



Involving young people to develop a Good Food Plan

Blackburn with Darwen Food Alliance: Interim update, July 2018

Changing perceptions of food poverty by involving experts with lived experience

[Blackburn with Darwen Food Alliance](#) formed in 2017 and brings together organisations which have not previously joined together in a practical way to address food insecurity. We have started work on our Good Food Plan, looking at how we support those in crisis, building more resilience through ensuring people have the right financial support, as well as growing, cooking, and sharing food.

As part of developing this plan we are involving and consulting young people. Our youth empowerment exchanges, where young people lead conversations with other young people, are developing into dynamic forums, changing perceptions and responses to the impact of food poverty. The young people are ambassadors and champions in the borough and beyond for Blackburn with Darwen Food Alliance and their school. A team of young people participated in conferences in London and Cardiff and will visit Westminster. Our work has been highlighted by the [Better Way network](#). We have produced a film with the young people, which will soon be shown publicly.

Challenges and learning

Forming a new alliance is never easy, but co-producing a film of the young people has made an immediate impact on key audiences and has encouraged key contacts to join the alliance. We never imagined how powerful this work would be. Support from Food Power has helped us to develop effective and appropriate methodologies to engage young people.

Next steps

To launch a 'Big Conversation' in schools about food poverty and to explore poverty proofing schools, including adopting best practice from other regions. Young people may also get involved in a campaign linked to End Hunger UK.

This activity was assisted by financial support and other advice from Food Power.
www.foodpower.org.uk



“When you are hungry, you get angry. Hunger changes behaviour. If I share my experiences, then others can share theirs and it takes a weight off their shoulders.”

Young person

Outcomes to date

- We have raised the issue of food poverty in a community of young people. We have provided life changing experiences for four young people – their school is so proud of what they have achieved.
- Longer term, we will encourage all schools to be part of the youth empowerment forums and poverty proof schools.