



6-month report: June – December 2017

February 2018

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1. SUMMARY

There have been a number of key achievements during the first six months of the programme, including:

- **41** alliances have registered with Food Power
- We allocated financial support to 16 alliances for alliance development and action planning, matched by both cash and in-kind match
- We appointed **4** peer mentors (and a fifth in January 2018)
- We launched the full website, sent **5** newsletters and held **2** well-attended webinars
- We appointed an independent evaluation team and produced a draft work plan

2. ACTIVITY TO DATE

Please see the separate Q2 dashboard for a summary of the programme's outputs to date. The programme is broadly progressing as planned with alliance interest higher than planned, a good level of communications and engagement with the programme and an evaluation partner appointed. There has been a modest delay in the expert by experience work due to later than expected recruitment of staff, but this work is now developing well, with activity taking place beyond the three planned pilots. We have not been able to appoint peer mentors to cover the whole of the UK at this stage, but are taking action to support shared learning in these areas and foster future peer mentors.

2.1 Objective 1: Local alliances have greater skills and capacity to develop coordinated community-based plans to reduce food poverty.

Alliance engagement

41 food poverty alliances registered with Food Power up to 31 December 2017. These represent a healthy spread across the UK given the early stage. We are conscious of some of the gaps in geographical spread, for example in the East of England and Northern Ireland and are taking action to foster alliance development in these areas. Registered alliances are at variable stages of development from very emerging alliances to more established alliances. There therefore seems to be a lot of opportunities for alliances to share learning and support each other.

Financial support for alliances

16 alliances have been offered up to £10,000 to support alliance development and two further alliances have been



offered £1,000 for exchange visits. Please see [here](#) for a list of these alliances. There is a 37% secured cash match to the Food Power contribution and 59% in kind match, so a total of 96% match. We think this is a healthy contribution from applicants and partners and is higher than we had forecast.

Activities cover a broad range but are summarised in the table below. We have also produced a more detailed grid of what each alliance is working on so that we can connect up alliances working towards coming goals. For example, we will be producing some written information and running a webinar on assessing and mapping need.

Objective	Examples of planned activities
Developing the alliance and its strategy/ food poverty action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops, conferences, consultation events • Research and analysis to assess, map or survey local needs and activities • Targeted recruitment of further alliance members • Access peer mentoring and visit other alliances
Including those affected by food poverty in strategic discussions and/or meeting the needs of specific groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation events, interviews, surveys, conversation cafés, tenants’ forums • Targeted work with groups including children living in poverty, BAME groups, people who are vulnerably-housed • Engagement with policy makers to ensure the views and voices of those affected by poverty are heard
Exploring specific areas of need and potential interventions within their strategy/ food poverty action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare advice, preparing for the impact of Universal Credit, promoting the Living Wage • The Healthy Start scheme, Free School Meals uptake • Pantries, food clubs, community box scheme, holiday food provision

Alliances will also be exploring a number of aspects of interest across the network such as working with diverse faith communities, working across rural areas and ‘mainstreaming’ food poverty as an issue across policies. Their activity will be written up and shared across the network.

We are delighted too that you're keen to hear about the interfaith dimension of the network.
Magdalen Lambkin, Interfaith Glasgow

Within the total of awards above, the panel also ring-fenced an award of up to £10,000 for a Northern Irish alliance (as there were no applications from Northern Ireland in this round). Starting in early 2018 we will develop and implement a work plan working with the Northern Irish peer mentor to support more NI alliances to establish themselves and develop and be in a position to apply for Food Power financial support. From the consultation and subsequent conversations, having a peer mentor on the ground should be what primarily prompts further developments, but the central Food Power team will also play a role; we will also engage local alliances in the various ways to get involved in the programme and visit.

Peer mentoring and regional learning networks

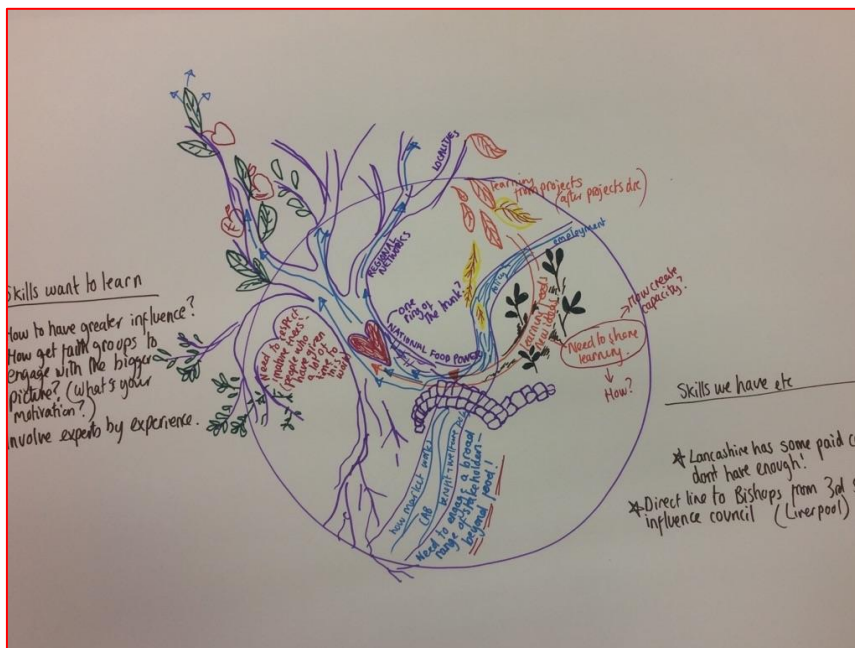
We [appointed four peer mentors](#) to cover the Midlands, South East England & London, Wales and Northern Ireland (and a fifth peer mentor was appointed in January 2018). A two-day induction is scheduled for January 2018.



The peer mentors will then agree a work plan incorporating both one-to-one peer mentoring and facilitating the group-based regional learning network. This work plan will be tailored to the needs of each region or nation. For example, in Northern Ireland, it will include outreach to emerging networks to engage with the programme. Due to a slower registration rate in these areas, a second application round for Scotland and the South West took place in December; two applications were received for Scotland with a decision made in January 2018.

We are forming regional learning networks in regions where we have not appointed peer mentors. The North West network met in December and meetings will take place in North East & Yorkshire and the South West in early 2018, and potentially the East of England. These will take place regularly and will provide ongoing peer support & shared learning. We hope alliances build the relevant skills, knowledge and confidence to apply to be peer mentor for these regions in year two.

The first meeting of the regional learning network was really useful to get a feel for what other areas are doing and the scope for sharing best practice and concerns. Having affirmation from our peers about our work, that we can share openly our challenges, and that there will undoubtedly be ideas and approaches that we can embed within our own alliances. Gillian Beeley, Together Lancashire



Notes from the Northwest peer learning set meeting in December 2018

2.2 Objective 2: Local alliances are able to apply learning from other projects or initiatives from across the UK to enhance their own ability to tackle household food insecurity locally.

In the first 6 months of the programme we created a framework to connect network members with each other to facilitate peer learning, as well as bring in other knowledge to share. Our newsletter has grown to 426 subscribers and is sent out at the start of each month, including updates from Food Power, our membership and other relevant research, events, news and funding. Open rates remain high, averaging close to 45% per newsletter. Additionally,



we've grown our Twitter account to 548 followers. Our [new website](#) was launched at the start of December, which includes a map of participating alliances, news items on food poverty, resources for members and the public and information about how to get involved. We've also developed an online members' area for alliances to apply for financial support, report on activities, update their alliance details and map their work.



The Food Power website home page

In addition we hosted two webinars in the autumn. The first, *What is Food Power and how could you be involved?*, included information about the new programme, introduction to staff and updates on how alliances could apply for financial support on developing their strategic work. It was held in November with 43 attendees. The second webinar was held in December, called *Involving Experts by Experience: Empowerment & Participation*. It focused on engaging experts by experience and included guest speakers Claire Pettinger (Food Plymouth CIC) and Hannah Pitt (Cardiff University) who shared learning about community participation and evaluation. It was attended by 30 people. All our webinars are recorded and available on the Food Power resources web page. It has been notable how much alliances have valued making contact with each other via the chat function, swapping examples of practice and contact details.

Thank you for hosting a great webinar this week, it was really useful to hear about the work in Moray and Brighton & Hove and it confirms that Croydon is going in the right direction! Chantell James, Croydon Council



Meet your hosts



• Ben Pearson, Food Power Empowerment Programme Officer



• Dr Clare Pettinger, University of Plymouth



• Dr Hannah Pitt, Cardiff University

Why involve Experts by Experience?

- Lack of voice for people experiencing food poverty and hunger within the sector and more widely within society
- Individuals with direct experience of food poverty play an active role in identifying & advocating for long term solutions to the issues they face
- Projects, support & interventions are better designed to help the people they are intended to help



Photo dialogue activity



Voices from experience - community researchers

Degree of involvement	Type of engagement	Outputs	Benefits
Light	Informing and consulting e.g. group discussion with researchers to inform research plans and ensure they reflect local experiences	Revised research plan	More appropriate design reflecting voices from experience and local context
	Shadowing researchers e.g. local alliance staff partner with researcher for case study data collection	Case study data Research training through practice	Participants gain experience and insight to evaluation processes
Medium	Peer interviewing e.g. beneficiaries record video vox pops	Audio-visual data Training by researchers	Participants gain training and experience in research skills Participants tell their stories in their words
	Research skills capacity building e.g. training sessions in interviewing	Training by researchers	Participants gain training and experience in research skills
Intensive	Independent community research e.g. volunteers design and deliver data collection, consulting with researchers as necessary	Co-produced research plan and data collection	Empowers participants

Slides from the *Involving Experts by Experience* webinar

We agreed to hold the first Food Power conference alongside the Sustainable Food Cities conference; the Food Power conference will take place the day before or day after the SFC conference. Representatives from the Independent Food Aid Network, A Menu for Change and Feeding Britain will also be invited to attend.

2.3 Objective 3: Individuals with direct experience of food poverty play an active role in identifying, and advocating for, long-term solutions to the issues they face.

Applications for financial support for alliances to deliver three pilots projects which will involve 'experts by experience' opened in December. This was accompanied by the second webinar mentioned above which has driven interest in the pilot financial support. Alliances have until the 26 January to apply to demonstrate their interest, we will then visit a longlist with successful pilots confirmed in March 2018.

Meetings with alliances in Blackburn with Darwen and Preston, along with North West Regional Learning network took place to identify how alliances can embed experts by experience into their alliances, both for those who have received funding and those who hope to apply for future funding.

Alongside the development of these pilots, we have also had initial discussions with three alliances (Blackburn with Darwen, Hull and Shropshire) on how they will embed experts by experience into their alliance as part of the alliance development work supported by the financial support. These three alliances will be supported alongside pilot projects to ensure those with lived experience are empowered to have influence at a strategic level.

We held a webinar on *Involving Experts by Experience: Empowerment & Participation*, which introduced our approach



and showcased best practice. This acted as a catalyst for enquiry on the launch of financial support for pilot projects.

2.4 Objective 4: Local food poverty partnerships are better able to monitor, evaluate and improve the impact of their interventions on both acute and long-term household food insecurity.

We have appointed a team from the Sustainable Places Research Institute at Cardiff University as the external evaluator for the programme. Dr Hannah Pitt is the project manager and the project is overseen by Prof. Jon May and Prof. Kevin Morgan. The team have produced a draft work plan to be finalised in January 2018 (see separate document). The evaluation will include an annual survey of alliances, deep dive studies of 2 local areas, review and production of local evaluation tools and supporting community researchers. The team will produce an evaluation report at the end of each year. The final report will be produced by 30 June 2021. We did submit a joint application for a PhD studentship to support the unfunded elements of the evaluation. This application was unsuccessful, but there is a further opportunity to apply in February 2018.

2.5 Working with other networks and programmes

We have made specific efforts to coordinate, and where appropriate collaborate, with the UK Food Poverty Alliance, A Menu for Change, End Hunger UK, the Independent Food Aid Network, Feeding Britain and Sustainable Food Cities. Activity to date has included:

- Sharing knowledge of emerging networks around the UK
- Supporting 3 meetings of the UK Food Poverty alliance and giving attendees an opportunity to inform Food Power
- Agreeing a joint working protocol with A Menu for Change
- Suggesting updates to the Sustainable Food Cities [food poverty resources pages](#)
- Linking to the other networks from the Food Power resources page
- Inviting all networks to be involved in the Food Power conference

3. LEARNING SO FAR

We have noted some key learning from the programme so far and are developing some responses. These include:

- As discussed during the consultation for the programme, alliances are generally very keen to learn from each other. We have seen this in a number of ways, including during the online chats during our webinars, within alliances applications for financial support, requests for peer mentoring and the enthusiasm for the regional learning network meetings.
- Unsurprisingly there is high demand for some of our financial support. We have therefore proactively sought to engage with alliances which are unsuccessful in receiving financial support, ensuring that the programme still has an offer of support for them.
- Peer mentoring or other proactive activity will be essential to foster more alliances in some parts of the country, such as Northern Ireland and the East of England.
- Webinars have proved to be an effective way to engage alliance representatives, with active engagement during



and following the webinars. Alliances have generally responded well to the invitation to share their work via a webinar. We plan to explore how this web-based tool could also support other meetings, such as with peer mentors of thematic learning sets. We are however alive to the fact that some are not accessing the webinars so a diversity of communication channels and resources remains important.

- There would be a benefit to providing further information on what is meant by ‘experts by experience’ and their empowerment at a strategic level. We will create an ‘Involving experts by experience ladder of participation’ diagram which should help alliances to visualise the different levels of participation, what capacity is likely be required and how we can support them to engage with this throughout the programme.

4. PLANNED ACTIVITY FOR YEAR 1 (UP TO 30 JUNE 2018)

This grid covers key activities expected to take place in Q3 and Q4.

	Jan–March 2018 (Q3)	April–June 2018 (Q4)
1. Alliance development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliances initiating alliance development activities • Peer mentor induction and agreement of work plans • Peer learning network meetings • Produce a briefing on measurement and mapping of food poverty and the local response • Food Power presenting at Fairer Moray Forum’s <i>Tackling Poverty - Building a Fairer Moray</i> conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliances initiating/ continuing alliance development activities • Peer learning network meetings
2. Sharing and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel awards ‘maximising family income’ financial support • Full launch of ‘maximising family income’ theme • 3 webinars (annual theme, mapping and measurement, 365 days nutrition) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate ‘maximising family income’ learning set • 1 webinar (local evaluation) • National conference (26- 27 June)
Experts by experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visits to develop pilot proposals • Produce ‘Involving Experts by Experience Ladder of Participation’ diagram • Panel awards pilot financial support • Supporting alliances which have included a focus on experts by experience within their alliance development plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and supporting pilots as well as other alliances with a focus on this



Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate work plan • Produce draft evaluation toolkit • Consult alliances on toolkit at regional learning set meetings • Apply for a PhD studentship to support the unfunded element of the evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise first edition of evaluation toolkit • Run annual survey • Conduct 2 'deep dive' case studies
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5. CONTACT DETAILS

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