. Along with the centre spread of some of the sexiest sustainable eateries the capital has to offer (and yes you can call it a pull out if you so desire) you can also read about our new report into the sector on page 7. To make even faster progress with London's eateries and to work with other food retail businesses we are pleased to announce Charlotte Jarman will be joining the team in February. No doubt you will hear more about her work in the next issue.

Building on this work with the restaurant and hospitality sector, we are planning a project with event caterers. This initiative, *Flavours of London*, is a reaction to the demand we have had to recommend sustainable caterers for public and private events and meetings around London. If our fundraising efforts are successful, we will be able to play a more active role in promoting sustainable caterers and helping caterers to become more sustainable. Watch this space for more news...

Meanwhile, as many of our members will know by now, 31st January sees the second London Food Link network meeting, held at the Government Office for London building, at Millbank. This follows on from our last event in June 2006 which some described as a "speed dating" session about food, and a very successful one at that. As a result we'll be hearing from as many members as last time, and from as many wide-ranging parts of the food sector as possible, to paint a picture of what's going on across the capital. My guess is it will be more of a Jackson Pollock than a Monet, but that says something about the chaotic and creative nature of London's food!

To help us get a better grasp on what you are all doing, and what you'd like us to be doing in the next year, you should find our annual questionnaire enclosed. If not, please go to www.londonfoodlink.org and complete one by Friday 2nd March. One of you lucky people will win a year's free membership to LFL.

In response to previous feedback from our members, we are organising some farm to fork field trips. Through these one-day trips we hope to help Londoners see where their food is coming from, and the stages it goes through to get there. Although we are still finalising details these are likely to include salad leaves from Sussex, pork from --- and dairy from Surrey. Along the way we will be visiting abattoirs, wholesale centres, sausage factories, schools, hospitals and restaurants. These trips will be free for London Food Link members, although there may be spaces for non-members. For more information contact ben@sustainweb.org. ■

We would like to thank the following volunteers for their time and assistance:

- Matt Linares
- Rachel Beebe
- Steve Murray
- Kate Bibbey
- Brooke Jensen

Disclaimer - Inclusion of information in The Jellied Eel does not imply that the product or service is endorsed by London Food Link or Sustain.

Around Town

Central Residents given a say in local food survey

Residents in South Westminster were recently given a chance to have their say about the availability, price and quality of healthy, fresh food in their area. South Westminster's Healthy Living Centre 'A Moveable Feast' commissioned regeneration charity, Groundwork, to carry out a food survey of 3,000 South Westminster residents from mid November to early December.

Residents were visited by specially trained local community champions who spoke to them on their doorstep about their views on the availability, price and quality of healthy food. Feedback from this study will help develop projects and initiatives to make it easier for local people to buy a wide range of healthy food in their neighbourhood.

South Westminster is a neighbourhood renewal priority area for Westminster City

Council. The survey is part of a larger food access needs assessment being carried out by A Moveable Feast who are working with Arabic and Bangladeshi communities in SW1 to encourage and support healthier living. Other project areas included lunch groups, cooking, exercise, swimming, business development

and childcare. The results of the food access survey will be available from 27th February from Louise Beckingsale.

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Ground work Champions - A Moveable Feast

East 'Green' Olympics plan to bulldoze 100 year old Manor Garden Allotments for four week footpath.

Manor Gardens, bequeathed to be allotments 'in perpetuity' by their original owner the 'Right Hon' Major Villiers, sit in the North central section of the Olympic Park. The London Development Agency plans to remove them to make a footpath to the stadia, destroying in the process a century of devoted cultivation and a close-knit community rooted in this irreplaceable site. However this diverse community of Turks, Cypriots, Greeks, Jamaicans, Africans and Brits welcome the potential for regeneration brought by the Olympic development. Rather than being moved out of the way they want to offer their contribution which seems to them to be entirely consistent with the Olympic and Government ambitions. They believe to

remove the allotment gardens would be to rip out the 'healthy heart' of the Olympic Park area as well as to fragment the community.

The Manor Gardens Allotment community organized a demonstration against the proposed redevelopment of the allotments at the launch of the London Assemblies allotments inquiry, aptly named A lot to Lose (see p Insert), in October 2006. This report reinforces other London government policy documents such as the Mayoral food and biodiversity strategies, in supporting the protection and promotion of space to grow food. However, these policies are being undermined by the actions associated with the Olympic development.

To capitalise on the support gained by their plight, Manor Gardens have organized a New Years Feast as we go to press (16th January). This will see Moro restaurant owners Samantha and Samuel Clark cook alongside in house 'food heroes' Hassan and Reg.

We would urge anyone reading this to sign up to the petition to save Manor Gardens from being redeveloped. The proposed eviction date is 2nd April, so act now. <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/manorgardens/>

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West Acton Farmers' Market

The 2nd day of December saw Acton town square buzzing with its first farmers market. The event, organised by London Farmers' Markets in conjunction with Action Acton, was a huge success and it is hoped that a regular market will be starting up in the spring. Watch this space.

CHERYL COHEN
WWW.LFM.ORG.UK

The Farmers Markets float tours central London bringing the country to the city
Credit: London Farmers' Markets



South West Farmers City Market, Richmond- upon-Thames



The Farmers' City Market (FCM) opened their first outlet in Hampton Hill, near Teddington, in November. FCM aims to combine the best of farmers markets with the convenience of supermarkets. The idea is to harness the demand for ethical, quality products, direct from the source and, at the same time, provide indoor retail, seven days a week, 363 days a year, with easy parking and restaurant facilities (with all the meal ingredients from the store).

Initially focusing on the South-East, the business has longer term national ambitions, and plans are in place to operate five stores by the end of 2007. FCM will be extending their service to offer an online ordering system for delivery to homes or offices by the end of February 2007.

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WWW.FARMERSCITYMARKET.COM/INDEX.HTML

North Camden wins funding to improve Local Authority food procurement.

The London Borough of Camden has received funding from the London Centre of Excellence (LCE) to implement a Sustainable Procurement project for London. Funded until 2008, Camden is helping local authorities to develop practical ways to integrate sustainability into specific procurement activities: meals in the home; highways minor improvements; and furniture reuse & recycling.

Camden will work to improve the capacity of London Authorities to identify and use environmental sustainability methods in these procurement areas, and promote more effective communication between local authorities. Sustainability objectives developed for the meals in the home contract are:

- Using sustainable food - organic, seasonal, fresh and nutritious
- Adopting quality assurance schemes such as the Red Tractor, Marine Stewardship Council and Fair trade products
- Reducing waste - packaging and food - and improving recycling
- Lowering water and energy use per portion
- Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises by improving access to sub-contracting
- Reducing CO₂ emissions through fewer food miles and delivery related emissions

The project will seek to develop model specifications in conjunction with suppliers and local authorities, with the latter testing

the specifications in their contracts. Local authorities who wish to get involved in the food procurement contract to improve their sustainability or simply to share their best practice experience can do so through the details below.

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Community Kitchens Project



The Community Kitchens Project works with community groups in Islington who need information on healthy eating and cooking, and those in need of volunteering opportunities in suitable catering environments. Information, training and support are offered in food hygiene, health and safety, nutrition, healthy eating, practical cookery, shopping and budgeting. In areas of need the Project plans to work with local people to develop sustainable initiatives such as food co-ops and grow-your-own schemes. The Project offers free healthy eating workshops, healthy cooking sessions, food hygiene courses and volunteer placements to groups and individuals. We will also be running a community food worker course to train people to spread the healthy eating message and teach practical cookery in the community.

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0207 561 5281
WWW.MANORGARDENSCENTRE.ORG/
P_KITCHEN.HTML

Bulletin

Awards: MBE for Sustain's Co-ordinator - recognition for sustainable food and farming policy

We are pleased to announce that Sustain's co-ordinator, Jeanette Longfield, was named in the New Year's Honours list. This well-deserved honour not only acknowledges Jeanette Longfield's hard work over the past 20 years, but also the efforts of her talented and energetic team, and the extraordinary breadth and depth of expertise in Sustain's membership and networks.

The recognition of Sustain's ground-breaking work is well timed, as 2007 is the national Year of Food and Farming in Schools. Jeanette Longfield commented, "I am absolutely delighted to be honoured, and look forward to continuing to work with Sustain's member organisations to ensure that, with growing public support, food and agriculture policies protect health and the environment, and promote a more equitable food system."

Awards: Caroline Walker Trust award

We are proud to report that Kath Dalmeny, Sustain's Deputy Co-ordinator, received a special lifetime achievement award at the Caroline Walker Trust ceremony in November 2006, where she was praised for her persistence and hard work in challenging the food industry to help provide better food for all, and for never giving up, even in the face of attacks from the industry. Awards were also given to London Food Link members Claire Pritchard, from Greenwich Co-operative Development Agency, who won the individual category, and Mike Duckett, Royal Brompton Hospital, who won the public procurement category.

Awards: Considerate Hotelier Award

London hotel One Aldwych have been announced as joint winner of the Considerate Hotelier's sustainable food challenge. One Aldwych has one of the most ethical purchasing policies around, using small local and British producers, and Marine Stewardship Council accredited fish, as well as organic and fair-trade produce. The food award which is sponsored by Sustain and Oxford Brookes University also went to Strattons hotel in Norfolk. See p8-9 for more information on One Aldwych.

Obituary for Kathy Piper, Community Food Enterprise

We were saddened to learn of the death of Kathy Piper, who worked with Community Food Enterprise, on 12th October 2006. As an active participant of the New Deal for Communities Board and Community Forum, Kathy was a popular and well liked member of the community. Kathy's death has created a massive void in the CFE workforce, especially on the Mobile Food Store (MFS) service and juice bar which she loved doing at community events - she will truly be hard to replace. We at London Food Link, on behalf of all our staff and members, would like to send our sincere condolences to Kathy's family and to her colleague's at CFE.

Closing the recycling loop

Recycling market development company, London Remade, hosted a closed loop recycling event in December for the food, beverage, conference and events industries at the Oval cricket ground and conference centre. The event provided information on using recycled or recyclable food and beverage packaging at public venues and on recycling methods for this packaging after use.

Included in the case studies was Acorn House restaurant which provided information on implementing closed loop recycling in the catering industry. Sustainability is central to their ethos, which pervades all areas of the restaurant including using recyclable or biodegradable packaging for takeaway food and recycling or composting kitchen waste. The restaurant is a joint initiative from the Shoreditch Trust and the Terrence Higgins Trust and is headed by Arthur Potts

Dawson, formerly head chef at the River Café and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen. For further information on Acorn House see page INSERT. More information on the Closing the Loop project is available at www.londonremade.com/mgpc.asp#cll

CLAIRE APPLEBY

LONDON REMADE

020 7061 6380

CLAIRE@LONDONREMADE.COM

New service unpackaged

A new social enterprise - called Unpackaged - has been set up offering organic wholefoods, but leaving out the unnecessary packaging. This service, where you can fill up your own containers, is not restricted to food, and includes cleaning products as well.



Where to find Unpackaged

- Fridays at Spitalfields Fine Food Market, Crispin Place, off Brushfield St, E1 10am - 5pm
- Saturdays at Cabbages and Frocks Market in Marylebone 11am - 5pm. (The top end of Marylebone High St, opposite the Conran Shop and nearest tube Baker Street <http://www.cabbagesandfrocks.co.uk>)

Unpackaged also offer a limited home delivery service. See the website to find out more.

CATHERINE CONWAY

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Acorn House

Forthcoming British Library food website

In April this year the British Library will be launching a new education website that will explore the history and politics of food consumption and production in the UK over the last century. Entitled 'Food Stories', the site will revolve around oral history recordings collected by the British Library Sound Archive. These extracts cover a broad range of subjects: memories of childhood meals; experiences of shopping; the politics of identity in relation to food; changes to food retailing; food rituals and cultural identity; the conventions and controversies of food production; and traditions and innovations associated with farming- to name a few examples.

The site will be organised under three key themes: food and identity, food production and food consumption. Using extracts which are humorous, challenging, vivid and engaging, the website will encourage users to explore a range of historical, geographical and cultural questions raised by food and its production.

'Food Stories' is for geography and citizenship school students as well as lifelong learners, and will include teachers' notes and suggestions for creative activities and classroom discussions. The site will combine short animated sequences with 'go deeper' sections including photographs, essays and articles from a broad range of sources, inspiring students to carry out their own investigations into the subject matter.

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Food for Life goes larger than life!

Some 180 schools in diverse communities across England will now become beacons of good food culture, thanks to £16.9 million Big Lottery funding for the Food for Life Partnership. Led by the Soil Association, The Food for Life Partnership consists of the Focus on Food Campaign, Garden Organic and the Health Education Trust, bringing together unique experience of successful practical work in schools, revolutionising school meals and giving children the chance to grow and cook food, and visit organic farms.

Hundreds of schools already working towards the Food for Life targets have seen take-up of school dinners rise, bucking the national trend. Food for Life works because it is a truly whole school approach that engages children and parents throughout, from planning menu changes to learning about the value of fresh, local and organic food. For example, award winning Millfields Community School in Hackney has

exceeded the Food for Life targets and seen take-up rise by 40%, despite being in a socially-deprived area where nearly 50% of children are eligible for a free school meal.

Each region (including London) will have a dedicated Food for Life Coordinator, who will oversee the farm visit programme and associated educational workshops. They will also coordinate input to each flagship school from:

- five Garden Organic officers who will lead on vegetable gardening initiatives,
- four Health Education Trust advisers who will guide schools through the process of setting up school food policies and action groups, and
- the dedicated Focus on Food Cooking Bus, with a team of 2 teaching staff and 2 driver/technicians.
- A commissioning fund for developing local and organic supply chains and running educational workshops

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Supersized supermarkets - a global dilemma.

The rapid growth of supermarkets around the world is wreaking havoc in the lives of farmers and workers, while both consumers and the environment suffer. Find out more about the devastating impact of supermarket power, and how we can fight back - with a panel of experts, workers and campaigners from Costa Rica, the USA, and the UK.

This public forum is organised by Tescopoly, Action Aid, Friends of the Earth and War on Want. On Wednesday, 28 February 2007, 19.00 - 20:30hrs Emmanuel Centre, Marsham St, SW1 3DW.

Speakers include Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Stacey Mitchell (US Wal-Mart campaigner & author), Tony Juniper (Director of Friends of the Earth), Mireya Rodriguez (Costa Rican banana worker's union) and the event is chaired by Rosie Boycott (broadcaster, journalist and farmer).

Entrance is free, but booking is essential. To book your place please email: amorser@waronwant.org

School fair trade faces nutrition review

New nutrition standards for school meals came into force in 2006, and will go a long way towards improving children's diets and health. 2007 will see introduction of nutrition standards for non-lunch food sold in schools, which means that all school food schemes will have to adapt to

the new regime. This will include tuckshops selling Fairtrade products that aim to raise awareness among children of global poverty issues. Many of the products currently sold will fall foul of the new nutrition rules.

Young Co-operatives is a not-for-profit organisation that offers young people (usually aged 13-17) a practical introduction to fair trade and co-operative ways of working. It gives them the chance to run their own co-operative selling fairly traded products in school, acquiring valuable business skills and making a real difference to the lives of producers in poor countries and their families.

Realising that many young co-operative tuckshops sell Fairtrade chocolate, which will be outlawed by the new nutrition rules, Young Co-operatives has commissioned the food and farming organisation Sustain to provide guidance on an acceptable range of healthy fairly traded products to be sold in schools. This project will share ideas for how to implement the new nutrition standards whilst continuing to sell fair-trade food and drinks. This will start with better-for-you fair-trade events running in schools across the UK during Fairtrade Fortnight (February 26 to March 9).

To keep up to date with these events and the project visit: www.sustainweb.org/page.php?id=220.

If your school is interested in joining the Young Co-operatives please visit: www.youngcooperatives.org.uk

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London Food Access Forum is one year old

The London Food Access Forum, which brings together organizations around London who are tackling food access, looked back over its first year in December. The forum, which is jointly run by Sustain's Food Access Network and London Food Link, has covered issues such as food mapping, corporate assistance, and evaluation techniques. The minutes and presentations of these meetings are to be put on the Food Access Network and London Food Link pages of Sustain's website in February. Anyone who is interested in the issues surrounding food access in London is free to attend the next food access forum, [insert date] which will be focusing on old people [check]. To join the mailing list to receive information on future meetings please contact Ben or Lisa at Sustain.

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CAPITAL EATS OUT

In its new report on One Planet Dining, London Food Link has found that restaurants using positive marketing messages to promote sustainable food generate useful differentiation for their businesses, supportive media coverage, and have enjoyed increased customer and staff loyalty as a result. Kath Dalmeny, Sustain's Deputy Co-ordinator, explains more.

For the report *One Planet Dining: London's growing market for eating out sustainably*, London Food Link interviewed 27 entrepreneurial restaurateurs from across the capital - including many who have already started to use local and organic food, fair-trade produce, and food produced to high environmental standards. Researchers also studied restaurant trends and consumer research, interviewed industry experts, and undertook a survey of restaurant customers in four areas of London.

"Using local and sustainable food is part of an ethic that we believe will increasingly become the driving force for the food trade," said the co-owner of Leon restaurants, Henry Dimpleby, which has branches in four areas of London - Carnaby Street, Ludgate Circus, Brompton Road and Spitalfields. *"After a period of rapid growth over the past two years, and having achieved four thriving restaurants across London, we are now confident that our ethical approach can become successful at a much larger scale."*

Keeping quiet about "green" menus?

However, despite identifying many examples of restaurants using local and sustainable food, London Food Link also found that a large proportion of these did not communicate food provenance or sustainability to their customers. Meanwhile, interviews with customers showed that they would welcome more information about their food. This is in line with catering industry research

showing that almost three quarters of customers say they want to see local foods named on restaurant and café menus, in particular, vegetables, meat and poultry. London Food Link's interviews with customers revealed that many simply take it on trust that restaurant food is produced to high standards of quality and sustainability, and rarely strike up a conversation with restaurant staff.

As one interviewee in Canary Wharf said: *"When people eat out they feel they put the responsibility of the food they are eating, in the hands of the restaurant. There is a certain assumption and trust about the quality and standard of the food."*

Exploiting a growing market

Some restaurants had found innovative ways to promote local and sustainable food, and found that their customers' response has been positive. *"We display information for people to understand the extent of green and ethical action going on behind the scenes. This helps people become more aware of sustainability, and how small things can help individuals to lead a more sustainable lifestyle,"* said Geetie Singh, founder and managing director of London's first organic certified pub, the Duke of Cambridge in Islington, which uses local, organic and sustainable food. *"In the coming years, more and more people will be interested in the provenance of restaurant food - local food and sustainability will be key."*

■ Continues on page 10



Capital Eats out

This is a snapshot of some of the more sustainable eateries around London....



As you can see there's quite a few gaps around the edges of London, so if you know of any other restaurants that are providing sustainable food or want to become more sustainable, please get in touch. ben@sustainweb.org

1: Leon

Branches in: Spitalfields, Carnaby Street, Ludgate Circus, Brompton Road

35 Marlborough St.
London W1F 7JE
020 7486 4424
www.leonrestaurants.co.uk

Leon's main aim is to get healthy seasonal food to the masses, and to use as much sustainable produce as possible - so they use free-range, fair-trade and British produce where possible.

2: Moshi Moshi

Branches in: Liverpool Street, Canary Wharf, Broadgate Circle, Ludgate Circus and in Brighton

Head Office
7-8 Limeburner Lane
London EC4M 7HY
020 7248 1808
www.moshimoshi.co.uk

One of the leading restaurants on sustainable fish policies, they have direct relationships with independent fishing families not only to meet Moshi Moshi's strict environmental policy, but also to secure fishing livelihoods.

3: Duke of Cambridge

30 St Peters Street,
Islington
London N1
020 7359 3066
www.sloeberry.co.uk/duke.html

The first organic pub in Britain, but so much more, with owner Geetie Singh making a major effort to reduce food (and beer!) miles and work with their producers.

4: One Aldwych (Hotel)

London WC2B 4RH
020 7300 1000
www.onealdwych.co.uk

The joint winners (with Strattons hotel) of this year's UK-wide considerate hoteliers award on the sustainability of its food, this hotel has one of the most ethical purchasing policies around, using small local and British producers, and Marine Stewardship Council accredited fish, as well as organic and fair-trade produce.

5: Petersham Nursery (café)

Off Petersham Road
Richmond
London
TW10 7AG
020 8605 3627
www.petershamnurseries.com

The café at Petersham Nurseries uses seasonal ingredients produced by small farmers and producers, predominantly from Britain, which capture the flavours of the people and places from which they originate.

6: Mal Maison (Hotel)

Charterhouse Square
London EC1M 6AH
020 7012 3700
www.malmaison-london.com

This hotel chain has started to use as much local, and organic produce as possible. They have taken great strides already, and before long you can expect almost everything from meat to jam to be of local origin.

7: Konstam at the Prince Albert

2 Acton Street
London WC1X 9NA
020 7833 5040
www.konstam.co.uk

Konstam can undoubtedly claim to be the only restaurant buying over 90% of its produce from within the tube network. With Amersham meat and oil from Epping, this is the shortest distance your meal will have traveled in London.

8: Acorn House

69 Swinton Street
Clerkenwell
London WC1X 9NT
020 7812 1842
www.acornhouserestaurant.com

Sustainability is the underlying ethos of this new restaurant which aims to be as sustainable as possible, including policies on waste, energy and design and well as the food it buys.

9: Café Spice Namaste

16 Prescott Street
Tower Hill
London E1 8AZ
020 7488 9242
www.cafespice.co.uk

This modern Indian cuisine has many organic and free-range ingredients, with the menu making the most of seasonal British produce.

10: Pod (Take-Away)

162-163 London Wall
London EC2M 5QD
020 7256 5506
www.podfood.co.uk

Pod specialises in healthy 'fast food' (so no fries with that!), with a significant effort to use organic, free-range or fair trade ingredients.

11: The Laban (Café)

Laban
Creekside
London
SE8 3DZ
020 8469 9514
www.laban.org/building/
cafe_bar.phtml

Recently taken over by caterers Feast Your Eyes, the café of this Deptford dance school is open to the public and serving up dishes made from organic, free-range, fair-trade and local ingredients.



Britons eat more out-of-home meals than any other country, including the US. [] [] This figure is likely to be even higher in London. In 2006, British people spent over £2 billion on 'ethical foods', mainly while grocery shopping, up 62% since 2002, including organic, Fairtrade, and locally grown food, free-range eggs and food produced to high standards of animal welfare. [] This demand in the grocery sector is in contrast to the apparent lack of provision of sustainable food in the hospitality sector. The report concludes that many London restaurants, by selling sustainable food, and communicating this to customers, could tap into a valuable market opportunity. Yet many restaurant owners lack the information and experience to do so.

"We rarely came across examples of restaurants or suppliers that had been



Konstam at the Prince Albert Credit: Pamela Troni

offered professional support to promote sustainability," said Ben Reynolds, coordinator of London Food Link. "Some had got basic support to help with recycling or energy use, but only one or two had received help with finding and buying more sustainable food, or opportunities for marketing positive sustainability messages."

Sustainability support - more needed

London Food Link's conclusions will help London Food Link and London government to plan support for food businesses in the capital to develop sustainable business practices. Such work will help to implement the Mayor's

Recipe for a sustainable food system for London

If the catering trade supported a sustainable food system for London it would:

- Minimise food transport.
- Minimise energy use.
- Minimise waste, and direct unavoidable waste to recycling, composting and energy recovery schemes.
- Promote produce from organic and other environmentally benign farming systems.
- Promote meals rich in a diverse range of plants, for health and sustainability benefits.
- Include foods of animal origin (meat, milk, eggs) produced to high environmental and animal welfare standards.
- Avoid fish species most at risk, and promote fish only from sustainable sources.
- Support a wide range of small-scale and local food suppliers.
- Support food producers and processors from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds.
- Provide sustainable food at an affordable price and in all areas of London.
- Communicate sustainability principles to clients and consumers, to encourage faster growth in both supply of and demand for sustainable food.





London sustainable food strategy, which was launched in 2006.

Examples of planned work include:

- Training and business support for caterers in how to find, buy, cook and promote fresh, local and seasonal food.
- Coordination of suppliers, and marketing support for food produced in the near vicinity of London, with a food delivery hub and - possibly - a 'Local to London' brand.
- Free environmental audits for restaurants, to help them identify ways to improve the sustainability of their waste, water, energy and food supply. This project, run by London Sustainability Exchange, has recently received funding from the LDA opportunities fund, and a new project officer will be joining London Food Link in February.
- Establishment of a 'green restaurant' association.
- Promotion of Fairtrade Fortnight (26 February to 11 March), to encourage retail and catering to use more foods and drinks for which producers in poor countries have been paid a fair price: http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get_involved_fairtrade_fortnight_2007.htm

London Food Link would very much like to hear from restaurants, hotels and caterers who want to find out more about sustainable food, and using produce from local farmers. ■

Member feature

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

What does the CIEH do?

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) is a professional, awarding and campaigning body at the forefront of environmental and public health.

Our mission is to maintain, enhance and promote improvements in environmental and public health through knowledge, understanding and campaigning.

- Promoting recruitment to the environmental health profession
- Working with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to prevent contaminants being poured into the sewerage system
- Helping to produce plans with the HSE to co-ordinate health and safety in London
- Looking at the impact of climate change from an environmental health viewpoint

Who set it up and when?

The CIEH's history can be traced back to the 1840s. An inquiry conducted by poor law commissioner, Edwin Chadwick, concluded that people became poor because of ill health due to a bad environment.

His subsequent vigorous campaign for change resulted in the Public Health Act 1848. The Act provided for the appointment of Inspectors of Nuisances - the forerunners of today's environmental health practitioners.

The Association of Public Sanitary Inspectors - the organisation which was to become the CIEH - was established in 1883. Over subsequent decades, the role of environmental health practitioners changed and grew. The grant of a Royal Charter in 1984 set the seal on this enhanced role and status.

Who is involved in your work?

As the CIEH London Policy Officer I work with a host of agencies across the capital including the Food Standards Agency (FSA), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), and the Health Protection Agency, as well as the 33 London boroughs.

Projects include working with the FSA on Safer Food Better Business, the implementation of a London-wide *Scores on the Doors* (see next question) scheme and preparing for the development of a London-wide food safety and sustainability policy for food businesses for the 2012 Olympics.

Other projects include:

- Working with partner agencies to ensure that London's environmental health services can respond effectively to incidents involving chemicals and hazardous materials

What have you been doing recently?

One of the major projects I have been working on is *Scores on the Doors*, where food hygiene inspection reports from restaurants across the capital will be made available to consumers.

The idea is to raise standards by providing clear and understandable hygiene information to the public and businesses, through a website and as certificates given to premises.

Restaurants and other food premises will be marked using a zero to five star banding system. Evidence from similar schemes in the US and Denmark has shown they are successful in improving standards of hygiene.

What are the next steps?

I chair a steering group of London environmental health managers developing the scheme. In March this year the FSA agreed to support national *Scores on the Doors* pilot projects involving 60 (though there were only 33?) authorities across Greater London as well as a number of authorities in the Midlands and in Scotland. Funding has been provided by the FSA to cover the costs of IT, website development, staff training, regional publicity and evaluation.

The London scheme is due to be launched on 2 April 2007 and consumers will soon be able to exercise choice about where they eat, based not only on the menu, but also on knowing how conscientious the restaurants they choose to frequent are in maintaining good food hygiene.

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Mrs Netty's fabulous school food

The concept that sustainable and healthy are two sides of the same coin is a relatively new one for most schools. But some, like Princess Frederica's primary school in Brent, are leading the way and reaping the benefits.

Up until 2004 the school had contracted out its catering to Scolarest - a major caterer in the education sector. However, concerns about quality and waste lead the school to opt out of the contract in 2004, going over to a packed lunch system. By 2005, and with support from parents and the Local Education Authority, they decided to bring all of their catering in-house. Since then the school has developed a solid catering team, has promoted enjoyable meal times to the students, and started a gardening club producing crops and herbs for use in the kitchen and for sale to parents. "The results are clear", stated Mrs. Netty, headmistress of Princess Frederica's. "Before we made the changes we would be throwing away three or four bins full of food after every meal. After we started cooking our own meals and involving the children in the menu planning that went down to under one".

Mrs Netty's first contact with Sustain was in July 2006, when she met project officer Mat Castle at a School Food Trust event. Mat was impressed with her passion and commitment, and organised a visit to the school to discuss how they could work together to make the link between sustainability and healthy food. The result was an action plan that included:

- training for staff in cooking seasonal ingredients and reducing waste;
- buying sustainable meat and fish options;
- asking suppliers for information about the source of their products;
- seeking out local, seasonal and organic produce where possible;

- and organising farm and producer visits for staff and pupils to bring to life the journey from soil to plate.

The plan kicked off with an after-school cookery demonstration for parents and staff using fresh, local produce. The session was run by Mark Gautier, a chef and former cookery teacher whose main focus is on seasonality and traceability. Mark whipped up a feast of quick and easy to cook seasonal dishes using produce as diverse as venison, pigeon, mackerel, apples, plums and root vegetables to tantalise the taste buds.

The following week the school hosted a mini organic farmers market, with produce kindly supplied by Choice organics - an organic vegetable wholesaler that tries to buy a large percentage of its produce locally. Tasting sessions were run throughout the afternoon to allow parents and children to compare organic carrots, apples and milk to their conventional counterparts. The London Farmers Market organisation and FACE (Farm and Countryside Education) were also on hand to give information and advice, including bus timetables and routes to the nearest farmers market. Both the demonstration and the market received excellent feedback from all present, and the school has requested more similar events. Princess Frederica's is now 100% organic in fruit and vegetables, supplied by Choice Organics. The school aims to continue its journey towards sustainability and so will continue to work closely with Sustain in the future. ■

MATHEW CASTLE

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Waste, muddle and secrecy in Government - and this is just bottled water!



A survey published in January by Sustain of a sample of Government department and agencies shows that most do not do one of the simplest things to save money and the planet

- serve tap water instead of bottled water at their meetings. Only two departments and one agency routinely served tap water, five spent taxpayers' money on bottled water, four either could not be contacted or did not reply and one (Ofcom) refused to divulge their policy when asked.

Top of the table is the Food Standards Agency, which recently changed its policy as part of its renewed commitment to sustainable development and now serves tap water. Green minister David Miliband's Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs also does well, serving jugs of tap water (although allowing meeting participants to request mineral water), as does the Department of Transport (though their tap water is put into bottles rather than jugs).

Bringing up the rear are the Cabinet Office, the House of Commons, the Treasury and the Departments for Health, and for Education and Skills - all serving bottled water.

The survey coincided with the publication of *Have you bottled it? How drinking tap water can help save you and the planet*, which reveals that, despite bottled water costing around 500 times as much as tap water, analysts predict we will buy more than 2 billion litres this year, with the market still growing by 6-7% annually.

But Sustain thinks the tide is turning against bottled water. A spokesman said: "We are delighted that the FSA, Defra and the Department for Transport are doing their bit for the environment and saving taxpayers' money. We'd like to see the rest of government follow their lead - after all, British mains water continues to be very high quality and great value. In the meantime, everyone can do their bit - get your drinking water from the tap, and spend the money you save on buying local, organic food!"

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IN PRINT

A Lot to Lose: London's Disappearing Allotments

October saw the release of a new report from the London Assembly into the threat facing London's allotments. Based on the most comprehensive survey carried out of London's allotments, it maps all known sites across the city for the first time, and examines the benefits they bring to individuals and how vulnerable sites can best be protected.

The report's recommendations include: an online search tool for allotments in London: greater sharing of information on supply and demand across the capital; and the use of boroughs' planning powers to compel high density housing developers to allocate land for allotment use. To see the problems facing one such London allotment go to p 7.

WWW.LONDON.GOV.UK/ASSEMBLY/REPORTS/ENVIRONMENT/ALLOTMENTS.PDF

Farming outlook changing for the better

Recovery in the fortunes of many of Britain's farmers is set to continue, according to the NFU's latest "Farming Outlook" report.

The report finds that among many positive trends identified in the industry,

by sector analysis of agriculture and horticulture, the NFU is predicting:

- improved wheat and barley prices are set to continue
- oilseed consumption should remain strong
- the improvement in the beef market is set to continue, thanks in part to a strong performance in export markets
- improved outlook for the pig sector, as a result of increased productivity and expected increases in farmgate prices
- lamb prices are expected to remain stable

But it is not all good news. Producer prices for milk are down by around 1p per litre compared with 2005, and with most dairy farmers operating at a heavy loss, the NFU is warning of a further decline in output unless farmgate milk prices increase. The report also looks in detail at the potential for biofuel production in the UK.

Farming Outlook is the NFU quarterly report on prospects for agriculture and horticulture. It is available free of charge to NFU members, or for £25 to non-members.

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Agriculture around urban areas

A new report by the Countryside Agency *The nature and potential of agriculture around major urban areas in England* presents the findings of a detailed study carried out in 2006 into how agriculture operates in and contributes to the character of the urban fringes of major urban areas, including London. The document also considers how farming could contribute to a more diversified and 'multifunctional' landscape, one that forges stronger environmental, social and economic ties between towns and their adjacent countryside and helps to underpin sustainable development. An important finding is that commercial farming remains a very important land use activity even in the 'inner fringe' i.e. within 500 metres of the built-up urban edge. This challenges some assumptions that commercial farming is not a significant activity at the 'urban rural interface'.

WWW.COUNTRYSIDE.GOV.UK/LAR/LANDSCAPE/CIAT/TOWNS/RESEARCH/NATURE_AND_POTENTIAL_AGRICULTURE_URB_AREAS.ASP

Recipe for a Greener Curry?



The new report, "Recipe for a Greener Curry: How London's ethnic business can celebrate sustainable food" is the result of London Food Link's research into getting more sustainable food into manufacturing businesses owned by black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) businesses.

After a year of research, *A Greener Curry* collates the experience and opinions of dozens of BAME owners of food businesses in the capital. It asks why some ethnic food businesses may not be concerned about sustainability and suggests how this might change.

As demand for sustainability grows, environmental policies and ethical supply chains will become expected practice. Like measures to comply with health and safety codes, sustainable practice will soon have to be written in to business plans and this

will filter back through the supply chain. The report recommends that Government support focuses on funding the infrastructure for profitable, efficient and sustainable local supply chains.

The sustainable food sector is growing. Getting locally manufactured ethnic food products, made with local and sustainable produce, onto the shelves of ethnic-owned local shops, would be a cause for celebration. In fact, the cultural and commercial vibrancy of multicultural communities in London may depend on it.

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Allotment Slot

A *Lot to Lose: London's disappearing allotments*, the Greater London Authority's Environment Committee's inquiry into allotments, did not tell us much that we did not know. Nor did it grasp any nettles, but at its least it might be a start (see page 13).

It does further underline the fatuity of the present political system. In November 2001 the same GLA produced the report of the Green Investigative Committee. I had given evidence about London's allotments by way of a 1,500 word submission and a 'live' appearance before the committee. All this work ended up as paragraph 5.19. " We heard evidence from Michael Wale, Hon Sec of the Acton Gardening Association, on the threats facing London allotments. Allotments are a valuable resource providing recreation and exercise, biodiversity and social activity. It is important that the use of allotments is protected and promoted. Michael Wale proposed a Greater London Allotment Authority. We believe the London Parks Forum should include a section dedicated to promoting and sharing information on allotments".

Ever since, I have attended parks dominated events as the only allotment voice. I did get praise from the head of

A lot to lose

the Royal Parks for continually bowling to a length (boring everyone to death maybe, but always raising the matter of allotments. Everyone always agrees.) But the parks movement is very old fashioned and self-protective. My current campaign is to open up the parks to a different style of allotments, with user-friendly chairs and tables out front with the plots, many of them half the normal size, at the back. Unfortunately, they have to be fenced in, but all sheds would be uniform. When I asked for allotment space in my nearby Ravenscourt Park, which houses everything from a private café, to soccer, netball, tennis, childrens playing area etc. the reply from Stephen McAndrews, team leader Environment policy and projects said : " It is not readily obvious how or even if allotments could or should be added to this busy location. As parks are held by us for public use, giving part over to private use would cause serious concern".

Oh dear. The people who want

allotments in Hammersmith are mainly people who live on estates, not the middle class pleasure-ites who garden the rule-ridden Hammersmith and Fulham show allotments in Bishop's Park. The Acton Gardening Association has offered to run the Ravenscourt site for nothing for the council, and the people we would put into the allotments would come from local council estates without gardens. We have a waiting list of 70, half of them from Mr McAndrews borough, so we're now planning to get them to write to Hammersmith and Fulham asking for an allotment. Ealing is full. ■

Michael Wale

VIEW FROM A SHED. FOUR SEASONS AS AN URBAN FARMER, BY MICHAEL WALE IS PUBLISHED BY ALLISON AND BUSBY 5TH JUNE 2006 £9.99P

Funding round up

'Small is Beautiful' - Funding for small community environmental projects

Following a key event on 18 October, attended by over 50 community environmental activists and projects across London, London 21 and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) have jointly launched a list of over 50 diverse funders for small projects. The list details a wide spread of funders who offer funding for community environmental initiatives on a small to medium scale. Following the event, Jagdeesh Singh, Project Co-ordinator for London 21's Multi-Ethnic Environmental Participation Project said "the comprehensive funding list we have jointly collated with BTCV, will go a long way to helping new-comers and new projects to link up with immediately relevant funding sources - public sector, charitable trusts, Big Lottery Fund and many more." The list is available from Jagdeesh Singh, who is also happy to advise any community groups about funding for community environmental initiatives. David Strachan, London

Regional Manager for BTCV, heads a fund-raising advisory service at BTCV. Individuals and small groups seeking help on funding, can also contact him for guidance.

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The Bridge House Trust announces revised grants programme

The Bridge House Trust is one of the largest grant making trusts in the Capital. Since it began grant-making in 1995, it has awarded over £170 million to projects that benefit the people of Greater London. The Trust has announced a new Small Grants scheme as well as a revised Main Grants programme. The new Small Grants

scheme aims to improve services for older people with a package of grants and capacity building support. The Main Grants programme will continue to focus on access for disabled people; improving London's environment; children and young people; older people in the community; and strengthening the community and voluntary sector. Grants are available for both running and capital costs and applications can be submitted at any time.

WWW.BRIDGEHOUSEGRANTS.ORG.UK/BRIDGEHOUSETRUST/

More money for local food schemes

Environment Minister, David Miliband, has just written to all chief executives in local government asking for support to improve the supply of food into schools under the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI). So Defra is making available an extra £250,000 for regional projects to encourage more small and local producers to collaborate and increase their capacity to bid for school food contracts.

WWW.DEFRA.GOV.UK/FARM/POLICY/SUSTAIN/PROCUREMENT/INDEX.HTM

Local to London:
Spotlight on the capital's fare

Alara Wholefoods



Who: In 1975 Alex Smith, the owner and managing director of Alara Wholefoods, had been protesting about the planned redevelopment of the Victorian building in Tolmers Square where he was squatting. The building was to be knocked down and replaced by an office block, so Smith chose to take a stand against capitalism by refusing to use money. Rainwater was collected for washing, cooking was done on a wood fire, and food was scavenged. After living this way for a year Smith happened upon what he took to be an omen: two crumpled £1 notes in the gutter. Two pounds was the entry fee for a vehicle at New Covent Garden market, so Smith borrowed a van, scavenged fruit and vegetables at the market and then sold them in Tolmers Square. The £2 profit made on the first day allowed him to continue his endeavor and, after trying his hand at bread and rice and beans, he settled on muesli as his main product. He bought the raw ingredients from a wholesaler and mixed his batches in a fifty gallon plastic water tank. Today, Alara employs approximately 60 people at their offices and factory near Kings Cross, London.

What: Smith brought the same dedication to principle he'd exercised in Tolmers Square to his muesli business. Alara was founded on Smith's belief that food should be natural, nutritious, and should meet high quality standards. The company is certified organic and has been

since 1988. They also meet the British Retail Consortium's highest-level quality standards, which is a general assessment of the quality of their product and procedures. With over 250 muesli blends, it would be difficult not to find a cereal to your liking, but if you have specific requirements, Alara will mix up a custom blend to your recipe. 250 is an astonishing number! - could we put some of the more exotic examples in a box?

Where: You can find Alara brand muesli in most local health food shops as well as chains like Fresh & Wild and Planet Organic; there are 36 retail locations in the London boroughs. They also distribute to a number of wholesalers in the UK and abroad. In addition, Alara sells muesli to many producers who then repackage and sell it as their own-label brand, including Co-op and ASDA supermarkets and wholefood names such as Marigold and Suma. So, chances are, even if you've never bought a box that says Alara, you've eaten their muesli!

Sustainability: Alara's aim is to become a carbon negative and zero-waste manufacturing facility by 2010. Their environmental policy, which can be viewed on their website, expands on this vision and specifies how they plan to achieve it. They currently recycle all of their paper and cardboard waste and most of the plastics, and they've recently built a compost bin and wormery that will turn all of their food waste into healthy soil for their new community garden. They also have a

purchasing policy that aims to reduce the environmental impact of their office and factory by considering the green options for every purchasing decision. Alara is hugely energy-conscious. They buy from a renewable energy supplier and save electricity wherever possible by switching equipment and lights off when they aren't in use. They are looking to produce their own energy in the future, possibly through wind turbines mounted on the roof or solar panels. Check out the environmental blog on their website for regular updates about progress toward their 2010 goal.

Future: Alara recently began building their permaculture community garden, located on what was a derelict strip of land behind their factory. A volunteer team cleared out the rubbish, prepared the soil and planted fruit trees that will need little care and will produce an abundance of fresh food. The garden is both an environmental effort and a way of giving back to the community; it will be used to teach kids about agriculture, healthy eating, and environmental concerns through a partnership with the nearby Jubilee Center. Alara is also working towards achieving Green Mark certification, which would demonstrate their commitment to environmental good practice and help them to put future improvement schemes in place. ■

WWW.ALARA.CO.UK
020 7387 9303

Diary

February

- 4th Chiswick House Kitchen Open Garden Work Session, 1-4.30pm
- 8th February Love Bites, Slow Food cookery demonstration With Jeremy Lee of Conran, Venue: Alternative Plans, Notting Hill gate 12 - 2pm, £25/£35 dan@slowfoodlondon.com
- 13th East London Organic Growers AGM, Welcome Centre, Walthamstow Village, 7.45pm
- 15th Supply, Standards and Strategy: International Public Sector Food Conference, City Hall London, 9.30am-5pm <http://www.sustainablefood.org/article/view/14295/1/2383/>
- 1st From Freight to Food, Food Manufacturing and Logistics Business Development Exhibition, Novotel London West, W6, 9am-12pm. Contact: heatherh@prevista.co.uk
- 21st Borough Market Wholesaler Client's Tasting Event, 10am-1pm. Free by invite only. Contact juliet@boroughmarket.org.uk to secure invitation.
- 26th Feb-11th March, Fair Trade Fortnight includes a London-based Fair Trade fashion show. <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/> (See p.11)
- 28th Supersized Supermarkets Public Forum on supermarket power featuring Tony Juniper and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. Emmanuel Centre, Marsham St, SW1 7-8.30pm. Free but booking essential. Contact: amorser@waronwant.org.

March

- Early March, London Food Access Forum, network of groups around London working to improve access to healthy affordable food. Free, contact ben@sustainweb.org
- 3rd Eastbury Manor House Food Festival, 10-4pm. Members Free, Other Adults £2.50, Children £0.65 Contact: 02087241002 michelle.flowers@lbbd.gov.uk
- 29th March Replication group for Good Food on the Public Plate project, advice and information sharing network for sustainable procurement, free. 1pm Friends Meeting House, Euston Rd. Contact emma@sustainweb.org

April

- 29th Chiswick House Kitchen Garden Open Day (Tulip Day), 1-5pm (info@kitchengarden.org.uk, www.kitchengarden.org.uk)

Join London Food Link Now!

The benefits of membership of London Food Link include:

- The Jellied Eel, our quarterly members' magazine.
- A chance to influence policy-making on food issues including contributing to food and nutrition strategies, government and GLA consultations on food, farming, planning and the economy.
- Membership of an interactive e-mail group with news, events, jobs and developments around food issues in London.
- Discounts off London Food Link events, conferences, seminars and publications.
- Access to an online members' area with membership directory.
- A free copy of Growing Food in Cities to new members and 50% off all London Food Link publications.

To join London Food Link or for further details contact:

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London Food Link members and supporters include:

Primary Care Trusts, London boroughs, business associations, retailers, farmers, environment and community groups, food access partnerships, allotment groups and food writers. Our work is guided by a working party of key London-wide agencies and groups representing food issues from farm to fork.



OUR WORK

To represent over 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level.

OUR AIM

To advocate food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, promote equity and enrich society and culture.

The Jellied Eel is the magazine of London Food Link coordinated by Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming. It aims to keep readers abreast of developments in the food and agriculture policy arena that have an impact on London. Sustain takes every effort to summarise and reproduce accurately the information in *The Jellied Eel*. Inclusion of any material does not imply that it forms part of the policy of Sustain.

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