

[Response from the Fishguard Bay Sustainable Food Initiative to the access to healthy, nutritious and affordable food inquiry](#)

- **To what extent does the Welsh Government's approach to tackling food poverty support provision of healthy and nutritious food for all, and what actions could it take to achieve this?**

Our sustainable food initiative is focused around the community of Fishguard and Goodwick, North Pembrokeshire. In terms of tackling food poverty the voluntary sector or social enterprises are the most visible in terms of whole community projects. By this I mean projects which are open to the community as a whole, rather than targeted at certain vulnerable groups.

These are in some cases supported by PLANED (Pembrokeshire Local Food Partnership) and PAVS. As a sustainable food initiative which is setting up a community kitchen in Fishguard, we have been heavily supported by the Pembrokeshire Local Food Partnership and PAVS. This has helped our organisation, a CIC, access training, develop partnerships and understand our roles within the CIC.

This type of support from Welsh Government (WG) help create more robust models which can generate longer term benefit in the community. It is therefore essential that the Pembrokeshire Local Food Partnership remains a priority for WG and funding is secure to retain this vital resource.

Our organisation would struggle to operate given that we are mainly volunteer led without the input from PLANED and PAVS.

- **What are the main barriers to addressing food poverty in a sustainable, preventative way that provides healthy and nutritious food for all, and how can these be overcome?**

Through our public consultation at Fishguard Town Hall in Feb 2025 our results showed that the main barrier to accessing healthy food was the cost of ingredients.

Having a healthy meal was also impacted by lack of cookery skills and limited time to cook.

As part of our community kitchen we will be addressing these issues through regular workshops to teach basic cooking skills, preserving, storage, cooking on a budget etc. This will be provided by qualified staff and our aim is to make the classes as accessible as possible to all members of the community. We will also offer workshops through partner organisation like POINT Youth Centre so that we access all age groups.

With regard to the cost of ingredients, we fully support our local producers and recognise that in many cases their products are now becoming cheaper than the local supermarkets in Fishguard and Goodwick.

Local producers markets need to be supported through county councils and local town council initiatives with regular promotion and recognition that weekend markets are vital for wider access and benefit to the local economy.

WG , should also be tackling the monopoly of supermarkets in small towns where prices are widely recognised as unaffordable. Creating small trader units for local businesses who sell local produce or have a business plan to develop eg. a local bakery should be a priority.

• **Which examples of good practice successfully tackle food poverty by supporting provision of healthy and nutritious food? How should the Welsh Government and partners support this good practice to spread and scale?**

Good practice to tackle food poverty require linking up land which can also be part of a community enterprise to grow and feed local people. We have an example of a community garden in Goodwick which allows people to access a plot (allotment) at a very affordable rent and this a family or 1-2 families can grow and learn with the support of the community garden.

Our community kitchen has 2 plots which are being developed for growing as we know long term we need cheap, local and nutritious food as a basis to feed people in need. We do not wish to operate solely on surplus food from supermarkets as much of it is over processed and unhealthy.

WG should seek to provide land or purchase land for communities to develop their own community gardens as a long term exercise in reducing food poverty. Projects like community gardens provide wider support through outdoor and healthy lifestyle plus building friendships, skills and connections.

• **Does the Welsh Government's approach to tackling food poverty sufficiently balance the need for emergency support with a preventative approach that provides sustainable, long-term solutions? If not, how should it do this?**

As an organisation we see the need for longer term, sustainable models which put control of land, food and resources in the hands of the community as a fundamental necessity.

Planning for any possible future supermarkets must be assessed under a scheme which recognises the impact on health (availability of cheap processed food), impact on local economies and locking in low paid work as a standard rather than providing grants, access to business properties to new businesses which are derived from local food production.