

# The Sustainable Food Cities Award - background



**The Sustainable Food Cities Award is designed to recognise and celebrate the success of those places taking a joined up, holistic approach to food and that are achieving significant positive change on a range of key food health and sustainability issues.**

The Award is open to any place – be it a city, town, borough, county or district – which:

- has an established cross-sector food partnership in place;
- is a member of the Sustainable Food Cities Network; and
- is implementing an action plan on healthy and sustainable food.

There are three tiers to the award – bronze, silver and gold – each requiring an increasing level of achievement in terms of action and outcomes. Details on how to apply for the bronze and silver awards are presented below. The gold award will be launched in 2016. Applications will be reviewed on an annual basis by a national panel of experts. Places achieving an award will be able to use an award badge in their communications and marketing materials.

For each level of the award, a place must meet a number of minimum requirements relating to their:

- 1) **food partnership**
- 2) **action plan** and
- 3) **the extent to which healthy and sustainable food is embedded in local policy.**

As well as meeting these minimum requirements, applicants will have to provide evidence of action and outcomes across six key food issues:

1. Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public.
2. Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food.
3. Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects.
4. Promoting a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy.
5. Transforming catering and food procurement.
6. Reducing waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.

**BRONZE AWARD** – for bronze you must meet the relevant minimum requirements and achieve three points for action/outcomes under each of the six key food issues.

Each award is given for a two year period. If the award holder has not made an application for a higher award by the end of that period, they will be expected to stop using the award and to stop referring to themselves as awards winners in all communications and promotional activity or to reapply for their existing level award.

**If you would like further information on the award or to discuss a prospective application, please contact Tom Andrews: email [tandrews@soilassociation.org](mailto:tandrews@soilassociation.org) or call 07717 802 188.**



# Requirements Relating to Food Partnership, Action Plan and Policy



## Partnership

**Terms of reference for partnership in place with list of member names and organisations.**

**Cross-sector (public sector, business, NGO, community group) membership of partnership.**

**Partnership has met at least 4 times spanning the last 12 months and evidence that meetings are leading to implementation.**

The Middlesbrough Food Partnership is chaired by Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) and was established in 2010 and has since developed a Food Action Plan for Middlesbrough

The Middlesbrough Food Partnership is a multi-agency partnership drawn from organisational structures and agencies which have expertise with the issues pertinent to Middlesbrough's food economy and food related health and well being. The Steering Group consist of members from:

Middlesbrough Council; Public Health, Teesside University, Middlesbrough College, Askham Bryan horticultural college, Middlesbrough Foodbank, Thirteen Group and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens.

A wider stakeholder partnership focussing on delivery of the Action Plan includes representation from community groups, charities, public sector and voluntary sector organisations.

The Food Partnership works closely with The Health and Wellbeing Board and Middlesbrough Council's One Planet Living board – a high level board which oversees Middlesbrough's Environment and Sustainability agenda.

## Plan

**Action plan outlining key objectives for at least one year ahead. It does not matter if the action plan is in draft form, but it should be available for interested parties to read and reflect the six key issues listed previously.**

- The Food Action Plan for Middlesbrough was launched in September 2015. The current published version is available here. The Action Plan is currently being refreshed and will be published spring 2017  
<https://www.menvcity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MEC-Food-Action-Plan-for-PDF.pdf>
- The revised strategy is still in draft form but is included in the appendix
- A balanced scorecard has been developed in conjunction with Teesside University which has scored progress over the last 12 months and is now informing the refresh of the Action Plan, due to be completed spring 2017. A copy of the balanced score card is included in the appendix.

# Requirements Relating to Food Partnership, Action Plan and Policy



## Policy

### Evidence that healthy and sustainable food is 'recognised/referred to' in city policies and strategies.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Middlesbrough headlines a commitment to making healthy lifestyle choices easier and developing actions to achieve Middlesbrough's One Planet Living status.

Middlesbrough Council has been endorsed as a One Planet Living Council and under the One Planet Middlesbrough banner, the Council is working in partnership with MEC to deliver practical actions to bring immediate and long term environmental, economic and social improvements to residents across the town. A significant number of the actions under One Planet Middlesbrough included the promotion of sustainable food, healthy eating, composting and food waste reduction. A summary of progress is here

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/environment-and-public-protection/one-planet-living>

Middlesbrough Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy 2013 – 2023 – states tackling obesity, childhood obesity and promoting healthy lifestyles, as primary actions.

[https://middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health\\_Wellbeing\\_Strategy\\_2013-2023.pdf](https://middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health_Wellbeing_Strategy_2013-2023.pdf)

Mayor's Vision 2025 – pledges continued commitment to food and sustainability via its commitment to One Planet Living.

[http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/mayors\\_vision](http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/mayors_vision)

3

A food charter or equivalent that encapsulates the food ambitions/vision for your city/place has been developed and a range of organisations have pledged/committed to taking specific practical actions to help achieve those ambitions.

3a

A key ambition of Middlesbrough Food Partnership is that the whole community should be given the opportunity to get involved with the creation of a food culture which gives access for everyone to good food which is healthy, locally produced and value for money. Under the brand 'Growing Middlesbrough' a Food Charter has been developed aimed at all businesses, charities and organisations based in the Borough. There is also a People's Food Pledge which is aimed at anyone living, working or visiting the town. <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/about-us/>

### Business Food Charter

Business and organisations are invited to sign up to the charter on Growing Middlesbrough website. Signing up to the Charter gives businesses the opportunity to make a commitment to supporting and achieving a range of ambitions as set out in the Food Action Plan for Middlesbrough. Businesses and organisations can pledge to work towards some or all of the following ambitions:

- **Health and Nutrition** – find help and support to help turn their organisation into a healthy food environment.
- **Local and Sustainable Food** – support initiatives which bring people and businesses together and help increase the availability, consumption and production of healthy affordable food.
- **Reducing Food Waste** – support for businesses to reduce food related waste.
- **Fairness in the food chain and tackling food poverty** – promoting Middlesbrough's Fairtrade programme and ensuring priority is given to tackling food poverty.
- **Education and Skills** – giving everyone the opportunity to learn about food production and how to grow and cook healthy food.
- **Strong local food production and catering** – helping businesses procure and provide healthy and sustainable food.

The Growing Middlesbrough Website has information and advice linked to all the ambitions to help organisations achieve their commitments. Upon signing the Charter the business receives a certificate confirming they are part of the Growing Middlesbrough food network. Since its launch in Summer 2016, seven organisations have signed the Food Charter.

### People's Food Pledge

The People's Food Pledge was launched in September 2015 at the Town Meal and gained over a hundred signatures. The Food Pledge invites everyone living, working or visiting Middlesbrough to get involved with the Food Action Plan's vision of creating a town where local people can eat good quality, healthy food that is easy to buy, offers good value for money and is produced locally wherever possible. By signing the Food Pledge and agreeing to make small changes to their eating and shopping habits, people can link into an online range of support, including advice, links to healthy cooking workshops and horticultural courses, and information about enjoying a more healthy diet, reducing food waste, composting kitchen waste, buying Fairtrade food, buying local food wherever possible and growing some food at home. The Pledge is available on line at the Growing Middlesbrough web page and once signed up – people become part of the Growing Middlesbrough food network and receive newsletters and information about local food events, skills workshops etc.

4

**An identity (brand/logo/strapline) for your city-wide initiative has been developed and is being promoted to the public as an umbrella for all the great work on healthy and sustainable food in your city.**

4a

**growing  
middlesbrough**

The brand 'Growing Middlesbrough' has been developed to promote local sustainable food and the ambitions of the Food Action Plan. The popularity of the brand is growing and is becoming an umbrella for the diverse work being delivered in Middlesbrough around the food agenda. The brand has been developed not just to inform people about the work being done to create a sustainable local food culture in Middlesbrough, but to encourage people to get involved and become a part of the Growing Middlesbrough food movement.

Improving access to local food

Growing Middlesbrough acts as a supportive network of businesses and organisations, retailers and food enthusiasts. Joining the Growing Middlesbrough movement provides:

- membership of a supportive network representing all food sectors;
- a free listing on the Growing Middlesbrough local food website and database;
- free regular events and workshops;
- use of the 'Growing Middlesbrough' logo for POS materials and displays; and
- a quick and easy application process with self-certification.

The Growing Middlesbrough web page <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/> provides users with many links to the work being delivered across Middlesbrough. As well as details of all the food-related events that are taking place in Middlesbrough, including regular Farmers' Markets and the local Orange Pip market, there are details of other specialist food markets and food events such as Local Food Weekends. There are also links to a database of local food producers and restaurants serving locally produced food.

Growing Middlesbrough has developed and produced two cookbooks which focus on healthy eating on a budget using seasonal produce and low cost, sustainable cooking methods of microwave and slow cooker. The recipe books can be downloaded free of charge from the website and details of slow cooker workshops are also available where people can learn about shopping and cooking healthy food on a budget. <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/cooking/>

Growing Middlesbrough's Local Food Directory provides a database of local food producers and restaurant serving locally produced food. There is also a link to the Middlesbrough Fairtrade Directory which lists all the retail outlets for Fairtrade produce in the town as well as a list of cafes and other venues where Fairtrade food is served. <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/food-businesses/>

6

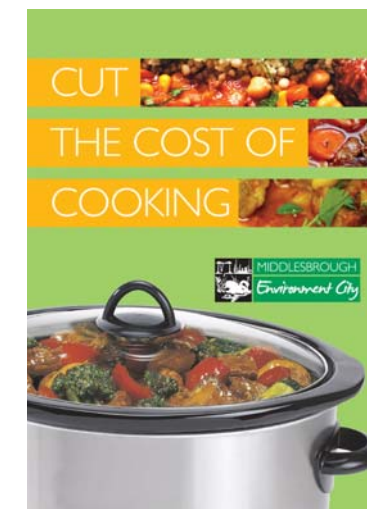
The public have a wide range of free opportunities to see, taste and learn about healthy and sustainable food - e.g. through demonstration, sharing and celebration events such as food festivals and 'town meals'.

6a

**The annual Middlesbrough Town Meal** - is a free event hosted by MEC and includes opportunities to learn about local and sustainable food, community growing and volunteering. The event also includes a free meal cooked using contributed vegetables from local community allotments. Different groups of volunteers come together to cook the meal and give free cooking demonstrations and tasters throughout the day, regular contributors include Middlesbrough College students, a group of ladies from the local deaf community centre, and volunteers from Investing in People and Culture which is a voluntary group supporting refugees and asylum seekers. The event was first hosted by MEC in 2009 and since then the Town Meal has become a favourite community event in the Town with around 6,000 visitors attending each year. As well as providing a free meal the event brings together local food producers and traders, including Fairtrade stalls, and includes family activities, including beekeeping demonstrations, tasting sessions and cooking demonstrations. There is also a produce competition which incorporates a schools vegetable growing competition.

**Microwave and Slow Cooking demonstrations** - Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) hold regular monthly demonstration and taster demonstrations at North Ormesby's weekly market which has been held in North Ormesby since 1850 and has a wide variety of stalls selling food including fruit, vegetables, meat, eggs, fresh fish, and other produce. North Ormesby is one of Middlesbrough's most disadvantaged wards and was recently reported as being one of the most deprived in the Country. The free demonstration sessions help us raise the awareness of good food on a budget and helped us promote some of our other free cooking skills sessions including Slow Cooker Workshops, Microwave Cooking Workshops which help people learn low cost cooking skills with inexpensive ingredients. MEC have attended 4 markets and have given away 187 free Microwave Cookery Books developed by Middlesbrough Environment City.

<https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/cooking/>



6a

**Cultures Cooking Together** –Investing in People and Culture (IPC) is a voluntary organisation which promotes the social wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers. IPC provides vulnerable migrants with access to a safe community hub and avenues to activities including horticulture and cooking. IPC were supported by Middlesbrough Environment City and North Star Housing to develop a community kitchen. A series of free cookery demonstrations was led by the MEC cooking team where people from different cultures came together to cook and share recipes from their own culture. The sessions were held in 2015, six sessions were held with four different groups of people. As a result of attending these sessions two people undertook a Train the Trainer and Food Hygiene Course delivered by MEC and are now delivering cooking sessions within the migrant community in Middlesbrough. The following links celebrate these activities.

<http://www.i-p-c.org/cultures-cooking-together.html>

[http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/local/teesvalley/middlesbrough/13842208.Refugees\\_brought\\_together\\_through\\_cookery/](http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/local/teesvalley/middlesbrough/13842208.Refugees_brought_together_through_cookery/)

Throughout the year MEC also host a series of free workshops, taster sessions and Allotment Open Days as a great way of sharing information about local growing.

Including:

- Introduction to permaculture courses – 15 people attended this course held at Town Farm Allotments
- Beekeeping courses – 8 people attended a three day course held in 2015
- Build and fill your own wooden planter a group of older men attended this course as part of a wider wood working course
- Apple picking days – We partnered with the Friends of Nature's World for the annual Apple Day event, held at the Community Patchwork Orchard in October half term 2016.

Over 100 people came for a visit and helped pick and press apples, made bird feeders and shared their stories of the orchard over a glass of juice. Some people took apples home, and some were donated to the Mary Thompson Fund to feed some of Middlesbrough's most vulnerable residents with free, healthy food.

## Tackling Food Poverty, Diet-related Ill Health and Access to Affordable Healthy Food



1

**A multi-agency partnership - involving key public and voluntary organisations - has been established to assess and tackle the full range of issues that contribute to food poverty in a joined-up strategic way.**

1a

A food poverty conference 'Food for Thought', held in February 2016 at Teesside University, led to the establishment of a food insecurity working group consisting of multi-agency partners, including: Middlesbrough Foodbank, Middlesbrough Council Public Health, Middlesbrough Council Financial Inclusion Group, Citizen's Advice Bureau, primary schools, charities working with refugees and asylum seekers and the homeless and vulnerable.

An action plan is currently being developed, however work is already being done in a number of areas, including:

### **School Holiday Food Provision**

A questionnaire was issued to all schools in Middlesbrough to survey the extent of food poverty experienced by the school and measures currently in place. Of the schools responding, 81% agreed that food poverty, children arriving at school hungry and going hungry during holidays was an issue in their school. As a result, work is underway increase the number of schools are signed up as referral agencies to Middlesbrough Food bank (currently 10). The school holiday provision will also involve more schools during 2017.

### **Hope4Summer**

Local charity Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland has run the Hope4Summer Initiative for the past four years, providing activities and healthy food during the summer holidays in communities where free school meal provision is high. During 2016, Hope4Summer teamed up with the Lunch Box Project provided by Middlesbrough Council Public Health Team and extended the provision to eight locations including churches, community centres and two schools. Last year the project ran for a total of 21 days and around 5,000 meals were provided to families. During the sessions, parents are offered trained to become volunteers for the project, including a food hygiene certificate, adding sustainability to the project. The project will extend to 15 venues including six primary schools in 2017.

### **Slow Cooker Workshops**

Working with MEC, the slow cooker project has been made available to 200 families and individuals during 2016, providing them with the skills to cook simple, healthy recipes. The workshops are offered to foodbank users and people attending can take away a slow cooker, recipe and larder pack at the end of the workshop. The workshop consists of two cooking sessions each involving a cooking demonstration preparing simple, low cost meals that can be cooked using a slow cooker. Adaptations to recipes are discussed and recipes specifically designed for the slow cooker are provided in the booklet 'Cut the Cost of Cooking'.

<https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/cooking/>

### **Foodbank Recipe Cards**

A range of recipe cards has been developed and printed onto wipe clean card. These are then included in food bags alongside all the ingredients needed to produce a healthy, value for money meal. The cards also contain nutritional information and signposting users to other areas of help, eg help with fuel debt, energy advice, welfare rights advice and healthy cooking workshops. The recipe cards are available in all Foodbank distribution centres. During the winter period October 2015 to March 2016, 449 food parcels were distributed, representing 1024 people. Recipe cards are offered with every food parcel and will continue to be offered throughout the year.



## Tackling Food Poverty, Diet-related Ill Health and Access to Affordable Healthy Food



3

**For those in urgent need - and particularly benefit recipients facing delay or suspension in payments - relevant agencies are providing rapid referral to hardship funds and emergency food aid.**

3a

There are several hardship funds available across the town which can be accessed by a variety of agencies including Middlesbrough Citizen's Advice Bureau, Tees Valley Community Foundation Emergency Relief Fund, Mary Thompson Foundation and Middlesbrough Together - all give access to emergency food as a matter of course. There is also a network of provision across Middlesbrough which ensures that at least one hot meal can be had on any given day for those in need. Middlesbrough Council publishes a leaflet detailing all the help available. Further help and information is accessed here and is available from the Growing Middlesbrough web page.

**Middlesbrough Foodbank** uses a voucher system and works with over 100 referral agencies to ensure that people in urgent need receive a 3-day emergency food parcel. Middlesbrough Council welfare benefits service operates a fast-track referral system, whereby telephone referrals can be made to the Foodbank to ensure same day provision. Emergency food parcels are provided for 100-120 people each week.

<https://middlesbrough.foodbank.org.uk/>

Middlesbrough Foodbank works in partnership with the Firm Foundations project (Help in Crisis Lottery funded project) to refer people for extra support and advocacy where needed. Firm Foundations staff are able to support people in accessing relevant hardship funds e.g. Teesside Emergency Relief Fund.

Firm Foundations <http://www.middlesbroughandstocktonmind.org.uk/services-support/firm-foundations.aspx>

Teesside Emergency Relief Fund <http://www.teesvalleyfoundation.org/apply-for-support/apply-for-a-grant/results?authority=1&type=2&submit=>

Middlesbrough has a large population of refugees and people seeking asylum. Hardship provision is coordinated between local charities, with emergency food parcels provided each week by the Mary Thompson Fund <http://refugee.org.uk/node/205> and Open Door North East. <http://www.opendoornortheast.com/> Up to 70 food parcels are provided each week, with advice about housing and other support needs.

North Ormesby Community Hub provide a free breakfast for anyone in need with food donated by the Greggs Foundation.

## Tackling Food Poverty, Diet-related Ill Health and Access to Affordable Healthy Food

5

A range of healthy weight services and initiatives are being provided, from dieting and nutrition advice and support to exercise programmes and facilities.

5a

**New Life New You** - a culturally-sensitive evidence-based lifestyle programme run by MEC offering an eight week programme of physical activity and nutritional advice targeting people from BME communities who are at a higher risk of developing T2D. Upon successful completion participants have access to a further four months of free physical activity sessions with ongoing motivational support and advice. Throughout 2015-2016 more than 90 men and 100 women have accessed the programme.

**Healthy Walk Sessions** - run by MEC to encourage hard to engage groups to take up exercise in a friendly social environment e.g. BME groups. The walks are free for anyone to access and there is at least one walk per day Monday to Thursday each week. We also train walk leaders to encourage people to run their own sessions.

**Extra Life** - Middlesbrough Council's Public Health team has created the Extra Life programme which is a settings-based approach to promoting a healthier lifestyle into organisations and workplaces. The programme works on the basis that people are influenced by their familiar surroundings and so works with organisations to make the environment that people work, live and study in a healthy environment. Current Extra Life partners include: Teesside University, Middlesbrough Council, Middlesbrough College, South Tees NHS Foundation Trust and Thirteen Group (the area's largest social housing provider). The Extra Life Programme gives each organisation an Extra Life toolkit, helping them to identify areas for improvement to enable a healthier workplace environment.

[https://middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health\\_Wellbeing\\_Strategy\\_2013-2023.pdf](https://middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health_Wellbeing_Strategy_2013-2023.pdf)

**Focus on Under Nutrition** - initiated by Middlesbrough Council Public Health and delivered by MEC, this programme engages all care homes in Middlesbrough. The programme is delivered in two ways:

- care home staff are trained to enable them to screen for and identify malnourishment in their residents; and
- a catering course is delivered to train staff in the creation of balanced menu plans which take into account the individual needs of all residents.

To date the Focus on Under Nutrition programme has engaged with 17 care homes in Middlesbrough. Eleven have been fully trained and six are still receiving training. Further Public Health funding has been secured to allow the programme to roll out to the remaining Elderly Care Homes in Middlesbrough.



4

**Community food growing is increasing through increased allotment provision and/or the development of edible landscapes in parks, borders and verges and through city-wide food growing initiatives such as The Big Dig and Incredible Edible.**

4a

Middlesbrough's Urban Farming programme was initiated in 2007 and has since evolved through Middlesbrough's Food Action Plan. Over the past ten years the successes of the programme have seen a steady increase the amount of fresh produce grown and eaten in Middlesbrough. The programme was started in response to a lack of community growing space in the town and prior to this the only growing space was via the oversubscribed council run allotments.

As part of the Urban Farm Programme, MEC developed a training centre at Town Farm Allotments in 2010 to provide training and support to groups and individuals using the various sites. The Town Farm Allotment training centre, which won an OCN award for community innovation in 2014, has provided training for over 1,000 adults in vocational accredited and non-accredited land-based courses including horticulture, food growing, garden design, bee-keeping and machinery safety. There are regular visits from school groups studying food sustainability and work experience placements.

Since the start of the programme a total of eight community growing sites have been developed of which six are now fully sustainable and self managing. The remaining two sites at Easterside allotments are still supported by MEC's horticulture team.

<http://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/local-news/easterside-residents-dig-allotments-3697128>

The Town Farm training centre is based on community allotments which also provide small starter plots to enable growers to develop their skills in a supportive setting before taking on the challenge of a large allotment garden. Facilities on the site include shared facilities, a tool library, and storage.

The following examples demonstrate some of the achievements of the programme:

### **Longford Street Alley**

This is a community-initiated transformation of a formerly derelict and underused space in the shared alley running between two rows of terraced housing. Now in its tenth year of development, planters and pergolas have been installed, together with garden furniture, solar lighting and decorative items. Sustainability has been at the heart of the development – many of the planters contain wall-trained fruit, vegetables and salads as well as plants to attract wildlife.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2397899/Community-transforms-Victorian-passageway-Middlesbrough-homes-oasis-greenery.html>

### **Albert Park Community Growing**

In 2014 a former vehicle depot in Albert Park, one of the town's premier open spaces and a Green Flag park, was identified as a potential community growing project. The site has evolved and now has eighteen growing beds, a poly-tunnel and family-friendly barbecue area with furniture made from pallets. To date more than 76 beneficiaries have been involved in the project from many different cultures including Guinea, Congo, Nigeria, Pakistan, Vietnam, Eritrea, Lithuania, Lebanon, UK and Sudan.

4a

### Peoples Park: Community Growing Garden

Peoples Park is a community allotment in west Middlesbrough, an area with limited allotment provision. Created on derelict land within a housing estate in partnership with MEC, the site comprises over 20 small plot holdings, forest garden and community poly-tunnels. The site is now self-managed by the plot holders who take responsibility for financial and operational management.

In addition, Middlesbrough Council has created two small Council-run allotment sites in the south of the town, areas previously without allotment provision. These feature smaller plot sizes, more appropriate for modern use, where time constraints can make managing larger plots more difficult.

### Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA): Community Garden

MIMA, Investing in People and Culture (a charity supporting refugees and asylum seekers) and MEC have worked together to create a community garden in a high profile public location adjacent to MIMA in Centre Square. It provides opportunities for people to gain new skills, share skills and understand the basics of gardening. Diverse groups work on the site, building community cohesion.

All these community growing projects continue to be supported by the horticultural team at Middlesbrough Environment City who offer free vegetable growing courses at Town Farm Community Allotment – these have been run by the growing team at MEC for the past 7 years attended by over 1000 people. The course covers the basics of vegetable growing, from soil management and crop planning to seed sowing and aftercare as well as fruit tree pruning. People attending the course are a mixture of individuals who want to learn to grow for pleasure and members of other organisations who are learning growing skills to take them back to their own jobs, including staff from Brambles Primary Academy, who now engage all their Y4 pupils in their growing club every year. The school visits the Town Farm Allotment every year for a celebration of their growing successes.

5

Primary and secondary schools are adopting holistic school food education and engagement programmes - such the Food for Life Partnership - including growing, cooking, farm visits and improvements to meals and dining culture.

5a

## Hearty BEATS

Hearty BEATS is a project developed and run by MEC which focuses on improving heart health by embedding a culture of growing and cooking healthy food and taking part in healthy outdoor activities. The activities are aimed at the whole school community including teachers, parents and carers. The project was initially run in five primary schools for two years and is now being offered to all primary schools in Middlesbrough. The project is aimed at all children in years 3 to 6 which includes some 950 children in the five participating schools. As part of the project, a series of cooking sessions have been held in the schools which include train-the-trainer sessions and food hygiene courses aimed at teaching staff and parents. The Hearty BEATS schools have been able to access a variety of resources including a smoothiemaker bike, healthy lunch box sessions and healthy breakfast workshops.

Gardening Clubs and growing spaces were developed at each school. Schools have grown and cooked their own food and have even provided vegetables for the Town Meal. Guided cycle rides which include healthy picnics and den building are also a popular feature. To encourage the Hearty BEATS schools to embed an ethos of healthy cooking and eating in their schools a store of healthy store cupboard ingredients, cooking equipment and recipe cards has been provided for each school, as well as gardening tools, and sowing calendars.

<https://www.menvcity.org.uk/heartybeats>

Hearty BEAT activities are now being rolled out to all primary schools in Middlesbrough.

## Farm Visits

Askham Bryan College provides school visits to Newham Grange Leisure Farm and Stewart Park which demonstrate small and large animal husbandry, growing plants and vegetables and sustainable living.



6

**Tailored training opportunities on food buying, cooking, nutrition and hygiene skills and/or access to community kitchens are being provided for a variety of audiences including young adults, families and the vulnerable elderly.**

6a

Middlesbrough Food Partnership coordinates a wide range of workshops and cooking sessions for a range of audiences, all with the aim of improving skills around buying and cooking healthy low-cost food. However, a core aim of MEC is to make learning as sustainable as possible - many sessions are accompanied by opportunities to undertake food hygiene courses, and 'train the trainer' sessions to give volunteers confidence to continue to run their own sessions in the community. Over the past year the MEC cooking team has delivered 6 Train the Trainer session to eleven cohorts of learners. Many sessions are also accompanied by pack of food and recipes to take and cook at home, and some slow cooker sessions include a free slow cooker.

Cooking on a Budget and Slow Cooker sessions have been held for a variety of audiences including:

**Know Your Money** - a project aimed at improving the financial confidence of young people (16-23). The trainers discuss with the young people the importance of eating a well-balanced diet, who are shown examples of recipes which involve low cost fresh food and then take part in cooking and tasting sessions, gaining a chance to learn hands-on. The project ran for three years between 2013 and 2016 and during that time six cooking on a budget sessions were run each year providing over 100 young people with cooking and food budgeting skills.

**Slow cooker workshops** - Food bank users are invited to join a slow cooker workshop where they can learn some simple, hearty low-cost recipes. They are able to take a bag of store cupboard ingredients away with them alongside some recipes and a slow cooker to enable them to continue to cook healthy meals at home. Funding to run the project was provided by a local industry in Middlesbrough who did not want the project to have any publicity due to the sensitive nature of engaging with food bank users. There was therefore no publicity surrounding these sessions and people were invited onto the course personally by food bank staff during conversations with food bank users. To date MEC have given away over 200 slow cookers at these sessions.

**Sporting Chance** - working in partnership with Ageing Better, MEC have delivered healthy cooking sessions to local Sporting Chance groups. This is a project working with men over 50 to promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging activities and healthy eating. A six week programme of cooking sessions was delivered to each group during which the men were encouraged to get hands on and learn new cooking skills. To date 42 sessions have been run for Sporting Chance reaching around 70 men over the past three years.

3

**Shops, restaurants and markets selling healthy and sustainable food are being promoted to the public using a range of communication tools, such as marketing and branding initiatives, directories, 'restaurants weeks' and food awards.**

3a

Middlesbrough is developing a vibrant and diverse food culture and is working through Growing Middlesbrough to support local food and producers, markets, shops and restaurants/ cafe etc that sell and serve local food. All local producers and food retailers which sign up to Growing Middlesbrough become a member of the online directory and have access to all promotional material and communication tools (including social media, local press and radio as well as posters and leaflets). These have been successfully used to generate interest in the local food economy, advertise the Growing Middlesbrough initiative, and direct people, local business and traders to the online directory.

### Website and online directory

The Growing Middlesbrough website and directory was developed to be a hub for local food – where anybody (from the general public to food purchasers) can find where to buy local food (from directly from growers and producers, to where and when farmers' and community markets are, to which restaurants and shops serve and sell local food). The directory has over 110 business entries to date. The website also houses the Food Action Plan and accompanying material as well as resources, information, news and events, links to training courses and workshops, and a Fairtrade directory.

### Social Media

Twitter @growingmbro has 234 followers

Facebook – Growing Middlesbrough Facebook page – 664 likes

Social media has become an important, and very successful, way of sharing news of food events. For example posts about the Local Food Event held in December generated over a thousand hits.

### Printed Materials

All Growing Middlesbrough printed materials (of posters, leaflets, postcards and cards) make reference to the benefit of buying local has to the local economy, and direct people to the website to find out where they can find local businesses that sell local food. We make efforts to tailor printed resources to each event to gain maximum impact. For example we have designed 'table talkers', window stickers and menu stickers for restaurants and cafes to use during Local Food Weekend events to promote Growing Middlesbrough. These are provided free of charge to help local food outlets promote their local produce and advertise Local Food events.

### Local Media

We have taken part in a number of BBC Tees radio interviews to promote Growing Middlesbrough and the Food Action Plan during the last 9 months, particularly around the Local Food Weekends where we are actively directing people to visit local businesses that serve local food. We also make use of local press and the local Love Middlesbrough magazine (that is distributed to all households in the town) to advertise events and promote Growing Middlesbrough and the Food Action Plan.

[https://issuu.com/lovemiddlesbrough/docs/\\_11\\_lovemiddlesbrough\\_magazine\\_mrtr](https://issuu.com/lovemiddlesbrough/docs/_11_lovemiddlesbrough_magazine_mrtr)



## Promoting a Vibrant and Diverse Sustainable Food Economy

3a

### Conferences

A series of free conferences and events were organised by Middlesbrough Food Partnership in 2015/16 to engage local businesses with the local food economy:

- Food for Thought – a Food Poverty event attended by 60 delegates from across the North East.
- Sustainable Policy event – delivered by a Corporate Procurement Officer from Durham County Council who gave best practice, examples and a step by step guide on how to write and implement a sustainable food procurement policy.
- Extra Life and Better Health at Work Awards – we delivered presentations on the Food Action Plan and Growing Middlesbrough, demonstrating the benefits of and social value of procuring local food to a large number and wide variety of non-food industry businesses. Highlighting how to use the online directory and the benefits to local businesses.

### Local Food Weekends

We launched two Local Food Weekends in 2016 and are running four during 2017. Local Food Weekends give diners the opportunity to sample delicious local food at participating independent food outlets, and raise the profile of these businesses. By buying locally sourced food and drink diners are supporting local growers and smaller scale food and drink producers and boosting Middlesbrough's economy. Nineteen cafes and restaurants are taking part in the next Local Food Weekend in March 2017. Food outlets taking part in the Local Food Weekend receive window stickers, table talkers and other promotional materials to alert shoppers to the event. <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/events/>





5

The council/city is supporting new independent healthy and sustainable food start-up businesses, for example by offering special loan and lease options or through business rates reductions and holidays.

5a

### Baker Street and Bedford Street

Middlesbrough Council have used local urban regeneration plans to revitalise the Town's local food businesses by creating a 'food-quarter'. Two streets close to the town centre which still consist of the traditional 19th century brick buildings have been restored, regenerated and brought back into use. A package of business support has been given to the food and beverage businesses to help them start trading. Ten independent food and beverage businesses have opened on Baker and Bedford Street bringing a distinct local offering to Middlesbrough's food sector:

- Cafe Zim – freshly cooked healthy food options with vegetarian and gluten free options.
- The Baker Street Kitchen – producing locally sourced food.
- The Curing House – restaurant, serves home-made and locally sourced food.
- Bedford Street Coffee House – first retail venture for local coffee roasters Rountons, providing fully traceable organic coffee beans. Rountons work directly with farmers in Tanzania to ensure they get a premium price for their produce and benefit from their trade.
- Songbird Bakery
- Mohujos Mexican Restaurant – a healthy twist on pizza – sourdough, wholemeal and gluten free, woodfired pizzas
- Roast – locally sourced meat
- Cillicake Deli – serving a range of locally sourced food and home cooked cakes

See all the businesses taking part on the following link: <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/events/>

To further promote this area of the Town as a thriving food quarter, Middlesbrough Council introduced an artisan street food market known as the Orange Pip Market in 2016. The monthly market is based on Baker Street and attracted 3,000 visitors on its first day.

### Grown in Middlesbrough Veg Bag Scheme

This scheme was set up with funding through the DWPs New Enterprise Allowance scheme. Mike Martin put forward his idea for using the principles of permaculture, a design system to create sustainable and regenerative processes, in this case focused on agriculture within the community. With this in mind he approached Middlesbrough Environment City who is partially funded by Middlesbrough Council to support him in his search for land to develop a permaculture site. Their One Planet team were so impressed with Michael's idea they offered him a 1/3 Acre site to develop a Community Allotment and Food Forest. The Veg Bag scheme is now up and running and providing affordable bags of fresh locally grown vegetables on a weekly basis.

<http://www.visitmiddlesbrough.com/the-latest/story/2964/bags-of-great-greens-up-for-grabs>

7

Local producers can connect direct with consumers and/or better access wholesale and retail markets through events, on-line tools and cooperative marketing and retailing initiatives.

7a

The Growing Middlesbrough website has a section for to help local producers connect with larger wholesalers via a growers' directory.

<https://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/food-businesses/>

### Orange Pip Market

A new street food market featuring local food traders launched in Middlesbrough town centre in May 2016. Over 3,000 people visited the market on the first day and the monthly market continues to be a busy attraction.

MEC have delivered a series of conferences and events during 2015-16 to help small producers connect with wholesalers and to promote local procurement:

- **Local Food for Local Business** – Launch event for local food procurement in Middlesbrough with over 40 delegates attended. Had variety of speakers, including local producers talking about what increase in business means to them, and examples of the benefits that neighbouring scheme (Durham) is having on local businesses. The event also had a 'meet the producer' section which brought businesses large and small together to discuss procurement opportunities. As a direct result of this event four local businesses developed contracts with Teesside University, Middlesbrough college and a local wholesaler. ? Love Middlesbrough event – presentation on Growing Middlesbrough to local hospitality industry to raise awareness of Growing Middlesbrough to increase buy-in. successful new collaborations as a result of this event include:
  - Holiday Inn Express brought in local supplier of specialist gluten free goods,
  - Jury's Inn now buying local produce.
- **Tees Valley Business Summit** – the Food Partnership has attended this event for the last two years promoting the Growing Middlesbrough directory as a tool for businesses of all sectors to find local suppliers of local food. We tailored advice to delegates, finding out how many brought in caterers for meetings/ events, and changing their supplier of milk to a local dairy.

### Website and online directory

- The Growing Middlesbrough website and directory has been developed to be a hub for local food consumers, producers and purchasers can find where to buy local food. The directory has over 110 business entries to date and this is widely promoted as a platform to connect with producers of local food. Examples of new business created as a result of the Growing Middlesbrough directory:
  - Roslind's Larder, a very small local business producing preserves from fruit grown on the owner's allotment has recently won business from a local restaurant as well as Jury's Inn who now include the preserve on their breakfast buffet;
  - Acorn Dairy, a small organic dairy based in Durham now supply Bedford St Coffee House.

<http://www.gazettelive.co.uk/whats-on/food-drink-news/middlesbrough-local-food-weekend-16-12667219>

1

### **A cross-sector sustainable food procurement working group, network or equivalent forum has been established to bring together procurement officers, caterers, suppliers and other decision-makers.**

Middlesbrough Food Partnership facilitates an informal local food procurement working group which meets regularly to investigate ways of procuring more food from within the Middlesbrough areas and work on the local procurement actions within the Food Action Plan. Members of the procurement working group include representatives from: Middlesbrough Public Health, Middlesbrough Council Procurement officers, Teesside University Procurement Officers, catering manager from Middlesbrough College, as well as representatives from MEC and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens.

The Food Procurement Group drew inspiration from Durham County Council and Durham University, who had worked within European procurement guidelines but still increased the food they had purchased locally. An event was organised in October 2015 that included a presentation from Durham University's John Turner, who shared his experiences, and culminated in a networking session at the end. Several connections were made, but most notably, Alister Wrigley, Middlesbrough College's Commercial Catering Manager, met with local speciality food producer Liz Homan, of Elizabeth's Kitchen. Alister had successfully implemented a Smart Buying Strategy, which enabled savings to be made on particular lines that enabled the college to spend more on specific ranges that might otherwise prove not to be cost effective. Contracting Elizabeth's Kitchen enabled the business to take on new premises and staff, and Middlesbrough College to showcase a local product. The college now also stocks Acorn Dairy's organic milk, the result of another meeting at the event.

The group held another seminar in early 2016, looking specifically at formulating a local food procurement policy. This aim was to encourage more large institutions to apply smart buying and create a marketplace for local and sustainable food. A new logo and branding will also be launched, making Middlesbrough's food more recognisable to its residents and encouraging people to buy locally, boosting the town's economy, improving employment opportunities, and ultimately reducing our carbon footprint.

4

### **Public sector organisations and large private caterers have achieved quality, healthy, sustainable and/or ethical food accreditation, such as the Food for Life Catering Mark, Sustainable Fish, Good Egg and other awards.**

4a

#### **Middlesbrough Council School Catering Service**

Following an audit in Autumn 2016, the School Catering Service was awarded the prestigious Gold Standard Food4Health award. The Service provides Middlesbrough Schools with 11,000 meals every day. In addition, 17 nursery schools within the town also received the Gold Standard award. Food4Health is an initiative developed by Middlesbrough Council to help businesses and organisations reach and maintain a level of healthy and nutritional food within their meal provision. Once Gold Standard is achieved, to ensure that this standard is maintained, establishments are encouraged to incorporate local food, Fairtrade Products and Sustainable Fish into menu plans, and are also asked to participate in the Breast Feeding Welcome campaign.

4a

### Middlesbrough College

The College is committed to sourcing locally-produced food for all its on-site cafes and snack bars and also in the prestigious Riverside Brasserie where food is prepared and served by catering and hospitality students. For example, all milk sold or used at the college is provided by Acorn Dairy – a local organic milk supplier. The College has attained the Gold Standard Food4Health award and is also has Fairtrade status. The College is also signed up to the ExtraLife programme and is working to create a healthy environment for staff and students with a focus on healthy eating, activities and weight management.

### Teesside University

Teesside University was one of the first organisations to sign the Food Action Plan's Business Charter and is working hard to promote sustainable, healthy and locally produced food within the campus. Teesside University received Gold Standard Food4Health award in 2016 acknowledging the work the University is doing to promote healthy and sustainable food within the University food outlets. The University's Sustainably Food Policy commits to procuring local food wherever possible and ensuring that animal welfare standards are adhered to for any animal produce purchased and to insist on red tractor standards as minimum where applicable. The Student's Union are also have Fairtrade Status and are prominent champions of Fairtrade within the town.

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/environment-and-public-protection/advice-and-information/food-businesses/food4health>

7

## Small scale local producers and other sustainable food businesses are better able to access large scale procurement markets via cooperative marketing and supply initiatives and via on-line tendering databases.

7a

The Food Partnership has hosted Meet the Supplier events, and run procurement workshops to help small businesses understand and use local procurement processes. As a direct result of these events local suppliers have been able to access procurement markets in the Town. For example:

- Acorn Dairies, a local organic dairy now supplies milk to Middlesbrough College;
- Rounton's Coffee Roasters, a small local business who source and import and ethically grown coffee beans are now supplying coffee to Teesside University;
- Elizabeth's Kitchen, a small bakery producing gluten free baked goods, also set up a contract to supply Middlesbrough College.

The Growing Middlesbrough website has developed a local supplier directory, which puts local suppliers in direct contact with procurement markets.

<http://www.menvcity.org.uk/gm/food-businesses/>

To build on these successes the Food Partnership will run a Food Summit event in Autumn 2017 where a major element will be a 'Meet the Producers' event. This will be widely publicised within the hospitality sector who have expressed an interest in such an event to meet potential local producers.

4

A food waste collection scheme for homes and/or for restaurants and other catering, retail and manufacturing businesses has been established and is redirecting this waste for composting, energy recovery (AD) or animal feed (where permitted).

4a

### Food Waste Collection Schemes for Restaurants, Businesses and Catering Outlets

Middlesbrough Food Partnership has established a good partnership with Warren's Food Waste Services, a local business based in nearby Co Durham who divert waste food from landfill and turn it into fuel via anaerobic digestion (AD). They are working with many restaurants and companies across the North East and are currently capable of diverting 100,000 tonnes of food from landfill. In 2016, the Partnership hosted presentations from Warren's to local food businesses and has organised two visits to the AD facilities. Warren's have since generated new contracts within Middlesbrough and currently service 135 container lifts per week which weighs in at approximately 13,500kg of unavoidable food waste.

As a result of working with Middlesbrough Food Partnership, Warren's have developed relationships with a broad range of businesses in the town, including:

**Off the Ground Coffee Shop** - a small independent retailer which is a new business due to open in Middlesbrough Centre. The owner of the business is big on sourcing his coffee beans ethically and has adopted a food waste strategy to ensure that he operates the business as sustainably as possible. All of his coffee grounds, tea bags and food waste from plates will go directly to the anaerobic digestion plant to produce energy.

**Teesside University** - have installed food waste into the main campus to service the food locations across the campus. They are currently on track to divert approximately 10 tonnes of food waste over a 40 week period. Warren's are working with the University by taking in engineering students at their facility to assist with course work and work experience.

**Bedford/Baker Street** - the Twisted Lip and Roast are on fortnightly collections. They are on track to divert six tonnes over 52 weeks.

**North Ormesby Market** - Warren's are currently working on this project to help to divert a staggering amount of fruit and veg waste from the market - approximately two tonnes each week - which is currently being incinerated. They are currently trialing a food waste solution which has been proven to be a more cost effective alternative.

### Domestic Food Waste Collection

Middlesbrough Council currently do not have the capacity or resources to introduce a domestic food waste collection service. Efforts are being focussed on promoting home composting which is something both the Council and Middlesbrough Environment City have been very active in promoting for many years, and will continue to do so as it is a valuable addition to One Planet Middlesbrough's ethos of sustainable living.

## Reducing Waste and the Ecological Footprint of the Food System



6

**Home and community food composting is being promoted through awareness and education campaigns and through the provision of composting tools, demonstrations, materials and sites for communities to use.**

6a

Middlesbrough Council provide green waste bins which are collected weekly from residents homes between March and October each year.

For residents wanting to compost at home, low cost compost bins are available from MEC to any Middlesbrough resident and Middlesbrough Council's Environmental Education Officers run a programme of composting roadshows, targeted visits to individual properties, school visits & annual events to promote home composting of kitchen and garden waste.

Middlesbrough Environment City also ran a series of free 'Introduction to Composting' courses during 2016, offering subsidised compost bins and ongoing advice to participants. The course covered the basics of composting, including what could and couldn't be composted, management of a composting system and why composting benefited the environment on a wider scale. An active compost bin was demonstrated, highlighting the processes involved. Participants were also shown different ways of using compost in the garden, such as in making compost teas, mulching bare soils, or making planting mixes, highlighting how it could lead to additional savings for food growers. Additional subsidised compost bins were also made available to residents for composting at home or on an allotment and were given out with guidance leaflets and contact information. These have been promoted by Middlesbrough Council too, through public events and also by offering them to residents requesting additional green garden waste recycling bins. 62 compost bins were distributed.

Community gardens and allotments at People's Park, Saltersgill and Town Farm Allotments all have communal site composting bays which were built by MEC to encourage on site composting and are used during workshops as working examples.

8

Local charities and social enterprises are collecting consumable surplus food and redistributing it to organisations feeding people in need, while working to raise the nutritional standards of the food aid being offered.

8a

**Nunthorpe Community Cafe** is a not for profit Community Interest Company. The cafe is part of the Real Junk Food Project which uses food that would otherwise be wasted to provide healthy, home cooked food. The cafe offers a Pay as You Feel menu twice a week (Tuesday and Thursday) as a way of making healthy home-cooked food available to those vulnerable to food poverty.

**NOSH Healthy Kitchen** restaurant in Middlesbrough town centre gives excess food away free of charge every Wednesday and Saturday evening to the homeless and those in need.

**Community Patchwork Orchard Project** – brings free, fresh and healthy fruit to the people of Middlesbrough by mapping where fruit trees exist that can be freely and safely accessed by local people, and by harvesting and distributing surplus fruit and bringing it to those in need. <https://www.menvcity.org.uk/patchwork/about/> people are already responding to adverts and press releases and are offering their surplus fruit from their own trees in the Autumn.

Greggs are providing free surplus food to a community hub in North Ormesby, which is in one of the most deprived areas of the town. The food is supplied daily and included sandwiches and bread. People collecting the food are also able to access a range of additional support at the Hub including CAB and Welfare advice, Debt advice.

Work is being progressed through the Food Poverty theme of the Food Action Plan to ensure an appropriate referral pathway is available to people gaining access to emergency food. This will ensure they have access to support to improve resilience to food insecurity, for example through welfare and debt advice, energy efficiency advice and cooking on a budget advice.

