



# Involving Experts by Experience

Newcastle Food Poverty Alliance: Interim report

November 2018

## Encouraging local community participation, voice and empowerment

The Newcastle Food Poverty Group was established in April 2017 by Food Newcastle and Active Inclusion as a delivery sub group of the Newcastle Good Food Plan. The group aims to make a measurable difference by mitigating the adverse effects of food poverty and understanding and responding to the causes of food poverty.

Earlier this year we began a pilot project to involve experts by experience in our work in order to strengthen our local community's ability to reduce food poverty through solutions developed by them, with the support of their peers from other communities across the UK.

Over the last six months we have been exploring approaches to community participation and voice, and seeking to empower those with direct experience of food poverty to play an active role in strategic alliance development.

Our focus is on the Byker ward of the city; specifically the Byker Wall Estate, which is home to about 9,500 people. Through a series of local conversations we are actively engaging with residents who are experiencing food access and affordability issues to explore the main issues and potential solutions. Experts from the group are also participating in discussions on a national level.

## Challenges and learning

Encouraging people to talk openly about food affordability and access is extremely challenging as it is often either hidden or accepted as a normality of life.

## Next steps

We will continue to support the experts in being heard and to seek action to make positive changes.

This activity was assisted by financial support and other advice from Food Power.  
[www.foodpower.org.uk](http://www.foodpower.org.uk)



*"We are the voice of the people that feel they have none. I will carry on challenging as much as I can."*

**Local resident with lived experience of food poverty**

## Outcomes

- Although the process of recruitment has been gradual we now have a core group of five residents who are actively involved.
- They have attended several national events including the End Hunger UK Conference and an event at the House of Lords to discuss raising the awareness of the need for measuring food insecurity in the UK, linked to MP Emma Lewell-Buck's Food Insecurity Bill.
- We are extremely lucky to have the support of these fantastically passionate and driven local residents!



