

# Civil Food Resilience in practice

## Agenda:

- Welcome
- Keynote: Sarah Bridle
- Keynote: Dominic Watters
- About the project: Vera Zakharov
- Role of food partnerships: Daphne Du Cros
- Plymouth: Ian Smith and Leo Leong
- Dyfed Powys: Chloe Masefield



# Civil Food Resilience in practice

Work across the  
Sustainable Food Places  
Network

13 May 2026



**Keynote:**

## **Sarah Bridle**

Professor of Food, Climate and Society at the  
University of York  
Director, Root and Reason

*See separate presentation*



**Keynote:**

## **Dominic Watters**

PhD researcher, speaker and founder of Food is  
Care CIC

*See separate presentation*



# Sustainable Food Places Civil Food Resilience Project

**Vera Zakharov**

Local Action Coordinator, Sustain





**Sustainable Food Places** brings together pioneering food partnerships from towns, cities, boroughs, districts and counties across the UK that are driving innovation and best practice on healthy, sustainable, equitable food. They:

- **Connect local** public sector bodies, VCSFE orgs, supply chain actors and institutions
- **Co-develop a strategy** and action plan for their place
- **Run programmes**, campaigns and supply chain interventions

Credit: Sustainable Food Places





**Sustain** is an alliance of organisations and communities working together for a better system of food, farming and fishing, and cultivating the movement for change.

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

Credit: Vera Zakharov, Oxford Real Farming Conference



# Other work linked to food resilience

Equity, community food and supply chain innovation:

➤ **Four Pillars of Dignified Food Access:**

<https://www.sustainweb.org/foodpoverty/four-pillars-of-dignified-food-access/>

➤ **Connecting Community Enterprises:**

<https://www.sustainweb.org/good-food-enterprise/connecting-community-food-enterprises/>

➤ **Local Food Growth Plan:**

<https://www.localfoodplan.org/>



## What is Civil Food Resilience – Lang, T et al

“By ‘civil food resilience’ we mean **the capacity of people in their daily lives to be more aware of risks to food, more skilled in reducing unnecessary risks, and more prepared to act with others** to ensure all society is well fed in and after crises.”

Food resilience framing must shift from individual, or community-level, responsibility, to a **collective ‘whole-of-society’ responsibility, with action needed at every level of governance.**





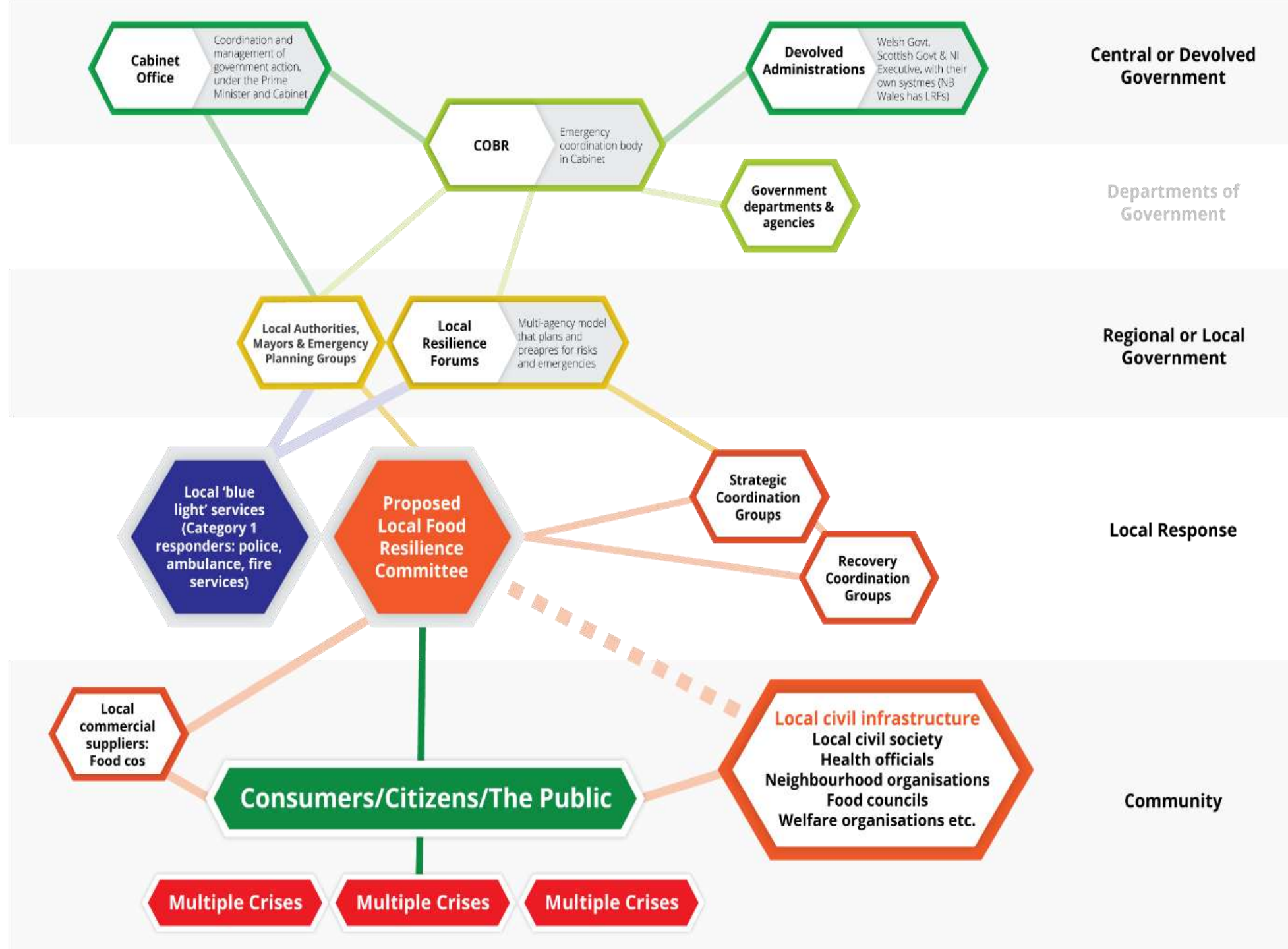
# National Preparedness Commission – Report on Food Resilience

Recommended actions for councils and food partnerships:

- Establish Local Food Resilience Committees/Forums
- Develop Local Food Resilience Plans
- Map and invest in community food assets
- Expand urban/town food growing
- Integrate food into planning: consider urban green belts as 'food resilience zones'

# Proposed civil food resilience structure

(expecting multiple crises at scale)



# Food is 'Critical National Infrastructure'

- Chemicals
- Civil Nuclear
- Communications
- Defense
- Emergency Services
- Energy
- Finance
- **Food**
- Government
- Health
- Space
- Transport
- Water
- Data Centres

Source: <https://www.npsa.gov.uk/critical-national-infrastructure-0>



## Food Resilience: Sustainable Food Places Framing

- “Upstream” focus – moving as a network **‘beyond the food bank’**
- **Identifying policy levers – local, regional, national**
- **Community asset mapping**
- Role of community enterprises, dignity principles & skills
- Regional-level collaboration and understanding of risks/gaps
- **Linking with Local Resilience Forums and other preparedness networks**
- Including food in council risk registers

# Civil Food Resilience in practice

Capacity-building for resilience across the Sustainable Food Places network



## Learning cohort & community of practice

- Working with food partnership networks to strengthen relationships with resilience forums & leads
- Working with London Resilience and London food networks to map community assets
- Report: role of food partnerships, obstacles and recommendations
- Case studies of interventions – ‘backcasting’ crisis scenario planning, infrastructure and supply chain development, community engagement

# Report insights

## Barriers and potent Levers

- **Local Resilience Forums/Emergency Planning teams** - need food mandate
- **Food Partnerships** - recognition & resourcing
- **Public Procurement** – funding & contract access
- Loss of **local and regional infrastructure** – investment and access for small scale
- **Supply chain engagement** – link into resilience planning and communities
- Chronic **disparities in food equity** - access, affordability, dignity
- **Asset mapping** and shared knowledge – formalise it!



# What next

## **Growing Civil Food Resilience**

- Continue working group and peer learning
- Continue to link up Emergency Planning Bodies with Food System Experts
- Focus on Communications for Food Resilience
- Briefings and Policy Engagement work

# Food Partnerships – leadership in Civil Food Resilience

**Daphne Du Cros**

Director, Shropshire Good Food Partnership



# The Mobilising Middle: Food Partnerships

**Birmingham** - Procurement, Council Mapping and Food Justice Network

**Brighton & Sussex** - Civil Food Resilience Report: Food system links, Challenges, Good Practice, Recommendations

**Lincolnshire** - Working with LRF, Food Resilience Summit

**Monmouthshire** - Relocalising infrastructure, Welsh Veg in Schools & Council engagement



# The Mobilising Middle: Food Partnerships

**Bristol** - Lessons from the pandemic & Food Disaster Risk Planning (FDRP) project

**London** - Sustain and London Resilience, mapping assets project

**Shropshire** - Working at Town and Parish Council level

**Dyfed Powys** - Investing in Food Resilience at a structural level

**Plymouth** - Inclusivity in a divided landscape



Close x

## Lula's test farm

Southwark

**Lead contact:** Lula Wattam

**Role:** Farmer

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**Secondary email:**

**Phone:** 01920911

**Postcode:** SE16 3LI

**Website:**

**Food provision:**

- Social supermarket / pantry / affordable food club
- Commercial kitchen
- Peri-urban / city farm

**Community support:** No, community engagement and skill-building only

**Previous emergency support:** no

**People supported per week:**

Total people supported: 2

Total meals served: 2

Total home meals provided: 0

**Food trading / growing:**

Trading (kg/week): 0

Grown (kg/week): 0

**Vehicles:**

Lorries: 0

Vans: 0

Cars: 0

Cargo bikes: 0

**Capacity to expand:** yes

# London: mapping community food assets

## What are community food assets?

Food growing, prep, retail and dining settings focused on health, sustainability, inclusion, community power and innovation. Charitable or commercial in operations but hold responsibility to communities in time of emergency.

## Mapping data in three layers

- **London-wide portal:** London-wide coordination
- **Borough-wide portal:** local authorities and VCSFE infrastructure organisations
- **Settings:** Individual organisations, venues or enterprises registering to be contacted in an emergency.

LONDON RESILIENCE

gcda

sustain  
the alliance for better food and farming

# Case Study insights

**What are the ingredients of a resilient community food sector**

**Community-led and centred:**

Community connections, Community agency, Community 'buy-in'

**Operational resilience and innovation:**

Diversified supply, Operational efficiency, Flexible and adaptable ways of working, Reoriented supply focus, Partnership and collaboration

**Investing and resourcing:**

Funding and investment, Infrastructure and physical assets, Skills and training



## Shropshire: many smalls make a big

### Supporting Town and Parish Councils

- **Risk Assessment:** Community Labs, back-casting, systems mapping (assets, hubs, gaps, food flows)
- **Build Networks:** Collaborate to address chronic long-term issues & prepare for acute crisis, embed in food resilience strategies and action plans
- **Grassroots capacity building:** Building communities, skills, confidence and trust.
  - 'Feeding Resilience' Pilot in Telford

**Bioregional engagement across the Marches & Climate Action Fund**

**Our rural context:** Farmer clusters, horticulture & training farms, includes seed





## Shropshire: Challenges/Opportunities

Shropshire Council & Local Resilience Forum

Town & Parish Councils

Marches Forward Partnership

Convening parallel active groups for Resilience



# Framework for Action

## Roles:

- SFP, Food Partnerships & Local Authorities/Mayoral Authorities
- Complimentary roles: What we each bring to the table
- Easy Wins - FPCs, Summits, LRFs, Funding, Policy levers, Food Strategies (& 'Food in all policies'), Right to Grow
- Short term Projects vs. Structural change

*Together we can deliver meaningful progress - this can't work without a strategic commitment from Government at all levels*



# Communicating CFR at all levels

## Public engagement

- Clarity, Coherence, consistency in communication strategies
- Local Community Context - Trust, Peer to peer
- Proactive for confidence-building and empowerment
- Storytelling, modelling, education & outreach, digital & analog materials

## Council Partners and coordinating/response networks:

- Scenarios with clear roles and processes
- Business and industry engagement



# Communicating CFR at all levels

## **(Bio)Regional work & networks**

- Best practice, case studies & data
- Convening parallel organisations and coordinated action, messaging

## **National**

- Reality, priorities - what works, what doesn't.
- Policy contexts: demystified and filtered to local level; boots on the ground examples to illustrate public sentiment on food issues.



## **Plymouth Case Study**

**Ian Smith**

Founder, Food Plymouth

**Leo Leong**

Founder, Unlocking Abilities Together

*See separate presentation*



## Dyfed Powys Case Study

**Chloe Masefield**

Partnership Coordinator, Bwyd Powys Food

*See separate presentation*



## Q & A Session

**Chair: Chloe Smee**

Sustainable Food Places Programme Manager, Soil  
Association



**Thank you!**

## **Civil Food Resilience in Practice**

Download our report:

<https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/news/may26-cfrreport/>

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