

P  
L  
A  
N  
N  
I  
N  
G  
  
F  
O  
R

# HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS

A toolkit for  
planners,  
developers and  
communities



# Contents

Introduction.....4

Policy Landscape.....8

Understanding the local context.....12

How to support the good food economy.....16

Edible landscapes.....21

Planning responses to develop healthier spaces.....25

Final remarks.....30

©Health Equalities Group, January 2022.  
*Authors: Emily Whyman, Gillian Morgan & Nicola Calder.*



# Introduction

## Planning for Healthy Food Environments

### The toolkit

This toolkit captures the conversations, case studies, and key learnings from the ‘Planning for Healthy Food Environments’ [symposium](#) held on 28th of September 2021. The toolkit has been produced as part of the childhood obesity trailblazer, [Healthier Place, Healthier Future](#) (HPHF). Local Authorities are starting to consider how local food systems impact the health and well-being of communities, how this relates to their strategic objectives and the work of different departments across the authority. By using their role as local planning authorities, Councils can work with developers and communities to create healthier food environments. Case studies on how this has already been deployed are outlined in the toolkit.

This toolkit supports the creation of healthier communities through health-promoting planning policies, the cross-collaboration of Council departments, and provides a series of case studies from across the Northwest region of England. This toolkit aims to highlight the different ways in which planning can support healthier environments and the feasibility of the approaches set out. The case studies will help to prompt developers, urban designers, Councillors, and planners to consider the ways in which to develop our local infrastructures and environments to integrate accessible food and support healthier lifestyles.



‘Planning for Healthy Food Environments’ virtual symposium, September 2021, [watch here](#).

This toolkit comprises of four key thematic areas:

### 1) Understanding the local context: how do we evidence a healthy food environment?

*Evidence and policies that support a good food environment, utilising tools such as food mapping, barriers to accessing food, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and more.*

### 2) How can Councils support the good food economy?

*The use of planning tools to support a good food economy and how to support local growers with a fair price for food.*

### 3) Implementing edible landscapes.

*An illustration of how edible spaces can be incorporated into new developments, normalise healthy food, ensure equal opportunities to grow, and outline how we need to be producing more in the UK.*

### 4) Planning responses to develop healthier spaces.

*How planning responses have worked in designing healthier food environments and the reasoning behind these decisions.*



# About the Healthier Place, Healthier Future project

Healthier Place, Healthier Future (HPHF) is one of five Childhood Obesity Trailblazer programmes funded by the Department of Health and Social Care (DSHC) and delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA). The project is funded for three years (until summer 2022). There are five other trailblazers across the UK: in Bradford, Birmingham, Lewisham, and Nottingham.

HPHF is being delivered by [Food Active](#), working with the Pennine Lancashire Consortium of Local Authorities (Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley, Rossendale). We aim to share findings wider across Lancashire, Cumbria and beyond.

The project works across four key levers: system leadership, planning, businesses, and working with a social movement.

6

## Planning

Working with planning authorities to support a healthier place by aligning policy across the Boroughs and working with the planning system to support public health.

***“We will use a positive approach to planning regulation which actively promotes a healthier food environment in all our districts” (HPHF).***

Specific planning activities of the Trailblazer include developing joint agreements that outline how planners are working to develop healthier places; Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Documents (PfH SPD); supporting community engagement in the planning system; engaging Elected Members in the planning process; undertaking research on hot food applications and policy decisions (with reference to health) and running national and local events on planning for health. This toolkit underpins the joint planers agreement by offering practical examples of how healthy food environments can be achieved.



Image, top and bottom: HPHF working with Child Action North West to design and build pocket parks in Blackburn with Darwen (Healthier Place, Healthier Future, 2021).

7



# Policy Landscape

## How planning policy can be implemented to support healthy food environments

### The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The [NPPF](#) for England supports food growing as part of green infrastructure in ‘Healthy and Safe Communities’. It states:

“Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- a) promote social interaction...
- b) are safe and accessible...
- c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.” (Para 92, P21, NPPF, 2021).

### Planning Practice Guidance

There is further support for food in the [Planning Practice Guidance](#), which extends into the 2021 National Design Code:

“Planning can influence the built environment to improve health and reduce obesity and excess weight in local communities. Local planning authorities can have a role by supporting opportunities for communities to access a wide range of healthier food production and consumption choices...”

(Paragraph: 004, Reference ID: 53-004-20190722, Revision date: 22/07/2019).

### National Design Guide 2021

The support for food in Planning Practice Guidance has now been expanded upon in the 2021 [National Design Guide](#). The wider benefits of health, well-being, education, and social inclusion are mentioned here in the Design Guide and expanded in the [National Model Design Code Guidance Notes](#):

*91 Well-designed places:* “provide attractive open spaces in locations that are easy to access, with activities for all to enjoy, such as... food production... to encourage physical activity and to promote health, well-being, and social inclusion.”

*Guidance notes:*

- Open space design
- Allotments and community growing need to consider community growing projects for food production, learning and community engagement on large developments.
- Include communal open spaces in new developments to promote the health and wellbeing of residents.
- Local shops: The design code needs to provide guidance for the design and access to local shopping facilities.
- Principles of Public Space Design: provision for markets.

### Other national planning support

Over the last year (2019 - 2020), the government has recognised the economic benefits of food. Many social enterprises and small and innovative food businesses have taken advantage of this support. For example, a market stall is a good way for a new business to test the market and hone their skills. The major changes made to the classification of

uses of shops aim to support high streets, avoiding empty shops and make it easier for landlords to let properties. Many a start-up company with a temporary market stall has grown to take on an empty shop and create employment. Introduced last March, the right allowing pubs, restaurants and cafes to provide a food takeaway service will be extended until 23 March 2022.

### Other national planning support

Over the last year (2019 – 2020), the government has recognised the economic benefits of food and introduced temporary planning measures. Many social enterprises and small and innovative food businesses have taken advantage of this support. [Some of these measures are being made permanent](#). A market stall, for example, is a good way for a new business to test the market and hone their skills. In addition, the major changes were made to the classification of uses of shops in an aim to support high streets, avoid empty shops and make it easier for landlords to let properties. With this support for the planning system at a national level, the next step is to interpret and apply at a local level.’

### Use Class changes

- Introduced in March 2019, the right allowing pubs, restaurants, and cafes to provide a food takeaway service will be extended until 23 March 2022.
- Hot food takeaways are in a Use Class of their own.
- A completely new Use Class covers local community uses, including a shop smaller

than 280 square meters selling mostly essential goods, at least 1km from another similar shop.

This could offer the possibility for a community hall to run a village or residential estate shop in a food desert. Another scenario is for a local shop in a new urban extension to be given this status instead of the wider Use Class E shop to ensure it remains as a local service. It will be interesting to see how this category is applied as 1km is a long way to walk to a shop, and in dense urban areas local parades tend to serve specific communities.

### New ways of planning

Planners may need to be open to innovative uses of land and building by communities and be supportive when these don’t fit traditional definitions of land use and development. For example, a [community pantry](#) may open twice a week for people, referred by agencies, to shop at dramatically reduced prices. Is this pantry classed as a community centre, a retail unit, or a food waste project? Another example can be seen in the case of raised beds. Raised beds can be placed temporary or places long-term on disused car parks or on housing land which can be open access or private. Are the beds classed as development? Is a [market garden](#) on the urban fringe, a commercial horticultural use, a social enterprise, an educational suite, or a therapeutic health facility?

### Local Planning Policy Framework for a sustainable food system

Food is a spatial planning issue that fits well into

the planning system. The problem with food is the lack of awareness around the different points in which interventions would make a difference. The chart on the following page is a useful tool for assessing policies and proposals.

Local plan policies

Some Councils have strategic policies for sustainable development, climate action or healthy communities which specifically support [food growing](#).

Local planning guidance

Even without specific policies, the food system can be picked up in supplementary planning guidance or planning advice notes to encourage developers to bring forward proposals that are good enough to approve. or planning advice notes to encourage developers to bring forward proposals that are good enough to approve.

Chart for assessing planning policies

Policies	Urban City Centre	Peri Urban Green Belt	Rural
Food growing:			
- Allotments			
- Community gardens			
- Growing enterprises / food production			
- Land / soil protection			
- Edible landscaping			
Access to healthier food:			
- Retail			
- Markets			
- Hot food takeaway			
- Farm shop			
- Community / local shops			
Public Realm:			
- Drinking water fountains			
- Advertisements			
Internal residential standards:			
- Food storage, kitchens, dining			
Transport:			
- Walking, cycling, public transport			
- Facilities within 10 minutes.			



# Understanding the local context

## How to evidence a healthy food environment

### Introduction

This chapter looks at evidence and policies that support a good food environment, utilising tools such as food mapping, barriers to accessing food, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and more. The first case study highlights how Council public health teams are mobilising to support healthier food environments through engaging with planners and third sector organisations. The

second case study shows how Councils can use an evidence-based approach to develop policies that support the reduction of obesity rates.



Revidge Allotments , Blackburn with Darwen (Blackburn with Darwen Food Resilience Alliance, 2021).

## Case study - Blackburn with Darwen Food Resilience Alliance

### Background

The Blackburn with Darwen Food Resilience Alliance (BwD FRA) is working to tackle food poverty and drive for healthier, sustainable, and more affordable food in Blackburn with Darwen. Blackburn with Darwen (BwD) Borough Council is a unitary authority and is the most populous borough of Pennine Lancashire with an estimated population of almost 150,000. There are 17 wards across BwD with the highest number of applications situated in Blackburn Central, Wensley Fold and Shear Brow. BwD is in the 10% most deprived lower-tier local authorities within England. Over the course of the 2016/17 academic year almost 37% (36.8%) of year six children across BwD were classed as living with obesity or overweight – compared to the English average of 34.3% according to the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP).

### Objectives

The BwD FRA promotes sustainable food, in which can be described as:

- Economic sustainability - contribute to thriving local economies and sustain the livelihoods of people working in the food sector.
- Environmental sustainability (working with planners) - protect the diversity of both plants and animals and avoid damaging natural resources and contributing to climate change.
- Social sustainability (jobs contribute to the wellness of the whole town) - provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products, and educational opportunities.

### Stakeholders

The alliance works with the planning department at the Council to build relationships to understand the constraints and languages around planning for healthy food environments. For example, Councillor Jackie Floyd, Chair of the alliance works as a key stakeholder to negotiate conversations between communities and stakeholders on topics such as parking, littering, and takeaways.

### Considerations

The alliance aims to gather evidence, share, and collaborate. The alliance has recently completed a stakeholder food mapping of the town to understand the role of convenience stores in food resilience during COVID-19, discovering that there were 120 convenience stores in one area.

### References

- Blackburn with Darwen Food Resilience Alliance - [Sustainable Food Places page](#).

# Case study - Gateshead Council

## Background

The planning team at Gateshead Council have developed a ‘Hot Food Takeaway (HFT) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)’. Gateshead currently has high levels of obesity and aims to reduce this substantially. The Gateshead region in 2019/20 had 38.5% of children in Year 6 living with obesity or are [overweight](#). Gateshead has the ambition to reduce the number of obese children in year six to less than 10% by 2025.

## Objectives

Gateshead’s SPD was adopted in 2015, after requests from Councillors to act on the proliferation of takeaways. The planning team at Gateshead looked at how to use planning policy to control the number of takeaways, working alongside Public Health teams and Environmental Health Teams to develop a policy that would support their aim of reducing the number of children living with obesity. One of the ways in which planning can have the greatest impact on health, and in particular obesity levels, is the restriction of new hot food takeaways.

After pulling together a robust evidence base it was decided that health and poor health (prevalence of obesity) should be a reason for refusal of HFTs. The proliferation of HFTs was judged by the number of takeaways per thousand of population – which was way above the national average. A nutritional analysis of the content of the foods sold at takeaways revealed that the foods were also higher in calorific content. These factors, coupled with the higher than national average obesity rates gave the grounds for the development of the SPD.

## Stakeholders

The SPD is one component in the wider Council Health and Wellbeing Strategy for tackling unhealthy lifestyles and obesity. The enactment of the HFT SPD led to a ‘blanket ban’ of permitting

more takeaways across Gateshead. This was due to the fact that all wards in Gateshead had an obesity rate of 10% or over. The SPD was the result of the collaboration between Public Health, Environmental Health and Planning teams.

## Considerations

The Council monitor the number of hot food takeaways each year, a number which has been falling since the SPD was signed in 2015. Sadly, the levels of obesity in Gateshead are still increasing, however, the SPD plays one part in a wider system of determinants in reducing obesity rates.

## References

- [Gateshead Hot Food Takeaway SPD \(2015\)](#)
- [Addendum 2020 Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document](#)
- [Consultation statement](#)
- [Hot food takeaway adoption statement](#)

# Top tips for Planners and Developers:

- 1) Work with local Councillors to understand the needs of the community – for example, gathering feedback from residents on their perceptions of their neighbourhood food environment.
- 2) Utilise data from public health teams – for example, obesity prevalence and health statistics can be used to support the development of PfH SPDs.
- 3) Complete a nutritional analysis of food content sold at takeaways to target outlets that are selling high fat, salt, and sugar foods. This mapping can also be used to support the out of home food outlets that are selling healthier foods.



# How to support the good food economy

Councils, organisations, and strategies that promote healthy, economically viable and sustainable food

## Introduction

This chapter of the toolkit looks at planning tools that support a good food economy, and how to support local growers with a fair price for food.

## Circular economy for food

One vision of a sustainable food system is based on the [circular economy](#). Not only would this vision result in food being grown closer to markets, but it would also provide healthy, nutritious food and reduce food waste. Whilst industrial farming practices are a leading source of greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, more productive use could be made of peri-urban land by the high value horticultural sector. Food, farming, and fishing are being overlooked as mechanisms to drive economic recovery across the UK. A good food environment connects food growers, producers, and consumers. Supportive planning policies can encourage good food businesses to thrive in the economy.

## Healthy High Streets

Discovering and developing a local food culture is one way to counteract the demise of high streets. This could encourage innovation, stem the tide on further proliferation of hot food takeaways and encourage more community food enterprises. In 2020, Bill Grimsey updated his [review](#) of High Streets.

*“Ultimately, we must ensure town centres and high streets are tasked with the role of lifting communities, not draining them. The proliferation of fast-food takeaways, vape shops, payday lenders, betting shops and off licences have damaged communities and become*

*a catalyst for public health, debt and addiction problems.”*

The recent relaxation of planning controls on holding markets is an opportunity for Councils to support local food growers and producers to bring their healthy, seasonal, and ethical produce straight to local consumers.



(Sarah, Unsplash)

## Case study - Foodwise Leeds

### Background

Foodwise Leeds formed as a food partnership in 2017, which then went on to achieve the [Sustainable Food Places Bronze](#) award in 2019. The partnership takes a system-wide approach to transforming the food system to become healthier and more sustainable.

### Objectives

Leeds has been supporting various programmes that highlight how healthy food can be embedded to support local economies:

- Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs): [Meanwood Valley Urban Farm](#) produces around 60 vegetable boxes weekly and sends produce to local greengrocers. [Kirkstall Valley Farm](#) produces around 30 vegetable boxes weekly.
- Patchwork Farms: Foodwise is testing out connecting small scale producers from Leeds and the surrounding area to a wider distribution network.

- Urban Agriculture Consortium: Foodwise Leeds is classed as the ‘Northern Pathfinder’ in the [Urban Agriculture Consortium](#). They are working with FarmStart, a programme across the North to grow the next generation of agroecological farmers.
- Leeds Local Plan: Leeds City Council have undergone consultation for their [local plan review](#), looking at green infrastructure in the city and policies to positively promote local food production.
- Low Carbon Lunch: at the Leeds [Low Carbon Lunch](#), Food Champion Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung announced a trio of commitments to reduce the impact of food procure across the Council’s services: supporting buying local, serving local, banning air-freighted imports and halving the carbon footprints of meals served.







## Stakeholders

Good working relationships have been crucial in enabling these programmes – Foodwise works with Leeds City Council, University of Leeds, third sector organisations, businesses, and the Sustainable Food Places network.

## Considerations

Foodwise Leeds can be seen as a model organisation that works across the system in planning for healthy food environments. Local Authorities that have project teams working on food delivery or food strategies can support the initiatives mentioned above, working with planners to discuss potential allocation of food growing space.



(Kirkstall Valley Farm, 2020)

## Case study - Pennine Cropshare

### Background

Burnley Food Links was set up in 2004 with the aim of linking producers with consumers. [Burnley Food Links](#) led on to the creation of Pennine Cropshare in 2011. [Pennine Cropshare](#) delivers food bags across East Lancashire (to Burnley, Pendle and Calderdale). The organisation has the aim to develop a healthier food economy in the third sector and a healthier society through transforming our obesogenic environments.

### Objectives

- Food security
- Circular local food economy
- Involving the community in the process

### Stakeholders

Pennine Cropshare works with local growers from across the Pennine region to collect and distribute healthy food at a fair price. Pennine Cropshare has not come without bumps in the road – the organisation needs more space to grow and professional horticulturalists to support the production. Pennine Cropshare was initiated as a with a loan from [Growing Communities](#).

### Considerations

The land which Pennine Cropshare uses to grow produce was traditionally classed as use only for livestock, however, they have utilised trained horticulturalists to transform the land to highlight how it can be used for vegetable production. Many of the food production projects have the same issue – a lack of space to grow. In order to successfully benefit the economy, designated areas to grow must be allocated to allow businesses such as Pennine Cropshare to flourish.



(Pennine Cropshare, 2020)



(Pennine Cropshare, 2020)



## Top tips for Planners and Developers:

- 1) Look for and support initiatives that link up producers, consumers, and growers.
- 2) Utilise the opportunity to support local food growers and producers from the recent relaxation of planning controls on holding markets.
- 3) Allow space to grow – successful food businesses need space to grow. Livestock land can also be used to grow fruit and vegetables, therefore, consider more sustainable uses of land and be flexible with planning applications.
- 4) Protect land suitable for food growing from development.

## Edible landscapes

### Normalising food production in the environment

#### Introduction

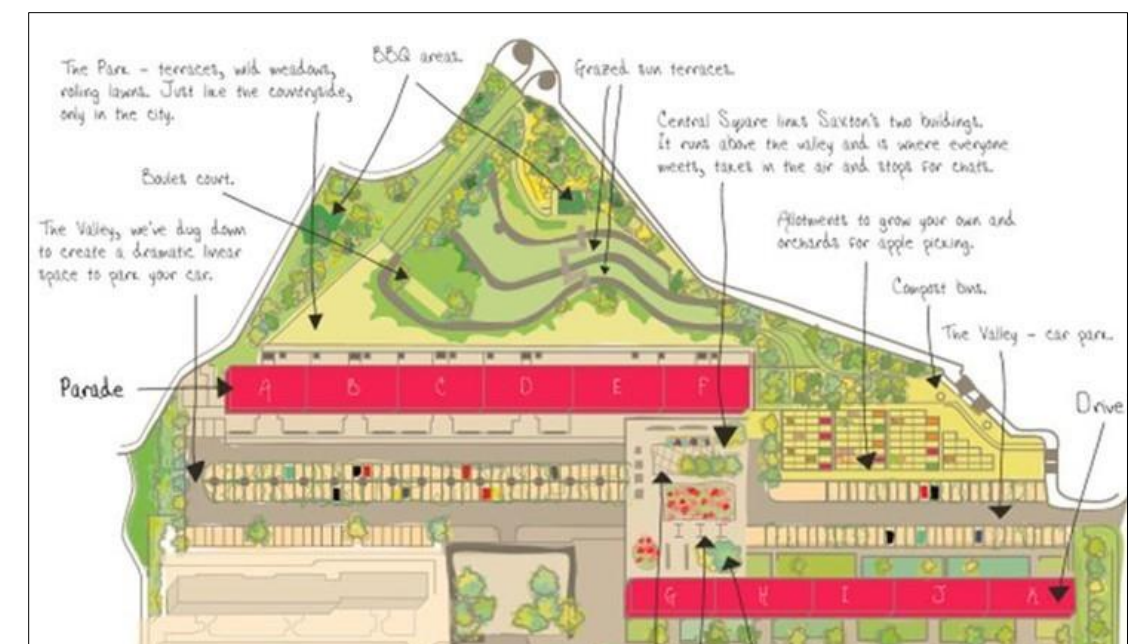
This chapter intends on illustrating how edible spaces can be incorporated into new developments to normalise healthy food, highlighting the need for increased food production in the UK with equal opportunities for all to grow.

#### Normalising food in the environment

Many developments incorporate a landscaping scheme. Planners could implement edible landscaping into the initial design of schemes. The example below, in Leeds, arose from a positive steer in an area action plan and resulted in an area of individual raised beds and a woodland with fruit trees in a communal area of a block of flats.

[Stirling Developments](#) has created an urban orchard by planting fruit trees in front gardens on their new village of 2,300 homes. This has led to an active gardening club, not only benefiting biodiversity but helping with social cohesion at the start of a new community. Further examples in the field of planning for healthy food environments include the 2020, Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Advice Note for developers on how to incorporate edible planting in a wide variety of settings from care homes to urban infill sites.

Further examples in the field of planning for healthy food environments include the 2020 Brighton and Hove Planning Advice Note for developers on how to incorporate edible planting in a wide variety of settings, from care homes to urban infill sites.



Saxton Gardens, Leeds, Site Plan identifies edible planting ([urbansplash](#)).

## Case study - Incredible Edible



### Background

[Incredible Edible](#) began in Todmorden, in the North of the UK, when residents mapped out their streets, community spaces and more in the public realm and began to grow vegetables. What is now called ‘Seeds to Solutions’ turned grey infrastructure into green infrastructure, and unloved spaces into food plots. These plots were named ‘propaganda gardens’ – in which the physical presence of food in the public realm acts as a catalyst to inspire and empower citizens to begin to reimagine what public spaces could look like if food production was the norm. With 150 groups in the UK and groups popping up all over the world, citizens are highlighting how they are ready to play their own part in acting for a fairer food system and adapting to climate change with hope.

*“If you eat, you’re in.”* (Incredible Edible)

### Objectives

The model is based on grassroots leadership that leads to action at a policy level. The Incredible Edible movement can be adopted based on their three-plate model:

- community - galvanize the community through growing and celebrating local food
- learning - bringing learning to life, from plot to playground
- business - support local and buy local

Aside from the obvious physical benefits of gardening, the edible movement has the potential to transform the way that primary care infrastructures work. This is through the allocation of food production spaces in the heart of our hospitals. For example: edible hospitals and health centres, community kitchens at the heart of the NHS and making use of the local food.

### Stakeholders

An NHS adoption of the Incredible Edible model would embody health-promoting activities and landscapes at the very heart of the centres that are designed to help us. This model has been tested at a small scale in Halifax. A doctors surgery car park was transformed to become an edible landscape which, pre-COVID, had over 50 visitors coming monthly to manage the space, learn how to cook, share, and eat the produce.

### Considerations

The Incredible Edible movement believes in the power of small actions, and in 2022 will campaign for the citizens right to grow on public land through changing the policy legislation. The movement is campaigning to rethink the public realm and make edible landscapes mainstream, to give more people the chance to grow food on their doorstep, without seeking permission every time they want to do so. The movement is a people-powered response to climate change and improved health combining localised opportunities to put good food on the table, get more active, meet more people, learn how to cook in community kitchens, think about apprenticeships, and local food jobs.

## Case study - Prospects Foundation

### Background

[The Prospects Foundation](#) has the mission of being the key movement in Hyndburn for environmental sustainability and to use collective knowledge, skills, work, and experience to secure a future for current and future generations. The foundation works with a variety of projects, ranging from outdoor learning to food production courses.

### Objectives

Prospects is aiming to be the organisation, which is a catalyst for positive environmental change, delivering a series of courses that connect people to climate. The charity works with six ‘themes’: improving biodiversity, energy conservation, local food, raising environmental awareness, sustainable transport and waste and recycling.

### Stakeholders

The Prospects Foundation are working in partnership with Onward Homes at Woodnook Community Garden in Accrington. Woodnook Community Garden was once a thriving community garden in the centre of Accrington, over the past 8 years it has fallen into disrepair. The garden is on land owned by Onward Homes. Onward approached Prospects for advice and support in returning the Garden to its former glory. Prospects meets regularly with members of Onwards staff to plan the next steps in improving the garden. Prospects runs regular food growing, outdoor learning, rewilding, and practical conservation sessions on the site. Onwards contract team is going to create new pathways and raised beds in the garden to create a more accessible landscape before the next growing season. Onward staff have the option of using their volunteer days to work on the site.

### Considerations

- Accessibility and diversity - Community partnerships. Work alongside existing ‘Friends Of’ groups, neighbourhood groups, food banks and environmental groups.
- Fund food growing and environmental projects - most food growing, and environmental charities are constantly on the lookout for funding. Include funding long or short-term projects that teach people about food growing when costing in building new developments.
- Normalise food growing - fund projects that engage all aspects of the community in food growing.



## Top tips for Planners and Developers:

- 1) Normalise food growing in new developments – for example, planting fruit trees when designing the landscaping scheme.
- 2) Consider incorporating edible landscapes into health and wellbeing strategies or in climate commitments.
- 3) Borders - replace fencing with more sustainable options. For example, instead of fences between houses, plant native hedgerows. This is great for increasing biodiversity and can be foraging pathways for humans.
- 4) Leave spaces for food growing - Create accessible food growing areas. For example, community gardens, raised beds/planters.

# Planning responses to develop healthier spaces

## Incorporating healthy food environments into long-term strategic design and planning

### Introduction

This chapter is to read about how planners, master planners, architects and Councillors have developed planning responses that have worked in designing healthier food environments and the reasoning behind these decisions.

### Local Authority planning role

Councils can use their role as local planning authorities to the full, drawing on the legislative and regulatory provisions of the planning system. With the support of their communities, they can be proactive in providing a clear policy framework with guidance and advice to landowners and developers.

# Case study - St Cuthbert’s Garden Village - Carlisle City Council

## Background

St Cuthbert’s Garden Village was accepted into the Government programme in January 2017. Garden Cities are not a new concept, with the first garden city (Letchworth Garden City) in the UK dating back to the late 19th century. The original principles include ‘opportunities for residents to grow their own food including allotments’. St Cuthbert’s Garden Village has the principles which included ‘Healthy Environments’, the vision of ‘promoting healthy lifestyles’ and the ‘thriving communities’ objective of creating the opportunity for people to grow their own food.

## Objectives

St Cuthbert’s aims to develop a series of frameworks to be used as evidence to support the planning process, with one of the key drivers being the food environment. Within this framework will be 9 guiding principles that focus on food production from the small, local and regional scale.

## Stakeholders

The garden village will form part of the green and blue infrastructure delivery strategy, moving from the high-level strategy in the masterplan to developing detailed evidence. Food growing in the plan has been recognised as one of the multifunctional uses of green spaces, promoting healthy lifestyles to fulfil Carlisle’s ‘Healthy City’ ambitions.

## Considerations

This plays a role in reducing health inequalities, promoting education and community cohesion. St Cuthbert’s has launched a landscape design competition for professionals and students to enter, to help design the multi-modal greenway and park. Stage 1 includes eight themes to address,

which include health and wellbeing. Stage 2 addresses what role food production can play in supporting wellbeing and encouraging community stewardship.

## References - Planning Policy

- [St Cuthbert’s Local Plan Strategic Design SPD](#)
- National design competition for professionals and students – for multi-modal greenway and park
- Stage 1 - 8 themes to address including health and wellbeing
- How can community food production in all its forms be integrated into the design?
- Stage 2 to address ‘what role can food production play in supporting well-being and encouraging community stewardship’?

# Case study - Blacon Old Library Development - Cheshire West and Chester Council

## Background

This planning application requested a change of use and extension to provide a 419 sqm convenience store (use class A1) and up to three further units with flexible use for A1, A2, A3, A4, D1, D2 and sui generis use with associated alterations. The site is situated in the northwest of Chester, in the urban area. Therefore, a suitable location for development. The area has high deprivation and high obesity levels. The area has two parades of shops, with no supermarkets, just convenience stores. The site has several educational settings within walking distance. The original application included a hot food takeaway as part of their flexible units. The application was submitted, and Public Health was consulted and objected to. Discussions between Public Health and the applicant resulted in the hot food takeaway element being removed from the planning application.

## Objectives

Considering the Development Plan and evidence submitted by Public Health. The objection to the hot food takeaway element included the obesity levels in the area, level of deprivation, the proximity to Schools and the existing food environment (other unhealthy food options and lack of healthy options).

## Stakeholders

Key stakeholders involved in this development include Cheshire West and Chester Council internal departments, the Planning Department, and Public Health.

## Considerations

The scheme includes a convenience store and flexible units, which could include a restaurant or café. The hot food takeaway element was removed from the application. There are strong health concerns in this area, and the removal of the hot food takeaway will benefit the community.

Facilitating discussions with the applicant and Public Health resulted in the hot food element being removed from the planning application. This resulted in the planning application being approved, with no need for an appeal. Therefore, the development can go ahead, benefitting the economy, the community and making the best use of the land.

## References - Planning Policy

- [Local Plan \(Part One\) policy SOC 5 – Health and well-being](#)
- [Local Plan \(Part Two\) policy DM 29 – Health impacts of new development](#)
- Planning application: 20/01651/FUL, Application received: 15 May 2020, Application approved: 27 November 2020



# Case study - The Cross - Cheshire West and Chester Council

## Background

This proposal includes a change of use from Shops to Hot Food Takeaway at 14 The Cross Neston CH64 9UB. 145sqm unit in a town centre within one of the boroughs Market Towns and designated as a Key Service Centre in the Local Plan (Part One). Public Health was consulted and responded to the application. The scheme was refused on one ground, the change of use would fail to take every reasonable opportunity to promote and positively contribute to the health of the borough. No information has been submitted to demonstrate how health and well-being had been considered. The cumulative impacts would give rise to a significant adverse effect on health and well-being.

education settings. There was no demonstration that health and well-being had been taken into account in the application such as opening times (to avoid School closing) or providing a sample menu.

## References - Planning Policy

- [Local Plan \(Part One\) policy SOC 5 – Health and well-being](#)
- [Local Plan \(Part Two\) policy DM 29 – Health impacts of new development](#)
- [Neston Neighbourhood Plan policy NNDS1 and NNR1](#)
- [Planning application: 20/03172/FUL, Application received – 1 September 2020, Application refused – 23 November 2020](#)

## Objectives

Considering the Development Plan (Local and Neighbourhood Plan) and evidence submitted by Public Health in objection to the planning application (location to education settings and existing food environment), the application was refused.

## Stakeholders

Key stakeholders involved in this development include Cheshire West and Chester Council internal departments, the Planning Department, and Public Health.

## Considerations

No information has been submitted to demonstrate how health and well-being had been taken into account, including the cumulative impacts. Concern regarding the increase of hot food takeaways within this area along with the close proximity to

# Top tips for Planners and Developers:

- 1) Provide a clear policy framework with guidance and advice to landowners and developers.
- 2) Incorporate healthy food environments in green and blue delivery strategies.
- 3) Send planning applications for out of home food businesses to public health teams to review on a health basis.
- 4) Participate in local food partnerships.

# Final remarks

Thank you to the presenters who offered inspiring examples of how they, their Councils and local organisations are planning for healthy food environments. This document will be made available on the Food Active website and is aimed to be utilised by Local Authorities to help prompt developers, urban designers, Councillors, and planners to consider the ways in which to develop our local infrastructures and environments to integrate accessible food and support healthier lifestyles.



