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ccri
countryside and community research institute

Local Food

Final Evaluation Report

Full Report March 2014

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1. Introduction

This is the final report of the evaluation of Local Food. It examines the extent to which the programme has addressed its over-arching aim and five main themes (see below). The report concludes by reflecting on how well the programme has achieved what it set out to do, and makes some recommendations for the future of local food projects. It builds on the report produced to celebrate the mid-point of the programme in October 2012, entitled 'More than just the veg: growing community capacity through Local Food projects'[1], and should be read in conjunction with it.

1.1 Report Structure

Section 1	The remainder of section 1 explains the background and aims of Local Food, as well as setting out the evaluation research brief and approach.
Section 2	Section 2 then provides details of the Local Food programme in terms of its emergence, the number of projects funded, the activity 'types' funded, the geographical spread of the grants awarded, and a breakdown of the projects awarded according to their main 'theme'.
Section 3	Section 3 elaborates the quite complex methodological approach developed for this evaluation, necessitated by its long-term nature and the large number of projects supported by Local Food.
Section 4	Section 4 then sets out how the evaluation of the programme has been conceptualised in terms of building three forms of 'capacity' -- material, personal and cultural -- which in turn are underpinned by five dimensions of 'social innovation'[2].
Sections 5-8	Sections 5-8 form the heart of the report in setting out the results and findings from the evaluation.
Section 9	Section 9 reflects upon the findings and the process of conducting this evaluation over five years.
Section 10	Section 10 sets out its key recommendations. There are then a number of appendices which are referenced, as appropriate, within the text.

1.2 Background to the funding programme

Launched in November 2007, as part of the Big Lottery Fund's 'Changing Spaces' programme, Local Food is a £59.8 million[3] programme that distributes grants from the Big Lottery Fund to a variety of food-related projects. It was developed by a consortium of 17 national environmental organisations that initially got together in July 2002 to discuss the possibility of bidding for Big Lottery funds.

This consortium included: the Black Environment Network; BTCV; Community Composting Network; FareShare; Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens; Garden Organic; GreenSpace; Groundwork; Learning Through Landscapes; National Allotment Gardens Trust; Permaculture Association (Britain); Soil Association; Sustain; Thrive; and the Women's Environmental Network. The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) is the award partner for the Big Lottery Fund and has been responsible for the programme's delivery. Local Food opened for applications in March 2008 and the programme will run until December 2014, with all projects having to be completed by March 2014.

The main aim of the Local Food programme has been to 'make locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities'. It has encouraged the development of projects working towards five main themes:

1. enabling communities to manage land sustainably for growing food locally;
2. enabling communities to build knowledge and understanding and to celebrate the cultural diversity of food;
3. stimulating local economic activity and the development of community enterprises concerned with growing, processing and marketing local food;
4. creating opportunities for learning and the development of skills through volunteering, training and job creation; and
5. promoting awareness and understanding of the links between food and healthy lifestyles.

Consequently, key elements of the Local Food programme include local food, community enterprises, economic activity, health and education/learning. Projects are funded with the intention of improving local environments, developing a greater sense of community ownership, and encouraging social, economic and environmental sustainability. In this sense, Local Food projects are being used as a vehicle for facilitating these wider societal changes to take place, with the funding from Local Food intended to act as a catalyst and enabler for positive change within communities.

1.3 Research brief

In 2009, RSWT commissioned the University of Gloucestershire's Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), together with f3 The Local Food Consultants, to undertake an evaluation of the Local Food programme, which has run from 2009 to 2014. The purpose of this evaluation has been to conduct an on-going assessment of the programme in its entirety that addresses six main areas:

1. the administration and management structure of the programme, including the adviser function;
2. details of the projects funded;
3. how effective the delivery has been;
4. the lasting impacts of the programme;
5. the identification of any lessons that should be learnt from the programme; and
6. recommendations for the future.

1.4 Research approach taken

Due to the number of projects involved (509), coupled with the timescale of the evaluation, it has been important to ensure an effective and on-going dialogue between CCRI/f3 and the management team of the Local Food programme at RSWT. As such, an active learning approach has been adopted that allowed for flexibility and the iterative development of the evaluation methodology and rationale.

This has included regular meetings between the two teams and the production of a range of reports during the course of

Schools enrolled on the programme are, amongst other things: growing their own food; organising trips to farms; sourcing food from local suppliers; and holding community food events.

the evaluation that have been fed back to RSWT and the Local Food Steering Group. It has also led to two further pieces of evaluation work being commissioned by RSWT, in addition to the original evaluation brief. The first sought the views of the Steering Group, the Selection Panel and the External Assessors in relation to the functioning of the Local Food programme. This report was always intended to be an internal document that would help to build an overall evaluation picture, rather than be publicly available; its findings are incorporated into this final report.

The second provides an evaluation of additional funding made available by the Big Lottery Fund to Local Food projects for 'Supporting Change and Impact'. The Supporting Change element of this additional funding was designed to enable projects to better review what they had achieved, while the Supporting Impact element sought to further support those projects that had made an outstanding difference to the lives of people most in need and which had clear plans to achieve lasting benefits. Evaluation of these two latter funding elements is considered within the results section of this report.

RSWT also commissioned the application of a Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis of Local Food. While a distinctive and separate piece of work from the main evaluation, it drew upon the case study work conducted as part of the ongoing evaluation, with its findings providing an additional and complementary perspective on the Local Food programme. The key findings from the SROI research are included as a separate section within this report, together with a link to the main report produced as a result of this work.

2. The Local Food programme

Renewed interest in local food emerged in the UK during the 1980s and 1990s, since when the local food movement has grown considerably. This has been manifest, for example, in the growing interest in box schemes, community orchards, city gardens, farmers' markets, and community supported agriculture. Many of the groups involved in these activities originated via the Soil Association's Food Futures Programme, as well as the actions of Local Food Links groups. More recently, the Transition Town movement has grown in importance, one of whose key tenets is the development of local food and local food networks. In some cases, these initiatives have been expressly about producing more food, but many are also concerned with developing community capacity and improving access to local, seasonal food.

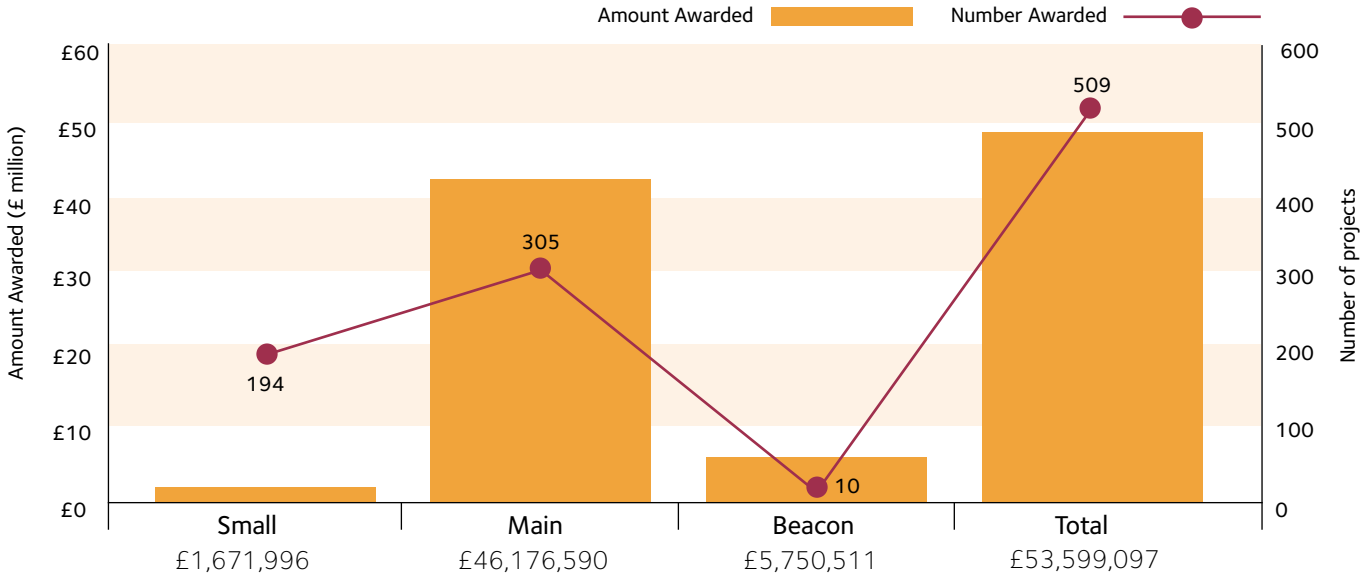
In recent years, attempts to increase the networks associated with local food have been supported by a series of initiatives, each funded by the UK's Big Lottery Fund. These include the Food for Life Partnership (2008-), which is a network of schools and communities across England that aims to reconnect children with where their food comes from.

Schools enrolled on the programme are, amongst other things: growing their own food; organising trips to farms; sourcing food from local suppliers; and holding community food events. More broadly, the partnership works to transform food culture and inspire families to grow and cook food. Another example is Making Local Food Work (2007-2012), which aimed to help people to take ownership of their food and where it comes from, as well as provide advice and support to community food enterprises, such as community supported agriculture, farmers' markets and food cooperatives, across England. And a third example is the Local Food programme, which was launched in 2007 with the principal aim of making locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities. Sections 2.1 to 2.5, below, provide an overview of the key grant statistics for the programme.

2.1 Key facts and figures - Local Food grants

Three sizes of grant have been available through Local Food, ranging from 'Small' grants (£2,000 to £10,000) to 'Main' grants (£10,001 to £300,000) and what are termed 'Beacon' grants (£300,001 to £500,000). A total of 509 projects have been funded through the Local Food programme. Figure 1 shows both the number of grants and the amount of money awarded for each grant size category.

Figure 1: Projects awarded



Within these three overarching categories, 17 distinct activity types have been funded (see Figure 2); these have been conflated in the evaluation to three main groups for ease of analysis and for sampling purposes[4]:

- **Enterprise,** which includes box schemes, catering, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), farmers' markets, food co-ops, redistribution of food, and social enterprise.
- **Community Growing,** which includes allotments, city farms, community food growing, community gardens, composting, and community land management.
- **Education and learning,** which includes celebrating food cultures, education and learning, sharing best practice/networking, and activities on school grounds.

Figure 2 shows that a large majority of the projects are concerned either with growing food or education and learning. However, care is needed in terms of placing too much emphasis on the specifics of this figure, because projects were able to 'self-label' what their main activity type was on their funding application forms. With hindsight, RSWT recognises that this was not ideal in that it introduced a degree of subjectivity into the definitions, complicating their comparison.

It has also meant that a very high proportion of the projects (more than 30%) are labelled as 'community food growing', when some of them might instead have been identified as city farms or community gardens, for example. Nevertheless, despite these notes of caution, it is helpful to identify that approximately 12% (60) of the projects can be categorised as 'enterprise', receiving £6,120,696 of funding; 48% (243) as 'community growing' with £28,524,237 of funding; and 40% (206) as 'education and learning', with £18,954,164 of funding (See Figure 3).

Figure 2: Activity types funded

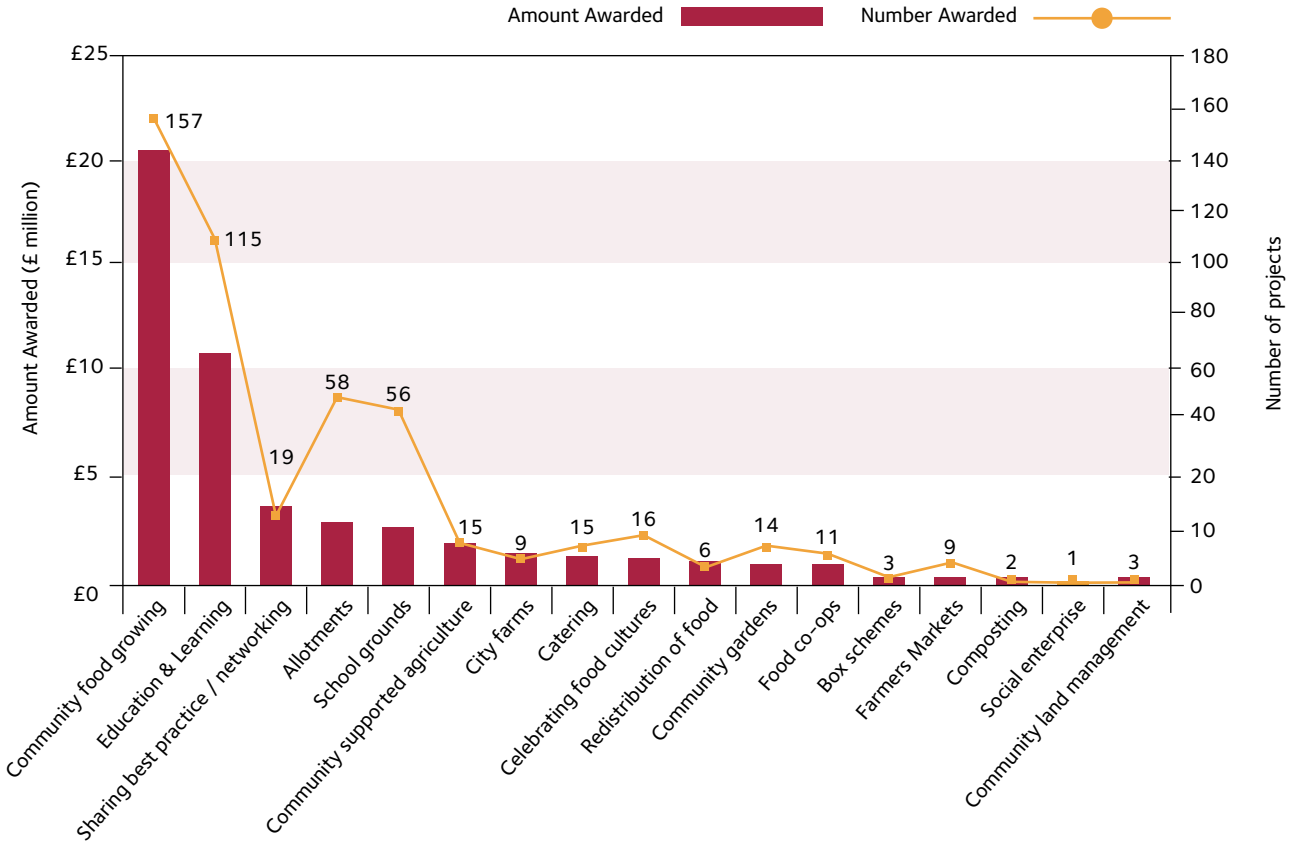
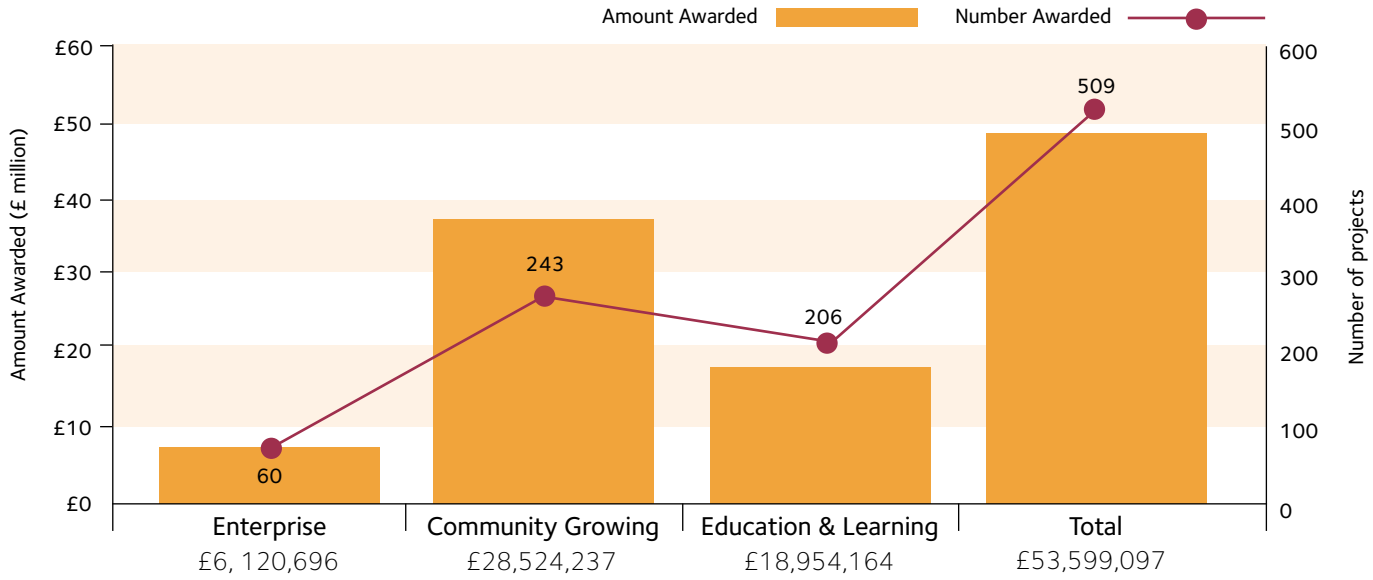


Figure 3: Activity types grouped



> Grants have been awarded on a regional basis within England, according to the nine main planning regions, and some projects have also been multi-regional.

2.2 Key facts and figures – Local Food award distribution by theme

This balance of activity types is to a considerable extent mirrored by the distribution of projects by main theme[5] (see Table 1). This shows that community food growing (theme A) was identified by nearly one third of the projects, with a further 46% associating themselves with education and learning (themes D and E) in some way.

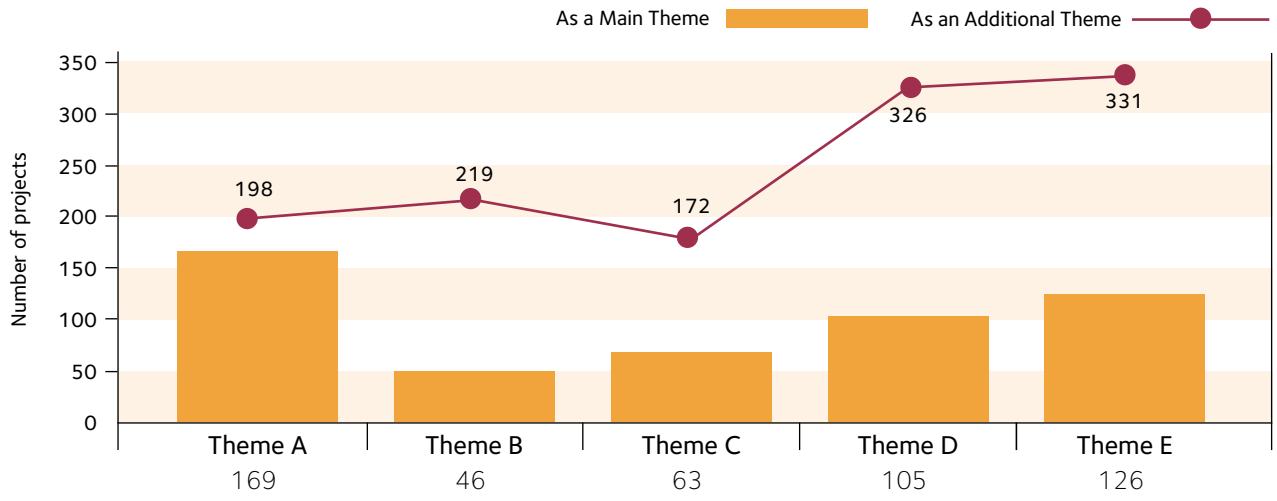
As with the 'activity types' identified above, the number of projects choosing enterprise (theme C) was relatively low (12%) and theme B (cultural diversity) was chosen the least often (9%).

However, identification of the main theme is only part of the story, as applicants were also asked to identify one or more additional themes that their project would address. These are displayed in Figure 4, which shows that themes A, B and C were all identified as 'additional themes' by more or less the same number of projects, but that themes D and E were identified substantially more often, suggesting that applicants recognised the significance of overall learning processes as an important benefit of their projects.

Table 1: Awarded projects by main theme

Theme		No. of projects	%
A	To enable communities to manage land sustainably for growing food locally	169	33%
B	To enable communities to build knowledge and understanding and to celebrate the cultural diversity of food	46	9%
C	To stimulate local economic activity and the development of community enterprises concerned with growing, processing and marketing local food	63	12%
D	To create opportunities for learning and the development of skills through volunteering, training and job creation	105	21%
E	To promote awareness and understanding of the links between food and healthy lifestyles	126	25%
		509	100%

Figure 4: Awarded projects by both main and additional themes identified



2.3 Key facts and figures – Local Food award distribution by organisation type

Looking at the types of organisation responsible for running these projects, by far the most common were registered charities, followed by a range of community groups and schools, with these three groups making up nearly 90% of the total projects supported (see Figure 5, below). It is significant that of the remaining organisations, a further 6% were focused on their own locality, with only 4.5% being companies limited by guarantee.

These figures clearly highlight that the projects supported by Local Food have almost invariably been instigated by the community and voluntary sector in order to develop the capacity of the communities involved. Furthermore, they can be understood as coming from the bottom up, rather than being imposed from the top down.

2.4 Key facts and figures – Local Food award distribution by geography

Grants have been awarded on a regional basis within England, according to the nine main planning regions, and some projects have also been multi-regional. Four key points can be made about the data presented in Figure 6. First, London dominates the regional pattern of uptake, with 89 projects (and 61% approval rate) worth just over £10.25 million.

Secondly, four regions have over 50 projects each (worth from £4.8 to £6.3 million): two of these are in the north (North West and Yorkshire and Humberside) and two are in the south (the South West and South East). Thirdly, the regions with the least uptake have been the Eastern and East Midlands regions (with 30 and 31 projects respectively). Yet, as demonstrated in Figure 9, the Eastern region recorded an approval rate (54%) that is bettered only by London and multi-regional projects (56%).

Fourthly, there are just 10 multi-regional projects, which are worth £2.64 million and are dominated by the education and learning category. In reflecting on this pattern of grant awards, it is important to remember that the programme was demand-led by the applicants themselves and that there was no regional allocation specified at the outset of the programme. In this respect, the quality of a project's application for funding was considered to be more important than its geographical location.

Figure 5: Projects awarded by organisation type

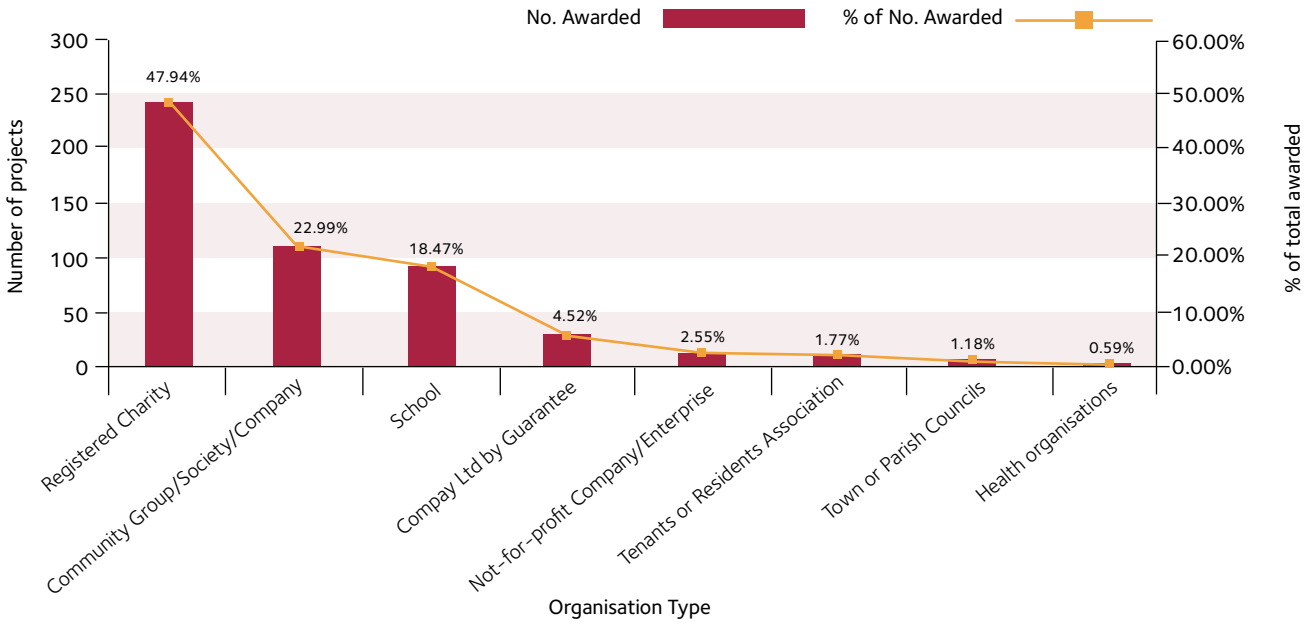
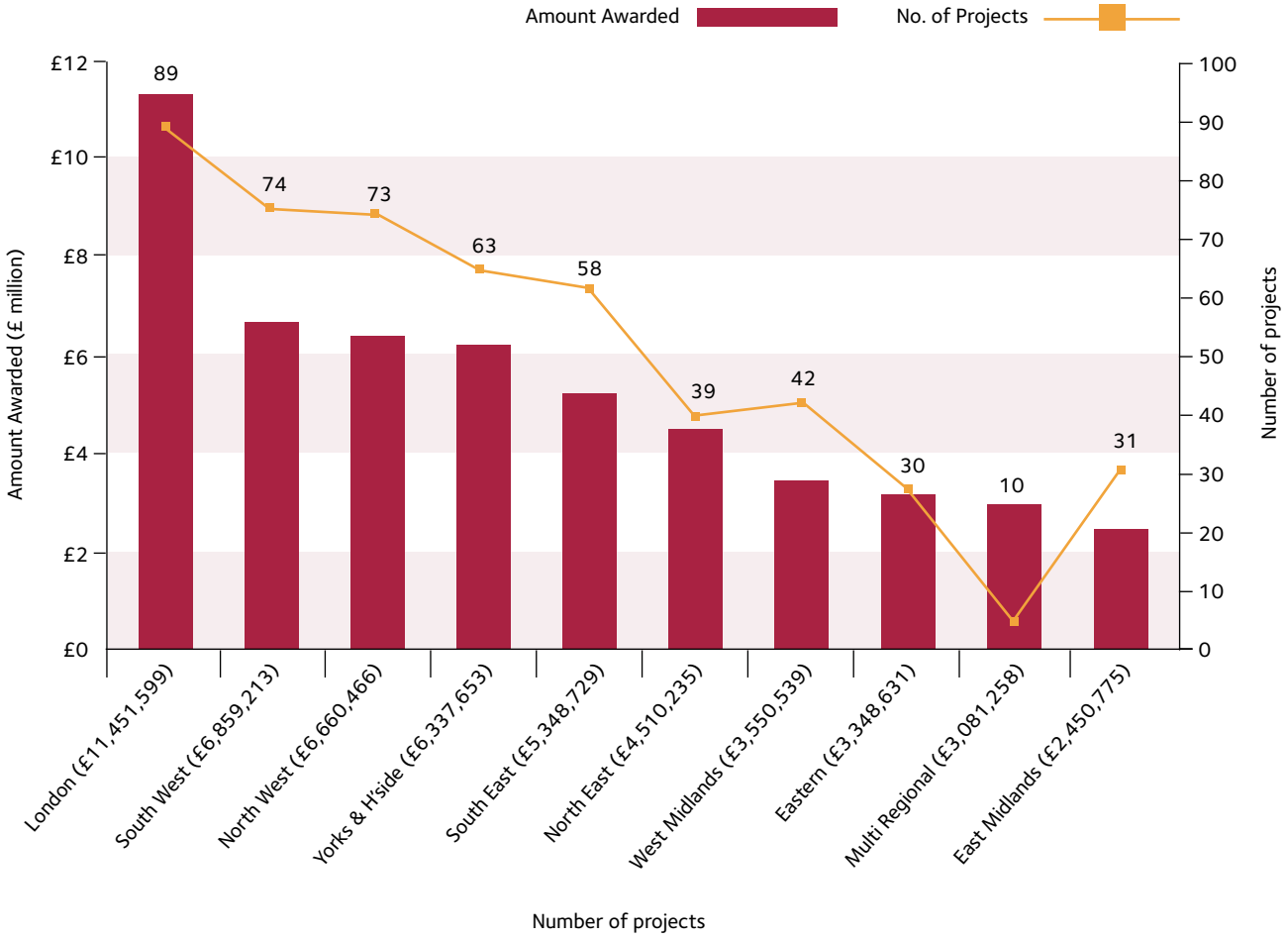


Figure 6: Geographical spread of grant awards



2.5 Key facts and figures – visual images of Local Food award distribution

The following maps depict the distribution of funded projects. This is in terms of the amount of money awarded; activity type; overall deprivation ranking; and whether the projects are in urban or rural areas (according to European rural-urban classification data).

The overall deprivation ranking shows that more than 65% of the projects awarded by Local Food are located within the 50% most deprived areas of England, with less than 13% being in the least deprived 25%. In relation to the rural/urban classification map, it is interesting to note that more than 75% of the projects funded are in urban locations.

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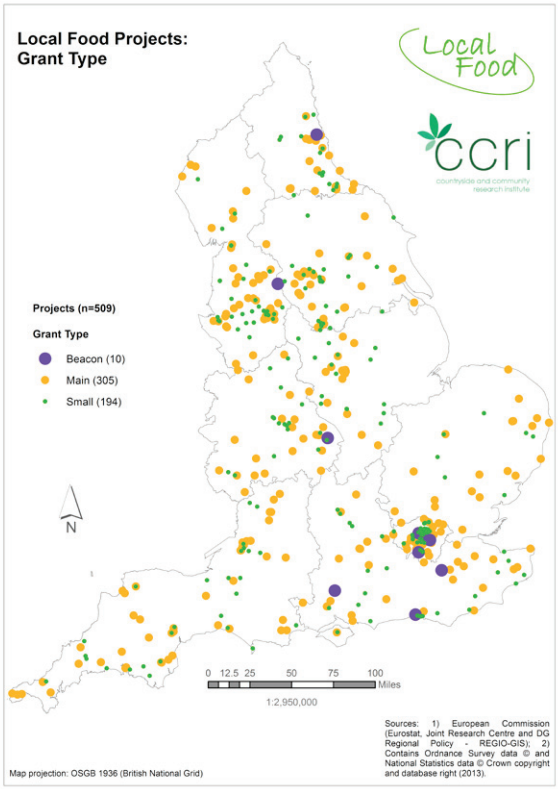
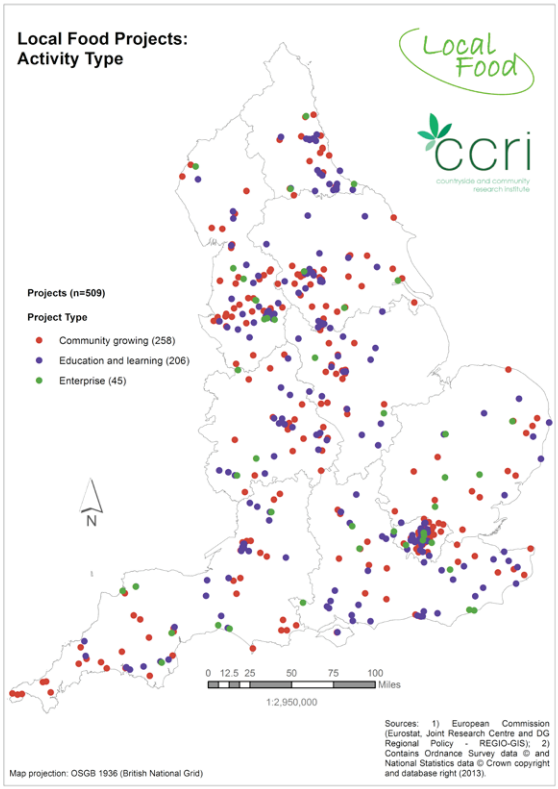
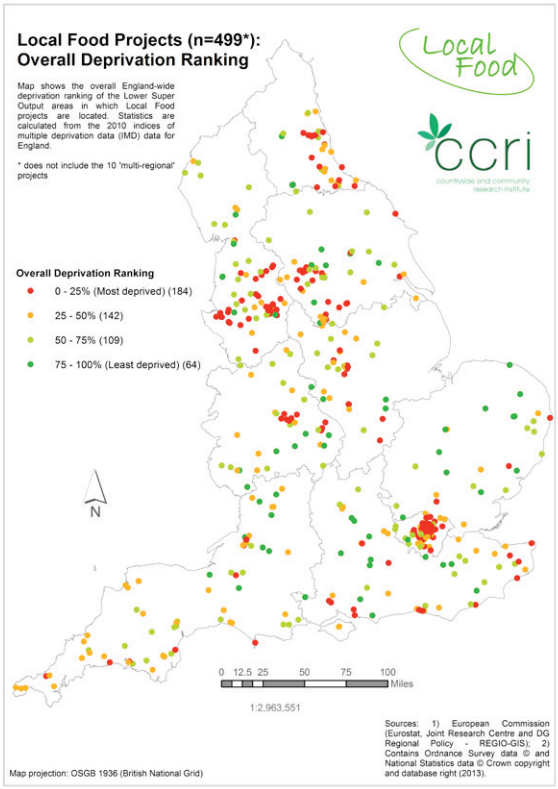
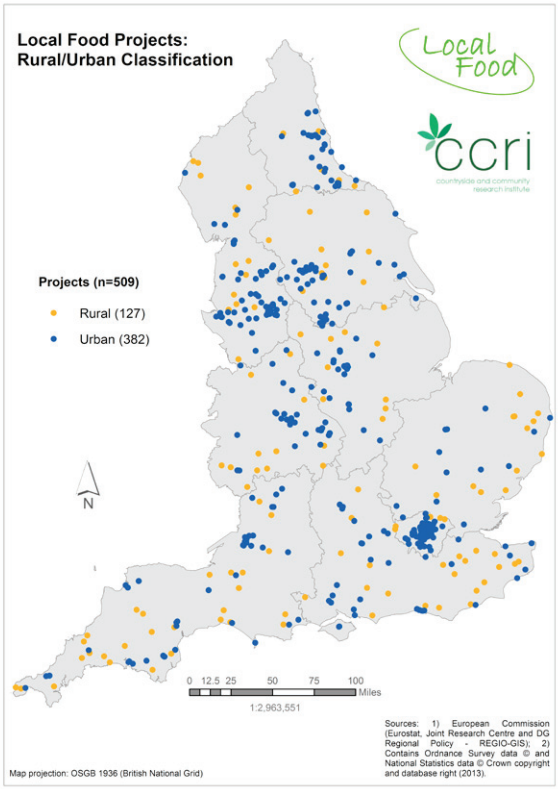








3. Evaluation approach

The iterative, complex and multi-phase methodological approach evolved as the evaluation of the Local Food programme proceeded between 2009 and 2014. In an evaluation of this nature, involving such a large number of individual projects, it was important to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. While the former helped to provide the context, scale, scope and an initial insight into the success of Local Food, the latter enabled a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of the human-centred factors that are likely to have a significant impact on the legacy of individual projects and on Local Food as a whole.

The use of a mixed methods approach allowed data relevant to the evaluation to be collected in three main ways. First, data were gathered as part of the application process by which prospective projects sought to access funding from Local Food. This provided detailed information on such factors as the numbers and types of project supported; the geographical spread of the projects; the extent to which the five main themes were being addressed; grant sizes and so on.

However, what these data cannot show is the extent to which supported projects have achieved their stated objectives. Thus the second source of data was the self-expressed achievement of project outcomes identified within the 'end of grant' and 'quarterly' reports that funded projects were required to submit. These provide a brief qualitative assessment of the extent to which individual projects have achieved their planned outcomes, as well as more quantitative indicators such as the number of beneficiaries (e.g. individuals, organisations, volunteer places, training places, numbers of jobs created). There is also a section on these reports that considers the legacy of the projects. This information was collected within RSWT's Grant Management System, for all the projects supported.

While the first and second data sources were collected and managed by RSWT, the third source consisted of a combination of quantitative and qualitative data generated by the CCRI/f3, which developed as the evaluation progressed. The main component was a series of 50 case study investigations, 13 of which were conducted by telephone and 37 that involved a researcher spending some time at each of the projects concerned, meeting those who were involved in running them as well as a range of project beneficiaries. Much of the resulting data were qualitative in nature, although a series of 'fact sheets' were also completed for each of the case studies (see appendix 1). In addition, members of the evaluation team attended two regional 'Adviser' meetings and three 'Share, Learn, Improve' events, all organised for projects by Local Food (see sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3, below), as well as a Local Food Selection Panel meeting.

Interviews were also conducted with members of the Selection Panel, as well as a number of External Assessors and Grants Officers. An analysis of the Local Food website was also undertaken. Further, quantitative data were collected via a series of project 'indicators' that were developed early on in the evaluation (see appendix 2). Due to the numbers of projects involved and their geographical spread across England, GIS[6] maps were produced throughout the evaluation, enabling another, more visual representation of where the projects are located.

These various data sources have helped examine the two key areas of this evaluation: firstly, the administration and management of the Local Food programme, including the Adviser function; and secondly, what the programme has delivered in terms of outputs / outcomes in relation to its original aim and key themes for achieving that aim. The rest of this section explains in more detail the different stages involved in the assessment and their contribution to the evaluation brief.

The Local Food adviser role was examined by members of the research team attending two Regional Adviser meetings: one in the West Midlands and the other in the South West.

3.1 Assessing administration, management, the adviser function and post-award support

3.1.1 Administration and management

An important part of the overall evaluation has been to assess the administration and management of the Local Food programme, from the perspectives of both those running the programme and a range of other actors. This has included having a section in the case study interview guide that sought opinions on the administration and management of the programme from the perspective of those in receipt of funding (see appendix 6). In addition, CCRI staff interviewed 17 people associated with the strategic decision-making and grant allocation procedures of the Local Food programme.

This included all seven members of the Steering Group (a number of whom had been involved in developing the bid for funding for Local Food from the Big Lottery Fund); three of the seven Selection Panel members, representing different regions and with varying local food insights; and seven of the 68 External Assessors, thereby ensuring a good regional spread. Six of the seven External Assessors also worked as project Advisers. Four of the interviews were conducted face-to-face, with the remaining 13 taking place over the telephone.

The main headings of the interview schedule for the three groups are shown in appendix 3. A different set of questions was tailored to each of the three groups, but generally views were sought on the functioning of the Steering Group and Selection Panel, assessment procedures, the Local Food programme itself, project applicants, partnership working, and the legacy of Local Food. This meant that, although the main focus of these interviews was the management and delivery of the programme, they also gave rise to some useful data on how these groups viewed its outputs as well as what its longer term impacts and legacy might be.

Towards the latter part of the evaluation period (2013), one of the CCRI researchers conducted interviews with three Grants Officers from RSWT. A semi-structured interview schedule was used in face-to-face interviews at the programme's headquarters in Newark (see appendix 4). In each case, interviewees were asked about their backgrounds and suitability for the role, together with their views on various aspects of project administration and management (from the selection of successful projects through to their completion). They were also encouraged to talk about the legacy of the Local Food programme, to assess its wider impacts on the local food movement and to consider what might come next.

3.1.2 Adviser function

The Local Food adviser role was examined by members of the research team attending two Regional Adviser meetings: one in the West Midlands and the other in the South West. In each case, notes were taken on the key discussion points covered in the meetings themselves, and in addition, a dedicated one-hour focus group session was held at the end of each of the meetings to specifically explore how Advisers had experienced their function in practice.

The findings from these meetings were then triangulated against the views of those interviewed in the case studies, who were asked about the role of the Advisers in the development of their project ideas and the application process (see appendix 6). Analysis of the Share, Learn, Improve events hosted by RSWT, which are described in section 3.1.3 below, provide a further perspective on the value of the Adviser function.

3.1.3 Post-award support

Although not specifically itemised in the original research brief, due to the long timescale of the Local Food programme it has been important to reflect upon how the management team at RSWT has developed different forms of post-award support and communication over time. This has involved a member of the CCRI team attending three of the Share, Learn, Improve events that were organised by RSWT, which have been a key component of post-award support for projects.

Eight events took place in the period February-March 2012, with a further eight in November-December 2012. They were attended by a total of 286 people, representing 204 different projects. The purpose of examining these events was to ascertain the extent to which, in practice, such post-award activities provided additional value over and above that offered by the Local Food Adviser. The process of assessing post-award support has also necessitated an in-depth

Before making any direct contact with specific case study projects, relevant background information on each project that had already been collected by RSWT.

analysis of the programme's website, www.localfoodgrants.org, and Foodecommmunity, as well as an examination of the 'Local Food Heroes' initiative, annotated annual reports (in the form of Local Food's Big Review) and the pamphlet published in 2013: '101 things that inspire people about Local Food and 101 aspirations for the future'[7].

In addition to the Share, Learn, Improve events outlined above, workshops entitled Delivering Your Local Food Project, and Creative Sustainability were hosted by RSWT. Projects were also able to access one-to-one support from the Advisers, as well as given the opportunity to undertake a funded Share, Learn, Exchange visit, which allowed one project to visit another and to benefit from peer-to-peer learning.

3.2 Assessing programme delivery

As set out in the introduction to this report, the main aim of the Local Food programme has been to 'make locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities'. This has involved working toward five main themes, and inherent within this aim and five themes is an intention to physically produce more local food and / or to help provide the impetus to do so. Assessing this aspect of Local Food requires a quantitative approach, which is achieved within this evaluation through an assessment of the indicator reports (described below), the case study 'fact sheets' (described below) and data from RSWT's Grants Management System.

At the same time, it is clear that projects have been funded with the intention of improving local environments, developing a greater sense of community ownership and encouraging social, economic and environmental sustainability. In this sense, the intention of Local Food funding has also been to enable wider societal changes to take place, by acting as a catalyst and enabler for positive change within communities. Evaluating outputs against these intentions requires a more nuanced and 'human-focused' qualitative assessment of the benefits of funding delivered through the Local Food programme. In this respect, the main approach taken within this evaluation has been to conduct an in-depth analysis of a range of individual case studies of Local Food funded projects in order to elicit these kinds of data. This approach is described in more detail in section 3.2.3 below.

3.2.1 Indicators

The research team felt that, in order to provide a broader evaluation of the Local Food programme, there was a need to extend the scope of quantitative data available by developing a number of indicators. Indicators are as varied as the systems they are designed to monitor and evaluate, but to be effective they need to be relevant (showing something about the system that one needs to know); understandable (even by those who are not experts); reliable (so that the results can be trusted); and accessible (whereby the information is available and in a suitable format to be gathered) (Defra 2010; OECD 2003; Sustainable Measures 2010).

In essence, the adopted approach tried to combine the directly observable outputs from individual projects with the reflections of those directly involved in the wider legacy of the projects in relation to their stated aims and intended outcomes. Appendix 2 lists the final indicators selected, which were sent to all 509 projects to complete.

3.2.2 Case study 'fact sheets'

Before making any direct contact with specific case study projects, relevant background information on each project that had already been collected by RSWT - either on their database or through the return of quarterly report forms and 'end of grant' reports - was extracted as appropriate. These data varied in quality and not all projects had completed any report forms by the time some of the case studies were conducted.

In order to broaden the background data available on the case studies to be visited, a series of 'fact sheets' were sent (by email) to the person in charge of each case study project at least two weeks before conducting the interviews and visiting the project for the first time (see appendix 1 for details). Some of the key sections included the type and volume of food produced; the area of land used by the project to produce food; and the number of jobs created by the project. These fact sheets were intended to provide additional quantitative data, as well as to help provide context for the case studies involved, which could be probed further within the subsequent interviews.

3.2.3 Case studies: their selection and evaluation

The key element of the overall evaluation has been to conduct a more 'human-focused' and in-depth analysis of

a range of individual projects, in order to capture the more subtle (or 'softer') societal outcomes of the Local Food programme. It was decided that a sample of 50 projects (i.e. just less than 10% of the total of 509 projects funded) would be sufficient for a detailed evaluation, of which 37 would be in-depth face-to-face case studies and the remainder would be via telephone interviews.The purposive sample of 50 was based on four main criteria: grant size, project theme, project type and location.

In terms of grant size, a higher percentage (quota sample) of Beacon projects (5 out of 10, or 50%) was selected to reflect their high monetary value and significance within the funding programme. These were complemented by 30 Main Grant projects and 15 Small Grant projects. The higher percentage of Main Grant projects relative to Small Grant projects reflects their relatively greater monetary value; having said that, it was considered important to ensure a good range of Small Grant projects in order to evaluate their value as a funding scale.

As Table 2 demonstrates, the five main themes of the Local Food programme are proportionately represented according to the total number of funded projects per theme, ranging from just five project case studies for theme B (cultural diversity of food) to 15 for theme A (managing land sustainably for growing food locally).

Table 2: Project sampling by grant size and theme

Size/theme	A	B	C	D	E	Total
Beacon	1	1	1	1	1	5
Main	10	2	4	7	7	30
Small	4	2	2	2	5	15
Total	15	5	7	10	13	50

The two final sampling criteria were project location and activity 'type' (see Table 3). In terms of their location, the 50 sampled projects reflect well the overall geographical distribution of all funded projects. As the London region dominates the regional pattern of uptake of Local Food funding, it accounts for the largest number (11) in the project sample. Likewise, the three least funded regions – the East and West Midlands and the Eastern region – each account for the lowest number (3) in the overall sample. As a small number of the total funded projects (10) are classified as multi-regional, three of these were included as well.

In relation to the three activity 'type' groups (distilled from the 17 distinct activity types – see Figure 2), the sample comprised 23 community growing, 18 education and learning, and 9 enterprise projects, broadly reflecting the total numbers of projects awarded in each of these groups. However, it needs to be emphasised that the project activity type should not be seen as definitive because, while associating themselves with one particular category in their application for funding, projects may be delivering just as much, if not more, against another activity type as they develop. The higher percentage of projects sampled under 'enterprise' is partly the result of this, as well as of the need to balance the wide range of sampling criteria outlined above.

Table 3: Project sampling by project location and grouped activity 'types'

Region	Sample total	Activity 'types'	Enterprise	Community Growing	Education & learning
East Midlands	3			2	1
Eastern	3			2	1
London	11		2	7	2
North East	4		2		2
North West	6		2	2	2
South East	5		2	2	1
South West	6		1	3	2
West Midlands	3			1	2
Yorkshire & Humberside	6			4	2
Multi-regional	3				3
Sample total:	**50**		**9**	**23**	**18**
Total population	509		60	243	206
Sample %:	10		15	9.5	8.75

Due to the long-term nature of the evaluation (December 2009-March 2014), along with the need to provide on-going feedback to RSWT and the gradual selection of projects receiving funding, it was necessary to conduct the case studies in a number of phases. As such, 19 were conducted in 2010 (with the results being fed back to the Steering Group and RSWT), 10 in 2011, 10 in 2012 and the final 11 in 2013. Appendix 5 provides details of the case studies undertaken, including the project themes, type, location and scale, as well as the year in which they were conducted.

The 50 case study projects involved a total of nearly 170 face-to-face interviews and 60 telephone interviews. Interviews were conducted with project managers, advisers, community representatives and individual beneficiaries, including school children (with the numbers depending on both the scale and type of project involved); the researcher was also an observer at a number of project events (such as an after-school cooking club), and also engaged in a variety of group discussions, site visits and informal conversations with volunteers and others.The interview schedule used for the case studies developed as the evaluation progressed. The initial semi-structured interview schedule was used for the first 29 case studies, which were analysed in detail and reported in the 'More than just the veg: Growing community capacity through Local Food projects' report[8]. This schedule sought information on the aims/scope of the projects; their context, current state, current outputs and longer-term outputs; project legacy and grant additionality; and attitudes towards the adviser and management/administrative functions of the Local Food programme (see appendix 6).

Learning from the analysis of the first 29 case study projects, where three types of capacity – material, personal and cultural – were seen to contribute strongly to the overall development of community capacity, the interview schedule was modified for the remaining 21 case studies. The 17 sections relating to different 'indicators' were reorganised into three sections based on the different types of 'capacity', where both quantitative and qualitative information was collected. These changes highlight the iterative nature of the methodology used in this evaluation (see appendix 7 for the schedule used for the latter 21 case studies).

3.3 Assessing the value of Supporting Change and Impact funding

This funding was in addition to the original grant made available to the Local Food programme by the Big Lottery

> The approach adopted in this evaluation has...been both flexible and iterative, designed to encompass the inevitable and subtle changes that a programme of this length undergoes over time.

Fund. Projects were eligible to apply for Supporting Change and Impact funding if they had received a grant with a revenue element of over £10,000, for a project lasting more than 12 months, and were in the final 18 months of a grant as of 1st November 2011.

A questionnaire schedule was developed, designed to assess the value of these two funding streams to those who had received them, against the stated aims of the initiatives (see appendix 8). A total of 10 projects were contacted: one face-to-face interview took place at the time of the main case study impact assessment in September 2012, at which time the project concerned had completed some of the work funded by their 'supporting change' fund, with the remaining nine projects being contacted by telephone in December 2013.

3.4 Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach

In an attempt to measure the change in, and associated financial value of, the various societal benefits of the Local Food programme, a Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework was developed towards the latter stages of the overall evaluation. Informed by the findings from the 50 completed project case studies, and focusing primarily on three case study projects encompassing Community Growing, Education and Learning and Enterprise, a Theory of Change (ToC) for the Local Food programme was first developed.

This sought to explore the nature and significance of the various outcomes from the projects involved, as well as the relationships between them. Reinforcing and magnifying the three types of identified capacity (material, personal and cultural), the principal outcomes of the case study projects were presented thematically to illustrate how one outcome leads to another in a 'chain of events'. To help ensure that all material and significant outcomes were captured, three storyboard workshops were held at each of the three projects – in Greenwich, Stroud and Kendal – at which participants identified and articulated the outcomes of the projects from their perspective. The following section explains how the findings of this evaluation are framed in relation to three forms of community capacity building; furthermore, they are discussed in terms of how they can be understood as being underpinned by social innovations.

> Innovation within this context is not so much to do with technological or economic advances...it is also about encouraging changes in social practice.

4. Framing the evaluation of the Local Food programme

4.1 Developing a conceptual framework

It is usual for a research methodology to be driven by the conceptual approach taken, but in this case the conceptualisation of the benefits of Local Food emerged inductively following the completion of the first 29 case studies and the production of the mid-term report in October 2012.

The approach adopted in this evaluation has, by necessity, been both flexible and iterative, designed to encompass the inevitable and subtle changes that a programme of this length undergoes over time. Setting out a conceptualisation at the start of the evaluation, therefore, was felt to be overly prescriptive. This was further complicated by the fact that there are two key elements to the evaluation: firstly, to assess the administration, management, communication and adviser functions of the programme; and secondly, to assess the delivery and outcomes of the projects supported[9]. The former requires a largely descriptive analysis, whereas the latter necessitates a more conceptual framework that can aid understanding of the significance of the funding provided through the Local Food programme, both for its own sake and in relation to wider discussions about local food.
As such, the framework set out below should be understood primarily in relation to the project delivery aspect of the evaluation, although the administration and management of the programme are vital in helping to ensure the best possible delivery of the projects involved.

4.2 'Social innovation' and building community capacity

Figure 7 shows how achieving the aim of Local Food can be conceptualised in terms of building three forms of 'capacity' – material, personal and cultural – which, in turn, can be seen as developing the overall capacity and resilience of the communities involved through the medium of local food[10]. Underpinning the notion of capacity is the concept of 'social innovation', described as being "mould-breaking ways of confronting unmet social need by creating new and sustainable capabilities, assets or opportunities for change" (Adams and Hess 2008, p.3).

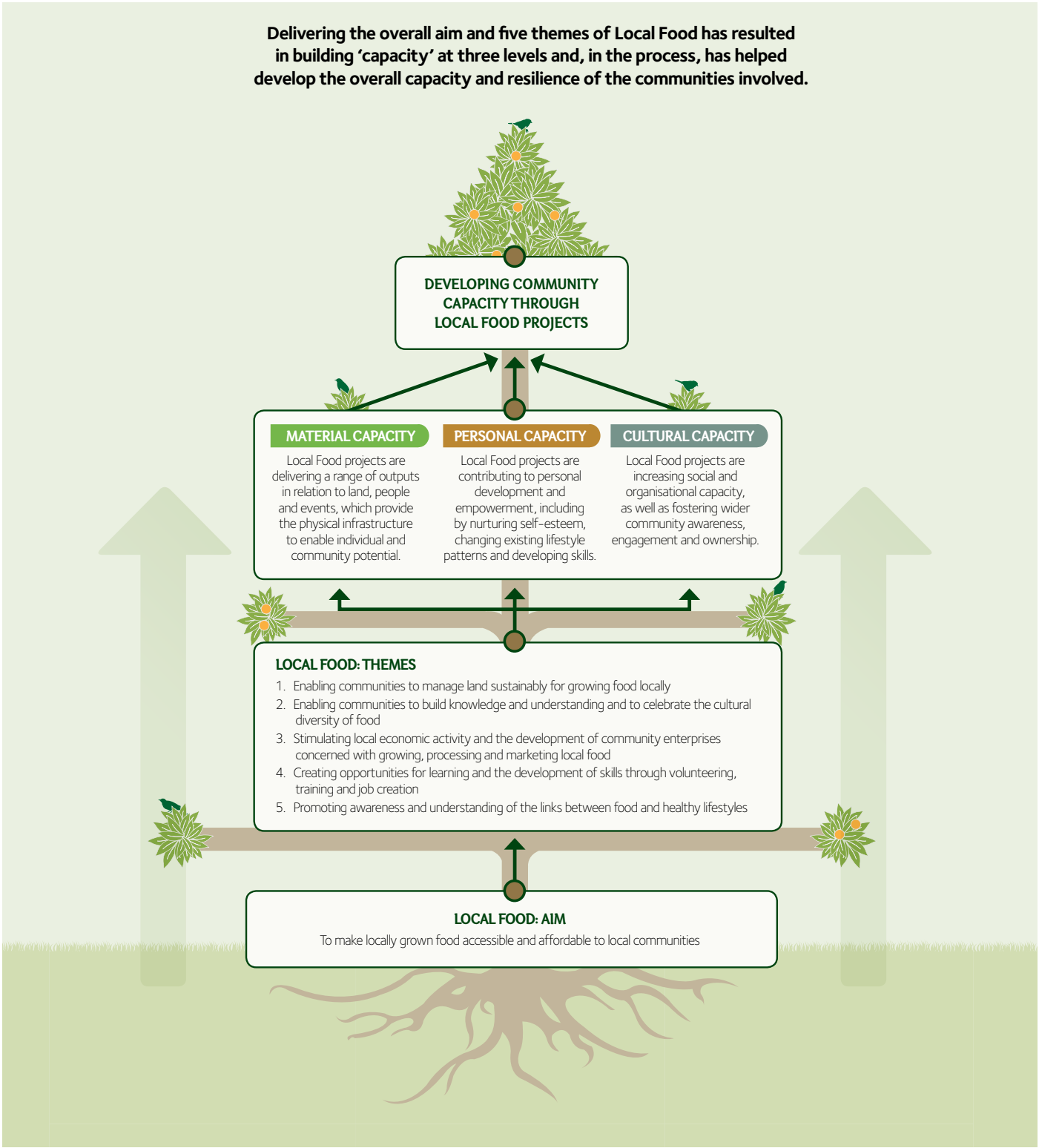
This idea has been developed further by the introduction of the term 'grassroots innovations', used to describe "networks of activists and organisations generating novel bottom-up solutions", which differ from top-down solutions in that they involve people at the community level "experimenting with social innovations" in order to satisfy human needs (Seyfang and Smith 2007, p. 585).

4.3 Collaboration, participation and empowerment

Innovation within this context is not so much to do with technological or economic advances (although these are undoubtedly important), it is also about encouraging changes in social practice (Howaldt and Schwarz 2010).

This includes new forms of collaborative action, changes to attitudes, behaviour or perceptions, as well as developing new social structures and the capacity to build resilience at a community level (Neumeier 2012). Inherent within this is the specific aim of increasing levels of participation, especially amongst those who had previously been excluded in some way; in so doing, those involved are empowered to take more control over their lives and to take a more active role in society. In this sense, "social innovation is very much about social inclusion as well as social justice" (Kirwan et al. 2013, p. 2) and a process of democratisation that is enabled by civic involvement (Neumeier 2012). However, these societal benefits may often be immaterial or intangible, complicating their evaluation.

Figure 7: Achieving the aim of Local Food through developing community capacity



4.4 Defining an appropriate analytical framework

In order to provide an analytical framework for this final evaluation report, the projects funded through the Local Food programme are assessed in terms of being grassroots social innovations that are instrumental in helping to develop community capacity (see Figure 8). In doing this, the evaluation draws on the work of Moulaert et al. (2005) and Adams and Hess (2008) in identifying five key dimensions of social innovation. The first of these involves the "satisfaction of human needs that are not currently satisfied" (Moulaert et al. 2005, p. 1976), with a focus on direct outputs that can in turn be related to 'material capacity'.

The second is concerned with 'process' and changes to the dynamics of social relations, specifically through increasing the levels of participation by individuals, especially those who may previously have been excluded in some way from the community they live in, or wider society. This involves developing 'personal capacity', such as through nurturing self-esteem or improving individuals' skills. Third, social innovations can empower individuals and communities to access resources through developing their social and organisational capacity.

This relates to the notion of 'cultural capacity', as does the fourth dimension which focuses on "asset building rather than need" (Adams and Hess 2008, p. 3). Building the asset base and capacity of those involved can help prevent the problems being faced by individuals and communities subsequently becoming a crisis. The fifth dimension emphasises the significance of place, recognising that the community itself should be viewed as having agency with the capacity to engender change through taking ownership of the issues it faces. In reality, it is important to acknowledge that these processes of social innovation may not necessarily occur in a straightforward or unproblematic way.

This analytical approach has provided the framework for the final stage of this evaluation, which is reflected in the structure of this final report. It also enables the findings of the evaluation to be linked with the wider issues confronting the country, such as food security and the resilience of local communities, and in particular the relevance of local food within these debates. These links will be made in sections 9 and 10 of this report, as part of the reflections on the legacy of the Local Food programme and in making recommendations for any future funding streams in this area.

The following sections of the report present the results and findings of this final evaluation, and are split into four sections. Firstly, section 5 is concerned with the management function of the Local Food programme. This includes subsections on the overall management and administration of the programme, the functioning of the selection panel, the Adviser function, the Share, Learn, Improve events, as well as the communication initiatives and on-going support provided to projects throughout the programme. Secondly, section 6 reports on the actual delivery and outputs of the 509 projects supported by Local Food. This is structured according to the five dimensions of social innovation, as set out in Figure 8. In addition to these two main sections, section 7 reports on the evaluation of the Supporting Change and Impact funding, while section 8 provides a brief summary of the Social Return on Investment produced from this work.

Figure 8: The five dimensions of social innovation

Adapted from (Adams and Hess 2008; Kirwan et al. 2013; Moulaert et al. 2005).

5. Results and findings: management and administration

5.1 Overall administration and management of the programme

5.1.1 Application process

Once opened, in March 2008, the Local Food programme was very quickly overwhelmed with applications. This was a reflection both of the public's appetite for local food projects and funding at that time, as well as the programme Consortium's dissemination of the potential of Local Food funding to the organisations they are involved with. First stage applications to the value of £191 million were received and it soon became clear that the programme would not be able to meet demand. In August 2009, RSWT reluctantly had to suspend the programme to new applications, which was much earlier than they had expected.

Although not directly related to the level of demand for Local Food funding, a number of those involved in the delivery of Local Food felt that with hindsight the First Stage application process perhaps made it too easy for applicants to succeed. There is recognition that the intention was to help ensure that smaller-scale projects and organisations were not put off from applying for funding, thereby enabling the programme to be as inclusive as possible as well as helping those involved to develop their skills:

"I agree that the first stage application level should be higher, but then there is a question about accessibility. You want to encourage as many groups to come forward as possible... otherwise there is a danger of it starting to become like other funding streams, where actually reaching communities is so challenging and lots of groups just look at it and say 'we can't do that". *(South West adviser).*

Including a more challenging first stage application might have reduced the number of subsequent rejections at the full application stage. This would effectively save time for projects, which is particularly significant for smaller organisations whose applications have had an inevitable impact on their ability to do their core work.
As one adviser said:

"It was basically showing that you were not ineligible, rather than that you were likely to succeed. Then when people hit stage two, it was just such a leap in terms of detail and so on".

In this sense, it is worth reflecting that in future programmes the first stage application process may need to function as a more effective filter, notwithstanding the need to be as inclusive and encouraging as possible.

The response to the application process from the perspective of the applicants themselves varied considerably. Although the written guidance accompanying the application forms was generally considered to be good, the application process was sometimes described in terms of being 'onerous' and 'time-consuming'. This was particularly the case for smaller projects, where the time and effort involved in applying for funding was felt to be burdensome and to take valuable time away from what an existing organisation may already be trying to deliver. In terms of the forms themselves, the financial section seemed to cause the most problems, often related to software compatibility issues. In contrast, RSWT staff were often praised in terms of being very helpful, typified by: "Grants officer very good, but process is awful".

5.1.2 Reporting process

There were also concerns about the paperwork and procedures for the programme, which in some cases were derived from previous Big Lottery-funded programmes. While these were considered appropriate at the beginning of Local Food, due to changing data reporting needs over the life of the programme they have not always provided the most appropriate information in order to complete the reporting requirements of the Local Food programme,

nor to conduct its evaluation. For example, there was clearly some frustration at a project level that the annual and quarterly reporting forms were "very dry" with insufficient space to say much about the real impacts of the project, or to provide any meaningful details. These concerns are well made by the following suggestion for improvement from a Grants Officer:

"I think probably more opportunity for them [in the project report forms] to write about what they have achieved and what has happened that they didn't expect. More opportunities about what has been great about the project.... If we have an outcome that says we will involve 50 people in five events, the report might say '49 people attended three events' and that is all you would get, rather than saying what happened at the event, who actually was involved and what they got out of it -- that sort of information"

Overall, the feedback from both projects and interviews with the Selection Panel, Steering Group, Assessors and Advisers is that RSWT have been very professional in their role as Award Partner for the Local Food programme. This is not to suggest that delivery of the programme has been without its challenges (as shown above); more that the staff at RSWT have been seen as willing to adapt to situations that have arisen and have attempted to find a way to resolve them. This is exemplified in relation to the economic downturn and the problems faced by many applicants, and indeed existing projects, in finding the requisite match funding.

5.2 Steering group

The Local Food Steering Group (SG) has had a significant role to play in terms of making a contribution to the strategic direction of the programme. Initially, the Consortium (from which the SG was formed) came together to develop a funding programme that would be accessible to its members and others, with an important objective being to recruit individuals with sufficient experience and decision-making capability within their own organisations.

A consequence of this membership seniority was that the Local Food programme was put together and later guided by leading figures within the local and community food movement, which is reflected in the original name of the programme: 'The Sustainable Communities and Food' consortium. This was subsequently changed to 'Local Food', although it seems that several of the members of the SG still view Local Food as a social and community development programme first and foremost, whose goals are achieved through the stimulation of local food initiatives.

On behalf of the original Consortium, the Steering Group instigated and established the programme, invited RSWT to be the Award Partner, and maintained governance and strategic direction throughout the long development period, and the subsequent delivery phase. As initiators of the programme, the SG has felt a sense of ownership over the concepts and philosophy of Local Food, notwithstanding that in reality once the programme was established RSWT have been the delivery body with responsibility to the Big Lottery Fund. Despite this, the SG maintained a commitment throughout and has still had a role to play in ensuring that the original aims have continued to be fulfilled and acting as a conduit between Local Food and the wider community food movement.

5.3 Grants Officers

There were four Local Food Grants Officers in total, who had a role in managing all of the projects with the exception of the Beacon projects (which were managed by the Assistant Programme Manager). In relation to Small and Main Grant applications of less than £35,000, they were responsible for the initial review of the proposal, its risk assessment, its formal assessment and subsequently its presentation to the Selection PanelFor those Main Grant projects of more than £35,000, they were responsible for an initial review of the proposal together with a risk assessment and the appointment of a suitable External Assessor.

In relation to risk, they graded projects as being low, medium or high risk. This was important in that they had to visit all high risk projects at least once, 10% of medium risk projects and 5% of low risk projects. The assessment of risk was based, amongst other measures, on the professionalism with which the business case was put together, coupled with an assessment of the applicant's /

In reality, the Grants Officers visited considerably more than the minimum, which was felt to be very useful in allowing projects that may be struggling to feel more supported.

organisation's ability to deliver the project.

In reality, the Grants Officers visited considerably more than the minimum, which was felt to be very useful in allowing projects that may be struggling to feel more supported:

"I think it is important because people are more reluctant to write down if they are suffering from problems, but when you go there and actually ask them questions about what they are doing, you can normally get the information out of them without them feeling they are suggesting their projects are failing. People don't like pointing out the weaknesses of it because they feel that the funder wouldn't want to know. That is the main benefit of getting that interaction, so that they feel confident to tell you everything about the project rather than just one side of it" *(Grants Officer).*

From the Grants Officers' perspective, it was not possible to say whether larger or smaller projects created more problems in terms of their administration. In the case of smaller projects, the issues encountered tended to revolve around filling out the paperwork and completing the claims, to which many of those involved were new.

With the larger projects, delivered by national organisations with dedicated departments in some instances, those involved were sometimes so far removed from the actual delivery of the projects that there were breakdowns in communication. Those that tended to be the easiest to manage were those where the person that Grants Officers were liaising with was both competent in terms of filling in the paperwork and was directly involved with delivering the project.

5.4 External Assessors

The External Assessors were responsible for examining all project applications, with the exception of Small Grants (£2,000-£10,000) and Main Grants up to £35,000, which were assessed by RSWT Grants Officers (see section 5.3 above). A key part of their role was to visit the applicants concerned, which was important in enabling a degree of discussion and investigation of the potential project beyond the confines of the application pro forma. The Assessor's report and recommendation were then presented to the Selection Panel, together with the Grants Officer's report and recommendation.

External Assessor expertise was judged by RSWT via a skills audit completed by people wishing to become Assessors. Altogether, 132 External Assessors were recruited by RSWT at the start of the programme, of which just over half also worked as Advisers. Those External Assessors who were also Advisers found the connection very helpful because they were then familiar with the questions on which applicants would be judged. Advisers did not subsequently assess projects they had advised on. In choosing which External Assessor to choose for a particular project, the Grants Officers tended to use those whom they could trust and rely on to produce a good report.

Over the course of the programme, the number of External Assessors used by RSWT reduced to 68 for a number of reasons: partly due to the geographical spread of the applications received; partly because the particular skills of some of them were not reflected in any of the applications; and partly because in a few cases the quality of the reports produced by the External Assessors was found to be inadequate. In relation to the last point, in the summer of 2010 a series of External Assessor refresher training events were held in order to feedback trends found by the Selection Panel and to look at the quality of reports received; it was a condition of their continued engagement with Local Food that all External Assessors attended these events. Following these events, the number of External Assessors was reduced.

The job of the External Assessors was to provide an initial interpretation of how applications met the assessment criteria and aims of the programme. This was composed of two elements: a quantitative score which reflected the application's fit against the assessment criteria; and a qualitative report which provided a recommendation about whether or not to fund the project concerned. There were clear concerns amongst the External Assessors that, although inevitable in a programme of this size, a standardised assessment approach across all application themes limited which projects they were able to support. In particular, it would have been beneficial to have had separate assessment criteria when assessing the sustainability of a project in terms of its ability to generate long-term income, compared to its potential long-term social outcomes. In other words, income generation projects should be assessed in a different way

The overall approval rate was 48%, varying between 36% for the East Midlands to 61% for London, with the remaining regions broadly similar to each other at 50-56%.

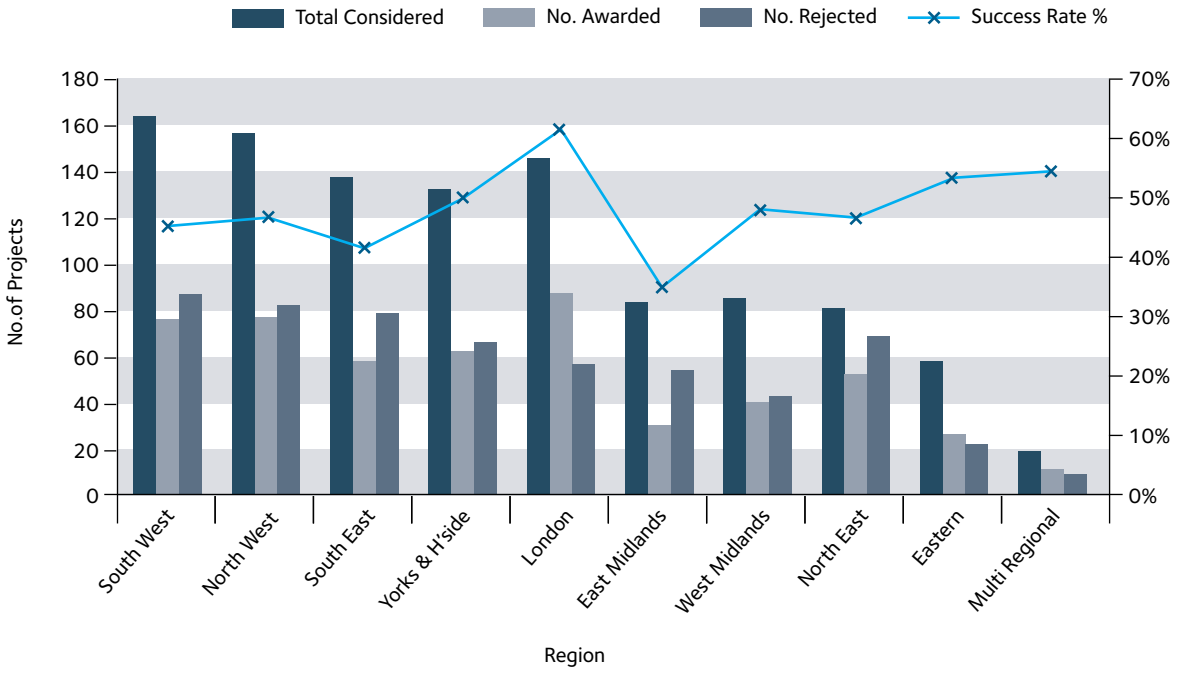
from time-limited community development projects. The corollary of this was that a number of the External Assessors reflected that there was a degree of risk aversion towards more unorthodox projects and those from new groups who may not have had a project delivery profile, with a tendency to support 'known' project types. Having said that, the programme was demand-led, and in reality there were not many applications from more 'unorthodox' projects.

5.5 Selection Panel

The Selection Panel (SP) included seven people, drawn from a range of backgrounds and geographical locations. Feedback from those involved, including Grants Officers, suggests that its composition was largely appropriate in covering business, growing, community and other interests. In other words, the SP was seen to be an independent group of individuals whose insights were grounded in local and community food practice.

The terms of reference for the SP were agreed with RSWT and the Big Lottery Fund. These stated that the SP must consider applications with due regard to the comments of the RSWT grants team and the External Assessors. SP members were not obliged to accept the recommendations of either the Assessors or RSWT's Grant Officers and, on a number of occasions, did not. Divergences from the Assessor recommendations were more pronounced in the early stages of the programme, in that there was a need to build an understanding between the Assessors and the SP, as is common in any programme. Some of the early Assessor reports were felt to be of a poor analytical quality, meaning that the SP sometimes spent time effectively reassessing the applications. Over time, the quality of the information and analysis in the Assessor reports improved and the SP became more confident in the judgement of the Assessors.A total of 1084 projects was considered by the SP, of which 534 were initially awarded and 550 rejected (25 of the awarded projects withdrew after the panel, leaving a final figure of 509 supported projects). Figure 9 gives a breakdown of these figures by region. The overall approval rate was 48%, varying between 36% for the East Midlands to 61% for London, with the remaining regions broadly similar to each other at 50-56%. Applications were rejected for a wide variety of reasons, although the following were the most common: the application failed to demonstrate how the project has involved and consulted the local community; failure to demonstrate how the project will

Figure 9: Number of projects considered, awarded and rejected by the Selection Panel



achieve a good level of social, economic and environmental sustainability; failure to address the overall aim of Local Food; failure to represent good value for money; and doubts about how the project will be delivered in terms of the applicant organisation's ability and track record. A key point to note from Figure 9 is that, although the Eastern region had noticeably the fewest number of projects awarded, this was not due to a poor success rate, but rather that there was a low level of applications[11]. The SP, in making their decisions, insisted they were principally made in relation to the aims of Local Food, with the geography of the projects constituting only a secondary consideration.There was frustration amongst the SP that some potentially good applications were not well enough written or thought through. This was often in relation to smaller or newer groups applying for Main Grants, who found it difficult to prove management capacity, financial competence and track record, compared to those applications from larger, longer established organisations.

The role of the Adviser has clearly been important in helping overcome this problem and is discussed further under section 5.6. Nevertheless, there was a sense that the programme-wide assessment criteria inclined the SP to support time-tested project formats, rather than to support more innovative projects from new or less experienced organisations[12]. Having said that, the view of the Grants Officers (who attended all of the SP meetings) was that overall the SP had worked well: "I think we've all got a few where we think, 'oh I don't know why that wasn't supported or why they supported that', but fundamentally it worked well". There was also some concern amongst the SP members that, within the overall framework of Local Food, projects should have been more clearly split into either commercial enterprises or community projects, each of which required their own assessment metric. In this respect, there was a need to balance the enterprise and social goals of the programme, which can also be thought of in terms of a balance between strategic and project-focused objectives[13].

5.6 Adviser function

Section 5 of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces: Local Food Guidance Notes states that: "The main role of the Local Food Adviser Team is to provide high quality advice to groups and organisations that are in the process of [submitting], or have submitted, an application to Local Food". Advice was available to either work up a full application (Pre-application help), or during the delivery of a project (Post-award advice). Each group was entitled to an average of two days Pre-application advice and two days Post-award advice.

In terms of the time available for Pre-application advice, two days plus the flexibility for additional time in certain circumstances was in most cases sufficient; however, the way in which projects used this advice varied considerably. In general, the smaller and less experienced the organisation, the more advice they needed in putting together an application; for the larger organisations, the advice was most valuable in terms of helping them to focus on the requirements of Local Food. In general, it is apparent that applicants valued the advice available, which is captured in the following quote from a Main Grant project interviewee:

"Excellent pre-award advice, very helpful, advised on writing the project structure. The adviser was very significant and helped [us] understand and get through the stage 2 process. The paper work was daunting, but she gave very good guidance."

The amount of Adviser time devoted to some of the smaller projects and those organisations with less experience might at one level seem disproportionate to the levels of grant applied for. However, there was a strong feeling amongst RSWT and the Advisers that the latter's advice had enabled a range of new organisations to think about developing bids and accessing funding. In this respect, the Adviser role has helped to build capacity amongst people and organisations in terms of thinking about and developing funding applications. Even where applications to Local Food were not successful in securing funding, Advisers felt that the projects involved had grown through looking at their options, working on their ideas and developing a business plan. As one Adviser in the South West commented:

"This is something that is not being measured: the effect of the capacity building of skills within the community – they may not go to Local Food, they may go to another funder, or they may be able to do a business plan for their own retail ideas."

There was a strong perception amongst Advisers that without their input both the quality and number of applications would have been lower (a perception that was shared by the Grants Officers). Many of the groups, especially the smaller ones, lacked the necessary skills or experience to submit a convincing application. In this respect, there was a sense that any funder should see it as critical to provide Adviser help in order to enable communities and smaller / less experienced organisations to apply for the funding opportunities available:

"I think it would be very sad if only the established organisations got funding... the whole idea is to tackle disadvantage. This whole programme is about communities. I think it [the Adviser function] is a vital part of it" (West Midlands Adviser).

In relation to Post-award advice, the time available for support was again two days, with the flexibility to grant additional time in certain circumstances. This advice was aimed at supporting projects during their delivery phase, with the onus on the projects themselves to take up the help on offer. The take up rate of 30% of projects requesting this type of advice could be for a variety of reasons: such as the initial contact for the project changing and the new person responsible for project delivery not being aware of the support available; or the project just being too busy to engage with an Adviser.

However, only 30% needing Post-award advice might also suggest that the projects were strong enough to start with and simply did not need Adviser support. There were a few cases where RSWT was not made aware of a problem with a project's delivery until it was almost too late. However, through increasing the number of projects that were visited by Grants Officers, the necessary support was able to be provided, either by the Grants Officers themselves or through assigning an Adviser. This also led to RSWT developing a range of other Post-award support measures, which are outlined under sections 5.7 and 5.8 below.

With respect to the administration of the Adviser role, it is worth reflecting on the way in which the Advisers engaged with the wider Local Food programme, as well as with RSWT. A number of the Advisers had a fairly minimal involvement with Local Food projects, with often quite long periods of time between assignments. This seems to have led to a sense of disconnection from the main programme.

The intention was to have enough Advisers, with enough skills and expertise to cover all eventualities, leading to 130 Advisers across England. With hindsight, RSWT recognised this was perhaps too many and that "a smaller pool of more consistent work would have been the preferable option" (Adviser Team Manager). A further contributory factor for the disjointed nature of the Adviser workload was the initial high level of applications, necessitating suspending the programme to new applicants in August 2009 and a compression of the time over which Advisers were needed.

5.7 Post-award support: Share, Learn, Improve events

The rationale for RSWT initiating and hosting these events was that they would provide additional Post-award support to all funded groups, over and above what the Local Food Adviser function provided. Their stated aim was 'to provide groups funded through Local Food the opportunity to share with others what has gone well and any lessons learned so far' in relation to their projects. They were specifically intended not to be training events, but to facilitate group participation and mutual support.

The format for the days gave everyone the chance to hear first-hand how other projects in their area were being run. This was through five minute introductions by each of the projects represented at the meeting, structured case study presentations and peer-led exercises. The introductions enabled an appreciation of the breadth of experience and activities that different projects within the same region were involved with. The case study presentations were structured in relation to two key themes: community engagement and partnerships (in the second set of Share, Learn, Improve events, the two keys themes were changed to Income Generation and Evidencing Impact).

Subsequent peer-led discussions of these presentations elicited participant reflection on their own projects, as well as vigorous and constructive debate about a range of wider issues. In short, the format of the events worked well, encouraging and enabling learning and a sharing of experiences through a combination of plenary sessions and, crucially, smaller group sessions.

An important aspect of the events for the participants was the opportunity to take time out from the everyday running

of their projects and to reflect on how things are going, facilitated by the support and encouragement of peers. This is exemplified by the following participant quotation:

"We are so busy just keeping going every day. We don't have the time to sit back and be strategic... It is very useful to be here. Great to hear about other projects and where they are. We are then able to compare ourselves with them, as well as make contact with them and to hear how they have addressed particular issues."

In summary, it is clear these events have added something to the Adviser role in terms of Post-award support, principally through enabling a greater sense of community and providing the opportunity for projects to be with like-minded people who are facing the same sorts of challenges as themselves.

In relation to the overall evaluation, it is also worth recounting one of the evaluation team's notes of a conversation at one of the events in which those involved recognised the need to better evaluate what their projects were achieving. This is important in that very often the data returned to RSWT and the evaluators from projects were lacking in reflection and insight.

The discussion started with the observation that projects very often create a lot of 'buzz', but in many instances don't have (or make) the time to sit back and evaluate what has been achieved. As one participant suggested "we are good at monitoring, but we do not have the time for evaluation". E.g. projects may collect how many people come to an event etc., but don't then seek to evaluate what this means.

There was also discussion that issues such as social cohesion, well-being, building confidence and self-esteem are difficult to evaluate. In this respect, "numbers aren't everything, but experience is"; and "the human interest angle about community impact" is ultimately more important than simply numbers. There was a lack of both knowledge and confidence amongst many of those present as to what is involved in setting up a viable internal monitoring and evaluation process, and this was something they would appreciate training on in the future.

5.8 Communications

The development of a range of different communications channels over the course of Local Food has been a distinctive and very positive feature of the delivery of this programme. There has been a deliberate attempt to respond to the needs of those funded through the programme, as well as those who wish to find out more about what it involves. It is clear that those funded by Local Food have appreciated the interaction, both between themselves and with RSWT, and the support this has enabled. It has also helped in the development of networks of organisations that might otherwise have struggled to recognise the opportunities available to them. In this way RSWT have consciously reflected on the needs of the projects they have funded and responded by providing ongoing encouragement and support. The following sections examine the nature of the communications processes developed by RSWT in more detail, starting with the programme website.

> It is apparent that RSWT have continually worked to develop the website and to make it as accessible and useful to as many people as possible.

5.8.1 Programme website

A key element of the support provided by RSWT has been the development of a website, which was intended to provide information, an e-community and a point of social connection for those projects funded through the Local Food programme. The website, which can be found at www.localfoodgrants.org, is structured through a series of themed tabs as shown below:

The types of information available on the website can be summarised as ranging from details of the Local Food programme and all the projects it funded, to press releases and news stories, films made by projects themselves and by the Local Food programme, links to social media, and downloadable documents and other relevant information beyond the immediate projects themselves.

Some of the information has been restricted to those who are able to log in (with only Local Food funded projects being able to do this until very recently), mainly so that discussions between projects have a degree of intimacy thereby helping to engender a sense of community. Generally speaking, however, the website has been accessible by anyone with an interest in the aims and outputs of the programme. In this way, the material on the website has the potential to be further leveraged, providing added value and helping to ensure a broader legacy for the programme.

Overall, the website has made a positive contribution to the delivery of the Local Food programme, creating a successful and useful point of access for information for both users involved with Local Food-funded projects and the general public. It provides specific practical information such as guides, materials and resources for those interested in and involved with local food. It also provides a central community and interaction point for projects, helping to build awareness and provide linkages between groups.

It is apparent that RSWT have continually worked to develop the website and to make it as accessible and useful to as many people as possible. Having developed such a useful resource for local food projects in general, it will be important to consider how it might be continued once the Local Food programme has finished.

A key feature of the website is the opportunity for every funded project to keep a blog, which they can update at any time with news and photos, and which is readable by anyone visiting the website. The latest project updates are automatically published on the homepage, helping to promote project news and keep the homepage fresh. On average, there are several new blog posts every week.

5.8.2 Local Food blog

The website also includes a link to an external blog site (http://localfoodgrants.wordpress.com/), where members of the Local Food team publish their reflections on the programme and its wider significance, commenting on topics such as nutrition, education and childhood obesity, as well as highlighting the societal benefits of Local Food projects by drawing on examples from around the country.

5.8.3 Foodecommunity

Until it was recently opened up to the wider public, Foodecommunity (http://www.localfoodgrants.org/foodecommunity/) was a subsection of the Local Food website accessible only to funded Local Food projects, where they could share their experiences of running a project, post comments, videos, photos and jobs, start discussions, and generally network and interact with likeminded people from other projects.

In an effort to increase the audience of the site, and allow more people to benefit from the resources available there, it has recently been made accessible to the general public, who can now witness this community hub and register to join the site if they wish to make comments and contributions of their own.

5.8.4 Social media

Local Food's online presence also includes public profiles on Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and You Tube. All of these allow funded projects and the general public to interact with Local Food, share ideas, news and photos, and to access information. They also allow for interaction with journalists, facilitating further opportunity for the promotion of projects and the programme as a whole. Updates posted on Twitter automatically feed through to the Local Food homepage.

5.8.5 Events and films

In addition to the Share, Learn, Improve events held by Local Food in order to enable interaction between funded projects, the programme has also organised two larger conferences to highlight the work involved and to discuss the issues surrounding the concept of local food with a wider group of participants. The first of these took place in October 2012 at City Hall in London, and showcased the findings of the "More than just the veg - Growing community capacity through Local Food projects" report, in which achieving the aim of Local Food was conceptualised as developing community capacity, composed of three elements: material capacity, personal capacity and cultural capacity (see section 4).

These concepts were illustrated by three films[14], each devoted to a single capacity and consisting of interviews with both those running the projects and those benefiting from them. The films were very well received at the mid-term conference; they were seen as providing a very accessible and impactful demonstration of what the Local Food programme is delivering on the ground. The films have subsequently been adapted and shown on national television, on the Community Channel, as well as on the website of this broadcaster.

A second conference was held in Manchester in November 2013, to mark the drawing to a close of the programme. Dignitaries from the sector, funded projects and other interested parties were invited to join the Local Food team in celebrating the impacts and positive knock-on effects that the funded projects have delivered across the country, as well as reflecting on the value of investing in communities through Local Food. A short film showcasing the history of Local Food was screened, and the event also saw the awarding of trophies and accolades to the most outstanding projects across four categories: Community Food Growing, Education and Learning, Enterprise and Small Grants.

5.8.6 Local Food Heroes

'Local Food Heroes' was a celebration of 'ordinary people doing extraordinary things'. Held in 2012 and 2013, it was intended to give those inspirational individuals – mostly volunteers – that do not normally get noticed outside of their projects the chance to gain recognition for the contribution they have made.

More than 150 nominations were received over the two rounds, from Local Food funded projects. These were sifted down to regional shortlists, from which one winner per region was chosen through a public voting process via the website, and more than 10,000 people voted across England. The 'Local Food Heroes' initiative was a highly accessible way of communicating the success of the Local Food programme in terms of skills, training and community building. It also encouraged engagement with, and interaction between, the projects.

5.8.7 People's inspirations and aspirations about Local Food

'101 things that inspire people about Local Food and 101 aspirations for the future' was published as a booklet both online and in print. Brief statements were collected from around 200 people, representing 120 projects who attended the Share, Learn, Improve events together with other Local Food events held around the country towards the end of 2012.

Participants were asked to reflect on what inspires them about Local Food, and what their aspirations are for the future. This has given a voice to the people on the ground running projects on a day-to-day basis, as well as providing an insight into where support for the local food sector might best be targeted in the future.

5.8.8 'Local Food's Big Review'

This is an online community built from Local Food projects. Each project has its own story to share. This is accessed by placing the cursor over the project image, which then displays information about the project involved and how it is making a difference to the communities in which it operates.

These snapshots provide an immediate and accessible way to understand some of the projects involved within the scheme, potentially engaging people who might not otherwise explore the range of projects supported by Local Food.

http://bigreview.localfoodgrants.org/

6. Results and findings: programme delivery

The way in which the programme has been delivered is demonstrated through a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data, each of which give a different insight into the delivery of Local Food and are therefore reported separately. The quantitative data derive principally from the indicator reports and fact sheets, and are reported under section 6.1. The qualitative data come from the 50 case studies that were conducted. The resultant data are structured according to the five dimensions of social innovation identified in section 4 above and reported under section 6.2 below.

6.1 Quantitative outputs from the programme

6.1.1 Project Indicator forms

These have been the main source of quantitative data from the programme, although their completion has not been without problems. This has been the case particularly for a number of the Small Grant projects, which had already finished by the time the indicator forms were developed and sent out. In these cases, the forms were not always properly completed, in that those involved in developing and running these projects had quite often since left the project. In addition, about 100 of the projects will not finish until March 2014, which is too late for their data to be included in this evaluation.

What all this means is that the data below relate to 183 projects, out of a total of 509 funded projects. While this is clearly not ideal, the reports represent a 36% sample of all projects and have provided some useful quantitative data on the outputs of the programme.

> The way in which the programme has been delivered is demonstrated through a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data, each of which give a different insight into the delivery of Local Food.

Table 4: Quantities associated with the production of food

Total area of land used by projects for growing food: 1,949,758 m2, which equates to 195 ha			
Total number of people involved in the practical production of food: 262,620			
Quantities of food produced		Number of food bearing trees planted	
Meat	1,765 kg	Apple	1,985
Fruit	28,423 kg	Pear	1,210
Honey	177 kg	Walnut	4
Vegetables	61,214 kg	Hazlenut	99
Vegetables	21,386 boxes	Plum	258
Eggs	39,428 eggs	Damson	84
Milk/Juice	4,298 litres		3,640

Table 5: Learning opportunities and dissemination of information

Events held		Numbers attending	Information published		Where information has been disseminated	
Open days	308	27,806	Press releases	552	Youth clubs	68
Courses	485	7,587	Fact sheets	13,272	Job centres	12
Training days	1,362	10,676	Booklets	38,751	Shops	390
Cultural events	423	8,512	Web hits	1,287,774	Cafes	140
Special events	643	180,710	Leaflets	116,900	School noticeboards	465
		235,271	Articles/features	11,044	Project websites	175
			Foodecommunity posts	170	Households	36,860
			Radio/TV interviews	141	Fairs/festivals	346
					Garden centres	80
					Libraries	220

Table 6: Skills development and influencing new audiences

Skills taught	No. of people	Events held	Events held
How to cook	21,082	Caterers buying fresh, local, seasonal	790
How to grow	44,417	People involved in allotments provided by local authority	564
How to harvest	25,603	People involved at schools buying fresh, local, seasonal	701
How to process their own food	8,260	Number of school-age people learning to cook	9,468
How to order food through the Internet	375		
	99,737		

Table 7: Jobs created and volunteer involvement

Total number of jobs created		195
Volunteer involvement		
	Farms	406
	Allotments	4,964
	Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)	2,513
	City Gardens	1,078
	Community Gardens	15,465
	Planting trees	3,309
	Helping organise a Local Food event	6,550
	Packing vegetable boxes	986
	Working in a food cooperative	423
	Events/festival	635
		36,329

These data are helpful in giving an indication of what has been achieved by Local Food, but should not be considered as definitive. This is partly because in many instances they were collected from projects that were only just starting, meaning there were no measurable outputs at that time.

This is typified by the following quote from a project that had planted fruit trees: "Our orchard is in its infancy and will begin to bear more fruit next year". It is also because in many cases it is clear that those involved in running the projects were more intent on delivering the aims of the project itself, rather than taking the time to measure the on-going outputs from the project. For example:

"We did not keep a record of the volumes produced. Our aim was to transform a rundown site. The produce was then used in healthy eating and cooking sessions" (SLF000230).

These responses echo those referred to under section 5.7, where participants at the Share, Learn, Improve events reflected that their focus tends to be more on project delivery; there was also a general lack of confidence about how to monitor and evaluate their own project. This is not to deny that some projects have conducted very extensive and accomplished evaluations, such as Harvest Brighton and Hove (BLF000374).

Some of the key outputs to highlight from the 183 sampled indicator reports are:

- **195** ha of land used by projects for growing food.
- **262,620** people involved in the practical production of food.
- **61,214** kg and **21,386** boxes of vegetables produced.
- **3640** food bearing trees planted.
- **235,271** people attended learning opportunity and dissemination events.
- **99,737** people received skills training.
- **36,329** people involved as volunteers.
- **195** jobs created.

As these figures relate to just 36% of the projects supported by Local Food, they are a considerable under-estimation of the total outputs of the programme. This under-estimation

is compounded by the fact that many of the outputs of projects will only become evident after a period of time (most obviously fruit from trees planted by projects). In reality, therefore, these figures can probably be multiplied by 3 to 5 times to give a more accurate representation; nevertheless, they are a useful indication of the scale of the quantitative outputs achieved.

6.1.2 Fact sheets

The fact sheets were a second source of quantitative data that were collected from each of the 50 projects examined as case studies. They were sent by e-mail to the person in charge of each case study project prior to it being visited for the first time. The data requested mirrored the indicator reports. They were intended partly to provide additional quantitative data, but also to help provide context for the case studies that could be probed further within the subsequent interviews.

As with the indicator reports, the resultant data received were partial; however, the fact sheets have been useful in providing corroboration for the indicator reports in a number of ways. Firstly, the relative outputs collected from these two different methods are broadly comparable. For example, 235,271 people were identified in the indicator reports as having attended learning and dissemination events delivered by 183 projects, making an average of 1285 people per project (235,271/183), whereas the fact sheets suggested an average of 1131 per project (56,587/50).

Similarly, for jobs created the average from the indictor reports was 1.06 (195/183) per project compared to 1.16 (58/50) for the fact sheets. In the case of trees planted, the figure for the indicator reports is 20 (3640 trees/183 projects) and 57 (2854/50) for the fact sheets. In other words, this reinforces the idea that these quantitative figures can be used as a useful guide to the scale of the outputs achieved, but not as an accurate approximation.

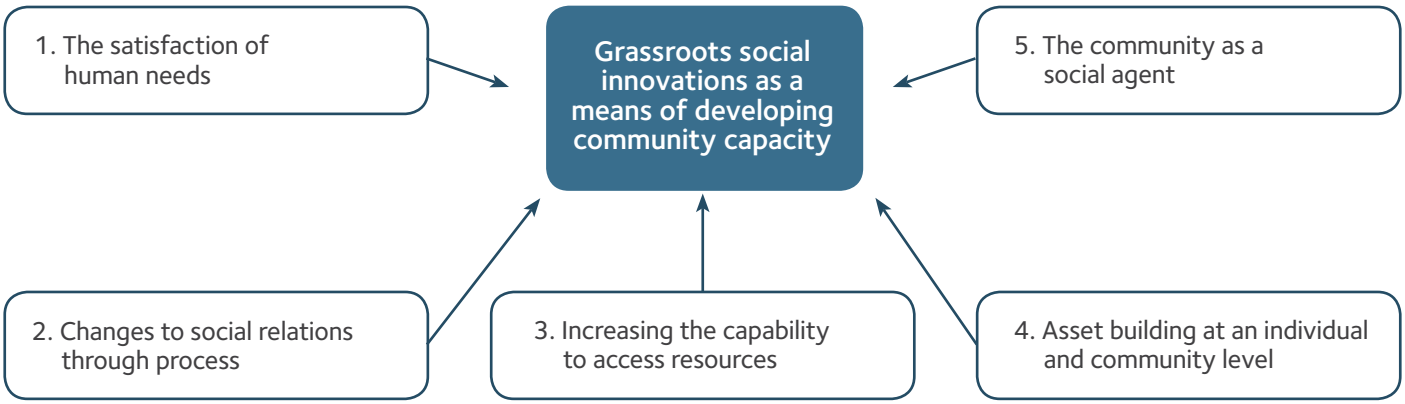
Secondly, the relatively higher number of trees identified in the fact sheets indicates that the final figure for trees planted may be considerably higher than that suggested in the indicator reports. This is relevant in itself, but also in terms of the potential for more local food output in due course as the trees start to come into production in a few years' time. The fact sheets also show that a number of additional food-bearing tree varieties have been planted, beyond those identified in the indicator reports. These include: sweet chestnut, cherry, peach, apricot, mulberry and quince. Thirdly, subsequent probing through interviews during the case studies revealed that in most cases the jobs created as part of Local Food have been for posts in the funded projects themselves. This is significant, in that jobs created are often used as an important output from a funding programme, but in this case the number of long-term jobs created that will last beyond the programme is unknown. In other words, the identified figure of 195 jobs created from 183 projects needs to be treated with caution.

6.2 Qualitative outputs from the programme

The qualitative outputs from the Local Food programme have been drawn from the 50 case studies that were conducted as part of this evaluation. As set out under section 3, the data derived from these case studies enable a more in-depth, nuanced and human-centred perspective on what has been achieved. Figure 7, under section 4, sets out how the main aim of Local Food can be achieved through the development of 'community capacity' and how this in turn can be understood as being the result of five dimensions of social innovation (see Figure 8 – reproduced below).

Each of these dimensions is examined individually, but in reality there is considerable overlap between them. The result is an understanding of how the Local Food programme has helped to encourage and support grassroots social innovations as a means of developing community capacity.

Figure 8: The five dimensions of social innovation



Adapted from (Adams and Hess 2008; Kirwan et al. 2013; Moulaert et al. 2005).

6.2.1 The satisfaction of human needs

The first dimension of social innovation is concerned with the satisfaction of human needs that are not currently satisfied. In particular, the focus is on the direct outputs achieved by projects, which in this case can be related to three main types of output - land, people and events - as well as the provision of physical infrastructure such as poly-tunnels, hand tools, raised beds and buildings. In turn, these outputs can be thought of as developing 'material capacity' in order to help enable individual and community potential.

In the case of 'land', many of the projects have brought previously cultivated and/or new land into food production in some way. This has usually involved very small areas that may only be a few metres square, in the form of allotments, gardens, community farms and gardens, orchards, city farms, or community supported agriculture. These spaces are owned by a variety of different bodies, including local authorities, charities, housing associations and schools, and are managed by a range of organisations such as community groups, hostels, the NHS and schools. The physical production of food on these spaces is certainly of importance to those involved in running the projects, but so too is the practical inclusion of members of the local community; indeed, this dual purpose underpins the rationale of most projects.

In relation to 'people', most of the projects have involved quite large numbers of individuals, either directly or indirectly. This is in small part through creating a relatively small number of paid jobs, but more significantly through generating a large number of volunteering opportunities and a range of events that have often included skills development opportunities. The numbers and types of people involved vary between projects, but often those who are homeless, mentally ill or drug dependent are explicitly encouraged; in other words, those who might otherwise be excluded from engaging in such activities within their community.

The third main output relates to the wide range of 'events' that have been organised by projects. These include training days, skills sharing and open days involving people of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds. Tables 5, 6 and 7 illustrate the kinds of opportunities that have been created and the numbers of people involved. It is clear, however, that despite the success of many projects in reaching people with these initiatives, others have struggled to attract sufficient numbers.

Evidence from the case studies indicates that the provision of funding to purchase some kind of physical infrastructure has been essential to the development of projects. In some cases, this has been substantial in terms of a building; more usually, it has meant the purchase of smaller items such as hand-tools or raised beds. Whatever the scale of investment, it is clear that the ability to purchase such infrastructure has been an important part of developing the material capacity of projects, as well as constituting an important on-going resource/legacy once Local Food funding has finished.

It is clear that engaging people in food growing projects can help them to develop a range of technical skills, as well as build communication and team-working skills.

6.2.2 Changes to social relations through process

The second dimension of social innovation is concerned with changes to the dynamics of social relations, specifically through increasing the levels of participation by individuals. This is especially important within the context of engaging those who may have been previously excluded in some way from the community they live in, or indeed wider society. This entails developing the 'personal capacity' of those involved through nurturing their self-esteem and improving their skills, thereby enabling a greater sense of well-being for the individuals concerned, and in the process benefiting society more generally.

The opportunities provided by many of the projects for people to grow food together have resulted in important social meeting places where people from different backgrounds can get to know and understand each other better. It is clear that engaging people in food growing projects can help them to develop a range of technical skills, as well as build communication and team-working skills. This is encapsulated in the following quote from a Brighton-based project (BLF000374):

"The project is about changing attitudes between people, food and culture... Food is important in itself, but its main importance is in terms of the opportunities it provides for children. The idea of organising events, getting people together, cooking and eating together is important.It is about breaking down barriers. Food is functioning as a social communicator."

Growing food can also help build a sense of satisfaction and mental well-being through achieving something that is demonstrably worthwhile. This can help those involved realise that they have something to offer others, and give them the confidence to go out and try and find employment and enter the job market. Benefits such as these are largely intangible and therefore difficult to measure; they are essentially about 'social process' rather than material output.

6.2.3 Increasing the capability to access resources

The third dimension of social innovation involves empowering individuals and communities to better access resources by growing their social and organisational capabilities, which in turn can be understood in terms of developing their 'cultural capacity'. It is evident that in most cases food provides the pretext for projects, but at the same time their aims encompass more than simply food.

As one project organiser stated: "it is about using local food as an object to foster local community development" (MLF000671). In this sense, food is being used as a vehicle to increase the capabilities of communities and their constituent individuals. Enabling change for the betterment of those involved is at the core of what projects supported by Local Food are intent on doing. This includes, in many cases, deliberately including those with mental or physical health problems who may otherwise find it difficult to access resources in their community.

Empowering local people by involving them in projects and encouraging 'learning by doing' has clearly been important, as has the development of their skills base through more formal training mechanisms. Not only has this helped develop their personal capacity, but also, in so doing, their cultural capacity. There is a clear overlap with the second dimension, above, although the focus here is more on increasing the socio-political capability of both communities and individuals to access resources to enable them to address the problems they have identified at a local level. There is an important connection here between developing the capacity of individuals, while at the same time ensuring that there is a wider legacy of cultural change at a community level in relation to food and, in particular, local food.

6.2.4 Asset building at an individual and community level

The fourth dimension of social innovation is concerned with asset building at both an individual and a community level which, as with the third dimension, can be understood in terms of developing the 'cultural capacity' of those involved. Change may be most obvious at an individual level, but it is apparent that it has also subsequently often had an effect at a broader community level. Although some of the smaller projects are working in relative isolation, others are linked more directly with wider networks of organisations. There is evidence of projects that have brought together what were disparate organisations, thereby enabling the delivery of benefits at a community level that would have been very difficult for individual organisations to achieve.

> Heightening awareness of what is involved in the production of food is a key part of the asset building that has been achieved.

This greater cooperation across organisations has in some cases enabled the formalisation of a distinctive asset base at the community level. In other words, Local Food funding has provided a necessary stimulus to encourage greater collaborative action among organisations. Thus one Beacon project involves a multi-agency steering group, as well as a partnership board that brings together members of the local health authority and the City Council, with the latter adopting a number of the ideas developed as part of the project, as 'legal' policy.

Asset building at a personal level is evidenced in the case studies' longer-term outcomes, principally in relation to continued community food growing, but also increased education and learning about food. Thus more people are now capable of accessing the potential benefits of locally produced food. Heightening awareness of what is involved in the production of food is a key part of the asset building that has been achieved. This is notably the case with schoolchildren, as one interviewee explained:

"The pupils' knowledge and awareness increases hugely and they are learning things that are never learnt anywhere else: where their food comes from, how to grow it themselves, and how to work with nature and look after wildlife" (MLF000050).

6.2.5 The community as a social agent

The fifth dimension of social innovation emphasises the significance of place, recognising that the community itself should be viewed as having agency and the capacity to engender change through taking ownership of the issues it faces. It is concerned with empowerment and the need for communities to both identify and have a key role in solving their own problems. This dimension is fundamental to the overall development of 'community capacity'.

A key part of the Local Food application process is for the proposed project to identify some kind of 'need'; furthermore, that they demonstrate engagement with members of the local community who will be involved in the project itself and stand to gain from its implementation. Indeed, many of the projects have an explicit focus on community cohesion and bottom-up development. In these contexts, although food may provide the medium for the development of the project and the support of Local Food funding, the project may in fact be more about improving the lot of the people involved and the wider community. As a project officer in London commented (SLF000482):

"The garden project has had a big impact on the area; not so much in terms of producing food, but as a sense of community, trust and belonging. . . The wider angle of this work is bottom-up community led involvement in neighbourhood renewal. . . [the result of which is that] many people no longer feel alienated".

Engaging the interest and active participation of the local community is critical if projects are to engender change; only then is it possible for the community itself to act as a 'social agent' and for community capacity to be developed.

6.3 Social innovation in practice

The following cameos of projects supported by the Local Food programme provide an insight into the way in which a range of innovations at a social level has helped to develop the capacities of both individuals and communities. The projects have been selected in order to illustrate the breadth of programme impact at a grassroots level.

Growing Greenwich BLF000031: Community engagement in food growing and skills development.

The focus has been on engagement, encouraging community learning about food growing and the development of well-being through gardening. There has also been significant organisational development, both in terms of engaging a wide range of individual organisations, but also in terms of making food growing a more significant part of the culture of the wider Borough.

Growing Greenwich is a food growing project that builds on existing food growing projects and partnerships. Its aim has been to combine food and community development. It is essentially a training and capacity building project aimed at giving as many people as possible the necessary skills to grow food and run their own food growing groups. While

the quantity of food produced has been limited, there is an increased awareness of food growing and a significant level of engagement by local people. The project has also linked up a number of diverse organisations and groups involved in food growing. The focus has been on engagement, community learning and wellbeing through gardening, including raising awareness at a political level about the important benefits that food growing activity can bring in relation to health and wellbeing. In this respect, the project has focused more on communities than individuals in order to prompt strategic change:

"Developing the business plan for the GG project gave us the opportunity to develop a strategic partnership. We spoke to NHS Trusts and all the various relevant Council departments…There was work on cultural change within individual organisations getting involved in growing food, but we wanted something that would influence others in order to achieve a strategic change in culture right across the borough" (Director).

As a result of the project, a number of large organisations have now committed to supporting food growing.

"There has been a sea change with the council and with GCDA's partner organisations in terms of taking food growing seriously" (Project Manager).

"The lead member for Health at the Local Authority has come to us to ask how to engage every school in growing food and how to engage all the LA properties in food growing. A global mental health project for Greenwich now sees GG as a key delivery partner for providing positive mental health support. This means there will be GP referrals in the future" (Director).

"GG is useful in a political sense, in that it is helping to link people up. It is making food growing more accessible to children and to older people. Now the Council has opened their minds to making land available for food growing on housing estates"
(Volunteer working with the elderly).

"We have seen changes in behaviour in our users who have learning disabilities. Many of the service users who attend our farm project have really changed. The challenging behaviours have disappeared. The skills they've learnt have changed their outlook on things. They are a lot fitter and have lost weight from being active. There's much less aggression. It is one of our most successful projects. We want to develop more links with GG" (Oxleas NHS).

The project has made food growing part of the Greenwich culture. "We have a model of good practice for developing food growing in a city borough…I am [now] a valid voice on the Greenwich Health and Wellbeing Partnership. That is incredible!" (Director).

"There has been a hearts and minds engagement in food growing at all levels including the Council Members. There are now some key people in the Council who see the benefit [of food growing]" (Councillor).

Green Path Gardening Project, Ashiana SLF001781: Gardening and cooking as therapy.

The production of food is a secondary consideration. The key to this project has been the development of a physical space in which people who have been abused can feel safe, and can start to rebuild their confidence and sense of well-being. In this respect, it has helped to raise awareness for the organisation involved of the therapeutic potential of gardens and gardening.

This project involves working with women at three refuge houses in east London. It does this by harnessing the previously unused gardens of the refuges to create a better social feel to the houses and provide a therapeutic environment in which women who are suffering from trauma in their lives can start to heal and be empowered to live independently. The actual production of food is secondary to the therapeutic effect of being in the gardens.

"A person's wellbeing and emotional state cannot be fed or measured in monetary terms. However, if the gardens are having an impact on wellbeing then this grant represents value for money beyond measure. If a young woman who has suffered greatly finds a way to reconnect with herself and heal, this is a life-changing outcome" (Deputy Director).

While it is very difficult to put changes like these purely down to a garden, there is no doubt that for some of the current residents the gardens are making a huge difference.

The material creation of the gardens has been critical to the success of the project.

"The physical changes in the gardens have been very positive and important. The women enjoy the gardens and they provide a safe and enjoyable environment for them to be in. This goes hand in hand with emotional changes, a growth in confidence and improved wellbeing. The therapeutic value of the garden is very significant... A young woman from India, when she first arrived, would hardly have eye contact with staff because she was so low. Now I see her each morning in the garden looking after the plants... She told staff it reminds her of being back with her own family in India. She has no support here in the UK and was not keen on counselling, but this gardening project has been integral to her therapy and recovery" (Deputy Director).

This perception is endorsed by the women themselves:

"The garden makes us calmer. I like nature. It makes me calm being with nature... If you are feeling a bit depressed you can come out here, chat to the neighbour... Without the garden it wouldn't be so nice. We can get together sometimes... It's part of our agreement to all be involved".

Ashiana's funders have been impressed by the innovation of the project and the connections being made between gardening, food growing and domestic violence recovery. The Ashiana Network Board now feels that continuation of the garden work is a priority for them.

Love Local Food Phase 3 (MLF000459): Local food distribution and education.

The purchase of a mobile van has enabled physical access to food, as well as helping to develop social relations, facilitate communication and increase awareness of and knowledge about food. In so doing, it has empowered individuals and their constituent communities to access food resources.

In this project, the Local Food grant was used to employ people, rent warehouse space and purchase a purpose-built mobile shop, with the aim of combining distribution and retail sales with education and outreach, through taking food out into the local community. In practice, the mobile shop has increased physical access to local produce, as well as raising awareness about how food is produced and distributed. The regular presence of the mobile shop at various locations has encouraged interest to grow over time, as well as develop a sense of confidence in people to come and buy from the van.

"It has changed the way we shop. We used to buy more veg at the supermarket. I'm committed to organic and local and it's now easier to get it from the van" *(Customer).*

The material gains of the van and warehouse space have been critical to the project, but at the same time the benefits have been greater than this, with the education/sales officer for the project suggesting that:

"The project is about local food supply and community development, you can't separate them. They have to be hand in hand. If you haven't got community development, where are your sales? It's about the social interaction with the community. Food is community – community is food".

In other words, the mobile van represents a point of connection, a meeting place and a focus for discussions about food that is produced in and around Devon. It also physically enables taking the food and conversations to different places and people around the city of Exeter, many of whom would not otherwise have access to this type of opportunity.

From the perspective of one organic farmer interviewed, the awareness-raising potential of the van is possibly more significant than its retail function. He recognised that the volumes sold through the van had been relatively small, but that it has been:

"A foundation for some really big shifts around Exeter. There's a far greater awareness that local food is available. The education visits are so important in making the kids and the parents aware, even though they don't all go out and buy local produce. It could be the next generation that changes their habits".

Arkwright Meadows Community (AMC) Gardens Cultivating Futures MLF001763: Food-related training and community activity.

The physical development of a building has enabled AMC to attract more people to get involved in some way. This has significantly benefited the organisation's capacity, but has also helped to influence attitudes, develop skills and crucially to increase the engagement of the local community.

The main aim of the funding was to increase access to food-related training and community activities through the development of a building and employment of a local food outreach worker. It has been about developing capacity in a variety of ways: at a personal level, to provide formal and informal training and educational activities; at a cultural level, to reach out to more people; and at a material level through embedding a new eco-building in the local community. Key to this has been the building:

> Through the provision of a physical structure, local children and their families have been empowered by being able to get involved.

"The new eco-building has given us the combination of a meeting area, a place to run events and a general asset to the garden. It has helped tie together all our activities and increase our capacity to involve local people" (Staff member).

It is clear that it has also engendered a sense of local pride:

"It's intangible: the impact of AMC as a whole. People are really proud of the gardens and it has enhanced the reputation and image of the Meadows estate. The building has improved the image even further" (Steering Group member).

"The building says we are here to stay; we are a serious going concern. A proper building was a large missing piece of the jigsaw" (Staff).

The building has enabled AMC to offer more activities and therefore to attract more people to get involved in some way, whether at events, through healthy lifestyle group activity, visiting the garden, hiring the building, or attending a food growing or cooking course. "Before, the focus was on food growing and now we have the bigger picture, cooking and healthy lifestyles and more social events" (Finance director). This has had a significant impact on the organisation's capacity as a whole, not least in terms of helping ensure its financial viability by generating income through bookings.

Christ Church School Garden SLF002114: Land management for school and community food growing and education.

Through the provision of a physical structure, local children and their families have been empowered by being able to get involved. Social relations have been improved through providing a social hub, helping to develop community spirit. It has also enabled change to the organisational culture of the school, in relation to food.

This project involved developing a community garden and inspiring local families in a socially deprived area to grow fruit and vegetables and, in the process, to breathe life back into a 'forgotten estate'. It is an example of a school and local community working together. The Local Food grant paid for a greenhouse, material for pathways and raised beds and a shed. These have provided a structure for the garden and created a productive, accessible and well-used space.

"Success can be seen in the number of children who love to be out here, love working here, love eating the produce…Their engagement with the project and growing things and taking them home has been the biggest success and it's now been built in to the curriculum for all the children throughout the school. It's also getting the staff enthusiastically engaged" (Head Teacher).

"Without a doubt it's changed the culture of the school. I've been in schools without a garden and the difference in the knowledge and attitudes to food is striking" (Teacher).

Instilling a sense of care in the children has been important:

"They're so enthusiastic and engaged about things they see. It's about spiritual values as well and caring for things around us…The children now know what veg look like, where they come from; they're picking things in the garden and tasting them. They're connecting with nature and the bigger picture as well" (Teacher).

Engaging with the local community and developing a community spirit has been crucial to the success of the project.

"The development of the garden was a real community effort and it's now a real kitchen garden...For me, it's team work – this is a small estate and two schools and a fire brigade – the fact that we all pulled together and made this possible for our children. The community spirit really made my day' *(Head Teacher).*

The garden is the physical legacy of the project, but it has also created an accessible and safe place for people to meet and work together – a social hub, where new connections are made. According to the secretary of the local Residents Association, "it has made the neighbourhood safer".

Hedgerow Harvest MLF001074: Planting and maintaining productive fruit and nut hedgerows in public spaces.

New links have been made between conservation and the production of food. People have been educated about the potential of foraging for wild food, as have schools. There has been widespread engagement with this project by the general public. The Tree Council has also developed as an organisation, in terms of having more confidence about the benefits of promoting hedgerows as an asset that has both conservation and economic value.

This project links strongly with national policy on hedgerows.

"Hedges are Britain's largest nature reserve; Britain's largest orchard or food producing chain"
(Council Staff).

It has provided the Tree Council with a new tool to link biodiversity and food messages. Hedgerows can yield fruit with an economic value. They can be 'linear orchards' or 'productive corridors'. The focus is specifically on hedgerow fruit as food; different types and varieties; and the culture of foraging.

Training and support has been provided to local groups to establish new hedgerows and to keep them well maintained in over 50 different locations in the South East region. One unexpected outcome has been the effectiveness of the project in engaging the public.

"There has been a strong interest in foraging and in traditional recipes for preserves... The older generation did this from necessity...they know all about what can be done with what hedgerow products e.g. rosehip syrup; in the war children were paid to go and pick rosehips in the hedgerows" *(Project Coordinator).*

The new hedgerow activity is also attractive to schools, other community groups and young entrepreneurs.

"At one event we had some young lads who were training to be chefs and wanted to try different ingredients e.g. elderflowers' *(Project Manager).*

New educational resources have been developed for the website including a schools pack; 'how to' information on planting and maintaining hedges; and heritage recipes for using fruit. The Tree Council itself has engaged more with the food agenda.

"If it wasn't for this work I don't think I would have ever made the link with food" *(Member of staff).*

It now has evidence with which to promote fruit hedges and has developed new clarity and confidence in the benefits, as well as effective techniques and mechanisms to develop their ideas..

Climate Friendly Food at Fir Tree Farm MLF001546: Combining commercial production and care farming.

The land rented as part of this project underpins everything it does; nevertheless, while the production of food and economic viability are important within this project, so too is community development. It is mainly about empowerment and providing an opportunity for people who might otherwise be marginalised to socially interact and in so doing increase their levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Fir Tree Community Growers is a complex mix between food, economic viability and community development. Food production for commercial supply through four community-organised outlets has been used as a vehicle to provide the opportunity for people from urban areas to work on the land and have access to the countryside.

"It is showing how growing vegetables can be a vehicle for improving individuals' lives" (Director).

The three acres of land rented as part of this project are central to everything else that happens on the farm.

"It enables people to connect with themselves... If we teach people how to harvest something, they feel really proud of their new skill and take ownership" (Director).

"It's the link between just telling people and letting them come here and see it and try things for themselves. They then get so much more out of it" (Farmer).

The farm has been key to the development of personal capacity. For example, John is a wheelchair user and, although this has restricted his range of activities, there is always something he can engage with on the farm:

"I enjoy coming to the farm and meeting new people. The activities I like include watering, grading, labelling produce and carrying crates back from the field... I like going somewhere where I am respected for who I am".

The independent evaluator for this project commented:

"I was very impressed by the way in which all the volunteers were able to contribute, regardless of their disabilities".

The overall impact on the project's volunteers seems to be mainly in terms of empowerment, whether in relation to mental health recovery or dealing with physical disability. In this respect, the skills gained by the volunteers are important in leading to increased confidence, self-esteem and social interaction, rather than specifically about food-growing. For example, the support worker for Adam says:

"Adam has come out of his shell and works much better this year. I think a lot of that is down to working in a smaller, more bonded group...I can see that Adam's confidence has grown. Adam thinks that the farm really benefits him in every aspect of his life - learning, socialising, organisational skills and actually gaining a work ethic".

Some staff also commented that working outdoors on practical tasks is proving to be an effective way of engaging with more challenging pupils.

Fruitful Schools BLF000340: School orchards, community connections and related educational activities.

The production of apples is a very important part of this project, but so too has been the engagement of young people and the development of a valuable educational resource.

It has enabled physical access to food for a wide range of individuals and communities, many of whom are disadvantaged or marginalised in some way. There has also been community buy-in, and there is a community legacy in the form of the orchards themselves, but also of an increased understanding about apples - both in terms of their production, but also their uses.

This national Beacon project has pioneered an effective approach for engaging young people with learning new knowledge and practical skills related to growing apple trees, heritage apple orchards and developing a strong sense of ownership, achievement and pride. It has worked with around 200 schools to establish new school orchards and school Apple Clubs. Students have gained skills in grafting, planting, pruning and maintaining young apple trees, as well as learning about orchard design and land management, researching local heritage varieties, visiting local orchards, cooking with apples and organising their own apple day events.

"We've enjoyed watching the concept grow, planning, consulting and then doing it. This will help the community too – passers-by can take apples. We can leave this school knowing we've actually done something".

"We've learnt how much work goes into planning the design and how the surroundings can affect the trees – like sunlight, shade, slopes, water".

"I wouldn't have gone to the apple festival before. I didn't think apples were interesting. It's not just about the actual fruit but everything to do with it." *(Students).*

As a national project it has been able to inspire activity in a wide range of schools, rural and urban, and in both advantaged and disadvantaged areas. Schools reported that their new school ground orchards are an enhancement and can be used as outdoor classrooms for a number of different subjects.

'Science needed to come out into the environment. This is giving us the opportunity to make science real' *(Teacher).*

Some staff also commented that working outdoors on practical tasks is proving to be an effective way of engaging with more challenging pupils. They have noticed improved concentration and interest.

The orchards and related activities have also given the schools a focused opportunity to engage with their local communities. Many of the schools now have their own apple presses for use on their apple days.

"The apple festival has started a trend...People bought our apple juice and then came to our orchard because they wanted to see which trees their apple juice had come from. *(Teacher).*

It is apparent, through these examples, how the needs of people are being met; how social relations are being improved through the medium of local food; how individuals and communities are being empowered socio-politically through their engagement with projects; how the asset base of both individuals and communities has been developed, thereby strengthening their ability to cope; and finally how Local Food-funded projects have been able to engage with and harness the power of communities, in so doing enabling the process of bottom-up or grassroots development.

7. Supporting Change and Impact funding

7.1 Amount awarded

85 projects were awarded Supporting Change funding (from 86 applications), totalling £818,780, while 71 projects (from 75 applications) were awarded Supporting Impact funding in addition to Supporting Change funding, totalling £3,495,090.

The total amount awarded for both sources of funding was £4,313,870. The purpose of evaluating this extra funding was two-fold: firstly, to establish the value of these additional funding streams in and of themselves; and secondly, to make some comment as to their wider contribution to Local Food.

7.2 Purpose

Projects could apply either for the Supporting Change funding on its own or in addition to the Supporting Impact funding; it was not possible for projects to apply for Supporting Impact funding on its own. Supporting Change funding could be used for activities that would ensure that the benefits of a project remained sustainable after the Local Food funding had ended.

Up to £10,000 was available to help cover the costs of measuring the impact of a project, reviewing how it had been delivered, working with others to sustain the project, sharing learning from the project, marketing and promoting the achievements of the project more widely, and enabling those running the project to develop new skills. Supporting Impact funding, on the other hand, was intended to help make sure that the projects themselves were sustainable.

Up to a further 12 months' worth of revenue funding, in addition to Supporting Change funding, was available for projects that could show they had made an outstanding difference to the lives of people most in need, and had clear plans in place to achieve lasting benefits. The total amount that could be applied for was the equivalent of the total revenue grant for the final year of the existing project. It was specifically not continuation funding.

7.3 Benefits and impacts

A key benefit of the extra funding has been the ability to pay for staff time to focus on consolidating the existing work of the project, together with developing future plans. In many cases, it is clear that projects would have been unable to employ staff to carry out these tasks and that finding alternative sources of funding to do this is very difficult; furthermore, it has been critical that paid staff time was made available, rather than projects having to rely on volunteers:

"It has enabled us to work on funding applications, which has been very precious to us. It is very difficult to find funding support for the fundraising process itself. The new funding we've found has contributed to the successful extension of our project."

Very often the end of a particular funding stream means that projects cease abruptly, mainly because the organisation or group involved does not have the capacity to link into new work or funding streams. In this respect, the additional funding has been valued by projects as a means of making the transition from the period of Local Food funding to continuing or adapting their work in the future. Projects have done this in a number of ways.

Some have paid for specialist mentoring around business plans and fundraising; several have found that it has enabled time to focus on the future, rather than the busy-ness of delivering current activities; while two of the large Beacon projects have used it to develop business plans that will help them to position themselves strategically within their community. Growing Greenwich (BLF000031), for example, has focused on: aligning the achievements of the project with the other work of its parent organisation; consolidating and refocusing attention on its most successful achievements; addressing the loss of a key delivery partner; and investing time in building relationships and establishing a strong borough-wide food partnership to support ongoing strategic work on food growing.

Projects have sought to both reflect upon and consolidate what they have been offering, in order to help ensure their continuity. This includes developing new ideas that have the potential to meet emerging demands and reach a wider audience, as well as changing the way in which they work and think about new ways to generate income. In the case of Growing Communities in England (MLF000620):

"[The extra funding] has been incredibly useful – it has allowed continuity of developmental work already taking place; it has also allowed the Federation and its members to engage in a culture shift, moving away from grant dependency for delivery of core services and reviewing membership services"
(Project Coordinator).

The funding has also been used by projects to help develop resources on which they can build in the future. These include training courses, websites, business plans, marketing and publicity materials. In one case, the funding has been used to conduct an in-depth evaluation of their own project[15], in order to communicate what the project has to offer and to help develop new partnerships and secure support from relevant agencies in the future.

All of the projects contacted said that the additional funding had enabled them to be in a stronger position to move forward in the future; however, most of them had not yet managed to secure new income sources to pay for staff and services, and are currently still engaged in fundraising activities.

8. Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach

In SROI, monetary values are used to represent outcomes, which enables a ratio of benefits-to-investment to be calculated and the amount of social, economic and environmental value created for every £1 invested in the programme. Data were collected from 126 stakeholders across three case study projects, with a total of 17 distinct and measurable outcomes being identified. A theory of change for Local Food was undertaken to explore the nature and significance of the various outcomes, and the relationship between them in a chain of events. For example, knowledge of food growing and provenance then leads to improved diet, and in turn improved physical health over the longer term; reduced social isolation through volunteering can lead to an increased sense of belonging, leading to improved resilience and self-esteem; and the structure and skills provided by Local Food activities have in many cases led to improved levels of competence and a sense of purpose for volunteers and participants, in turn opening new doors for employability or education.

Following SROI convention, financial proxies for all measurable outcomes were identified in order to assign a monetary value to each of them. For example, the unit cost of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy was used as a proxy for improved mental health, and average weekly household food spend was used to approximate the improvements to food affordability as a result of the programme. All the information was then assembled in an SROI model to calculate the impact and produce an indicative benefit-to-investment ratio for Local Food based on the three case study projects. A sensitivity analysis was also undertaken to examine the effects of varying some of the key assumptions underlying the calculations for the most influential outcomes, which produced a confidence range for the ratio. Following from this, the total present value in relation to the levels of total investment in the three Local Food projects was as follows:

Total investment	£1,687,441
Present value of benefits	£11,756,563
Ratio of benefit-to-investment	6.97:1
Confidence range	5.85 – 8.09

In other words, every £1 invested in Local Food (as evidenced by the three case study projects combined) was shown to return between £6 and £8 to society in the form of social and economic outcomes including health and well-being, training and skills. Breaking down the magnitude of benefit according to the principal areas of change affected by Local Food, revealed the programme to be producing almost two thirds of its societal return in the areas of health and well-being (62%), followed by community vibrancy (26%) and then education and skills (8%).

The ability to monetise the benefits resulting from Local Food provides a useful additional insight into the outputs of the programme. However it is important to remember that much of the value of the programme is best assessed at the level of social practice rather than simply material benefits. In this respect, it is crucial to have a qualitative insight into the nature of the benefits that accrue. This is important for two reasons: first, as shown above, it underpins the ability to conduct a robust SROI by providing the basic data from which to develop the benefit-to-investment ratio; and second, it can encompass the values associated with cultural change rather than just those outcomes which have economic implications, either directly or indirectly.

> Local Food funding has been a vehicle for community cohesion, regeneration, healthy eating, educational enhancement and integrating disadvantaged groups into mainstream society.

9. Reflections

"It's called the Local Food programme, but it is very much about people... Food is the medium, but it's not just about food -- it's all the other things. It does wonderful things to your soul!"
(a Local Food-funded project, manager)

9.1 Impact and legacy

9.1.1 Land and food production

The amount of food produced within Local Food projects has been relatively small and certainly not enough to make a significant quantitative impact on the wider food supply chain. Nevertheless, the data collected show that Local Food has brought small, often neglected pieces of land into production, developed local infrastructure and increased the physical quantity of food produced at a local level (albeit to a limited extent).

Crucially, the case studies have revealed that Local Food projects have enabled individuals and communities to build capacity at a social level to access and afford local food, in addition to the more tangible outputs of physically producing more food. Local Food funding has also been a vehicle for community cohesion, regeneration, healthy eating, educational enhancement, integrating disadvantaged groups into mainstream society, and developing people's skills so that they are better able to get into paid employment. It has also helped to change people's and communities' attitudes towards, and understanding of, food and local food in particular.

9.1.2 New connections

Projects supported by Local Food have connected a wide range of people and organisations to the ideas and values associated with 'local food', enabling new ways of working in partnership on food issues. This is particularly important in relation to children and young people, in terms of influencing their future decisions about food choices.

Projects, through the medium of local food, have also brought together groups of people who would not otherwise communicate or work together, helping to develop community cohesion. As one project officer commented:"I think the benefit is in the people", with local food effectively being used as a catalyst to foster community and organisational development. These types of benefits may be quite profound, even though they may not become apparent in the short or even medium term, or be unambiguously attributable to the funding provided by Local Food. Wider community involvement and engagement are also critical to the on-going success of projects, not least where key individuals within projects may move on or retire.

9.1.3 Increased community resilience: 'material, personal and cultural capacity change'

Section 4 set out how achieving the aim of Local Food can be understood in terms of developing three types of capacity – material, personal and cultural. By developing these different types of capacity, Local Food projects have contributed to the resilience of the communities involved and thereby the overarching aim of Local Food, which is 'to make locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities'.

In the process, the five main themes of Local Food have also been addressed, so that:

- communities are now better able to manage land sustainably for growing food locally;
- those involved have developed their knowledge and understanding of food, as well as having a better understanding of how other people relate to food;
- local economic activity in relation to community food enterprises has been stimulated through a

combination of skills development, infrastructural improvements and a broader recognition of the benefits of local food at an organisational level;

- a wide range of opportunities for learning and the development of skills have been created, as well as jobs; and
- awareness has been raised about the links between food and healthy lifestyles, through developing skills such as cooking and food growing, and changing the culture of organisations such as schools and hospitals.

In this context, material capacity entails the provision of physical infrastructure to enable individual and community potential. Personal capacity is concerned with personal development and empowerment, including nurturing self-esteem, changing lifestyle patterns and developing skills. And cultural capacity involves increasing social and organisational capacity, as well as fostering wider community awareness, engagement and ownership. Individual projects differ in the emphasis they give to the development of each form of capacity, but it is apparent that material capacity in the form of land, people, events and physical infrastructure is both critical in itself, but also in enabling the development of the other capacities.

9.1.4 Increased community resilience: 'grassroots social innovation'

The notion of capacity(ies) can also be understood as being underpinned by 'social innovation' and in particular 'grassroots innovation' (see section 4). Innovation within this context is concerned with encouraging changes to social practice, which includes new forms of collaborative action, changes in attitudes, behaviour or perceptions, as well as developing new social structures and the capacity to build resilience at a community level. Inherent within this is the intention to increase the levels of participation, especially amongst those who may have been previously excluded from society in some way, thereby empowering those involved to take a more active role in society.

Five dimensions of social innovation are identified as being relevant within this evaluation, which are used within section 6.2 as a means of structuring the qualitative outputs from the Local Food programme. Section 6.3 then demonstrates, through the use of a series of project cameos, how social innovation has helped to develop the capacities of both individuals and communities.

9.1.5 Increased affordability and accessibility

In taking this conceptual approach, this evaluation has enabled an examination of what is meant by the terms 'accessibility' and 'affordability'; specifically, how these critical aspects of the food supply chain can be addressed by the types of project funded through the Local Food programme. Key to this has been the ability to encompass the 'softer', more human-focused outcomes from the projects such as wellbeing and social inclusion, especially in relation to those who are often marginalised in discussions about food, but also within society more generally. In so doing, it has demonstrated that Local Food has delivered a range of broader societal outcomes that go beyond its original remit.

Accessibility is normally thought of in terms of ease of physical access, availability, convenience or nearness, with links to the idea of 'food deserts' (Wrigley 2002). However, it is clear from this examination of Local Food that it also needs to encompass: awareness of the issues surrounding local food, including its provenance and the seasonal nature of food; knowledge about the nutritional value of food; the opportunity to get involved (very often with others) in actually growing food, thereby seeing what it is possible to grow locally; the confidence to try something new; and the broader social and cultural acceptability of local food.

Affordability, on the other hand, is usually understood in relation to cost -- both absolute cost, but also in relation to income. Within Local Food projects, the emphasis has not been on reducing cost directly, but on developing new skills and providing the opportunity for people to be more directly involved in growing food for themselves. In many cases, volunteers who have been engaged in food growing initiatives have been able to take home for themselves some of the food they have been growing. Ultimately, accessibility and affordability have been addressed within the context of Local Food in terms of the empowerment of individuals through raising their awareness, skills and understanding of what is possible and available in their own locality.

> Awareness has been raised about the links between food and healthy lifestyles, through developing skills such as cooking and food growing, and changing the culture of organisations such as schools and hospitals.

Critical to improving both the accessibility and affordability of local food has been the introduction of local food to new audiences -- to people who may not previously have been able, either culturally or physically, to see it as an option for their nutritional benefit, or wider health (both physical and mental) and wellbeing.

9.2 Lessons learnt

9.2.1 Application process

- With hindsight, the First Stage application process perhaps made it too easy for applicants to succeed. Setting a higher bar at this stage might have reduced the number of subsequent rejections at the full application stage. This would effectively save time for projects, which is particularly significant for smaller organisations whose applications have had an inevitable impact on their ability to do their core work. In future programmes, the first stage application process may need to function as a more effective filter or screen.
- The application process from the perspective of the applicants themselves varied considerably. Although the written guidance was generally considered to be good, the application process was described in terms of being 'onerous' and 'time-consuming'. This was particularly the case for smaller projects. In contrast, RSWT staff were often praised in terms of being very helpful, typified by: 'Grants officer very good, but process is awful'. It is also clear that the application process built the capacity of a number of projects (especially those with less experience), making them review their policies and procedures as well as develop their capacity to apply for funding in the future.

9.2.2 Reporting

- There were concerns about the paperwork and procedures for the programme, which in some cases were adapted from previous Big Lottery funded programmes. While these have provided RSWT with the necessary information to make payments to projects and to monitor their delivery, they have not always enabled the collection of more qualitative data that can help tell the wider stories associated with projects. The annual and quarterly reporting forms were experienced as being 'very dry', for example, with insufficient space to say much about the real impacts of the project, or to provide any meaningful details. Notwithstanding these concerns, other methods of reporting and recording impacts were developed during the course of the programme, such as the website and foodecommunity.

9.2.3 Inconsistent work for Advisers

- A number of the Advisers had a fairly minimal involvement with Local Food projects, with often quite long periods of time between assignments. This led to a sense of disconnection from the main programme for some Advisers. The intention was to have enough Advisers, with enough skills and expertise to cover all eventualities, leading to 150 Advisers across England. With hindsight, RSWT recognised this was too many and that a smaller pool of more consistent work would have been a preferable option.

9.2.4 Assessment process

- There were clear concerns amongst the Assessors that, although inevitable in a programme of this size, a standardised assessment approach across all application themes limited which projects Assessors were able to support. In particular, it would have been beneficial to have had separate assessment criteria when judging the sustainability of a project in terms of its ability to generate long-term income, compared to its potential long-term social outcomes. In other words, income generation projects should be assessed in a different way from time-limited community development projects.
- Some of the grant themes, particularly those relating to enterprise and job creation, ideally required different assessment metrics from those themes more clearly concerned with social objectives. For instance, time-limited projects found it difficult to provide details of their longer-term viability, although this is a criterion upon which they were judged in practice.
- In general, smaller and newer groups applying for Main Grants found it harder to prove management capacity, financial competence and track-record than applications from larger, long-established organisations and those with professionalised fund-raising capabilities. It is important, therefore, to also examine the track-records of the individuals applying, in order to identify any relevant and transferable experience they may have from elsewhere.

> Overall, the feedback from both projects and interviews is that RSWT has been very professional in its role as delivery partner of the Local Food programme.

9.2.5 Timing of post-award support

- Due to the apparent success of the Share, Learn, Improve events, any subsequent grant project may like to consider delivering these much earlier on in the programme. This is not a criticism of the delivery of Local Food, in that clearly the need for these events only emerged over time[16]. However, projects at all stages of their delivery have the potential to benefit from interaction with other projects. In many cases, their greatest need may be when they are starting off. There is still likely to be a role for the one-to-one support of an adviser, but a wider sense of community and peer-support seems to bring added benefit to those who have engaged with this kind of event.

9.2.6 The need for flexibility

- Overall, the feedback from both projects and interviews with the Selection Panel, Steering Group, Assessors and Advisers is that RSWT has been very professional in its role as delivery partner of the Local Food programme. This is not to suggest that delivery of the programme has been without its challenges (as shown above); more that the staff at RSWT have been seen as willing to adapt to situations that have arisen and attempted to find a way to resolve them. For example, the development of a range of different communications channels over the course of Local Food has been a distinctive and very positive feature of the delivery of this programme.There has been a deliberate attempt to respond to the needs of those funded through the programme, as well as those who wish to find out more about what it involves.

9.2.7 Size of grants

- The range of grant sizes available within the Local Food programme has been important. This has provided an opportunity for larger organisations to expand the work they were already doing, but also to give smaller and less experienced organisations the chance to win funding. Small Grant projects have in many cases made an impact that is disproportionately larger than the scale of their funding would suggest; on the other hand, the scale of larger Main Grant or Beacon projects has allowed them to develop strategic alliances and partnerships within their communities.

9.2.8 Determining legacy

- Whatever the scale of investment, it is clear that the ability to purchase some kind of physical infrastructure has been an important part of developing the material capacity of projects, as well as constituting an important on-going resource/legacy once Local Food funding has finished.
- Although much of the legacy of Local Food may be thought of in terms of physical infrastructure, this should not be seen simply in terms of material capacity because in many cases it will be instrumental in enabling the development of all the capacities.
- Very often projects have been concerned with investing in capacity and developing future resilience, which is particularly apparent in relation to the education and awareness-raising functions of projects. This makes evaluation problematic in that the current outcomes will not always reflect the eventual outcomes. This needs to be recognised when considering future funding criteria for any new programme.
- Arguably the key benefit of Local Food is the development of people, with local food effectively being used as a catalyst to foster community and organisational development. These types of benefits may be quite profound, even though they may not become apparent in the short or even medium term, or be unambiguously attributable to the funding provided by Local Food.
- Similarly, funding has often contributed significantly to the development of organisations and their capacity to do things better in the future. This investment in organisational capacity should be seen as an investment for the future and therefore a key legacy of the programme.

9.3 Links to broader debates about local food

This report comes at an important time for the local food sector. Within debates about food production and food security over the last five years or so in the UK, it is significant that at a governmental level local food has been largely side-lined. Instead, the focus has been on ensuring food supply chain resilience through 'sustainable intensification', with an emphasis on the

quantity of food available at a national level (Kirwan and Maye 2013; Lang and Barling 2012). Nevertheless, there is an alternative perspective which argues that "definitions of food security should go beyond the quantity of food available to encompass the needs of communities, households and individuals" (Kirwan and Maye 2013, p.91). It then becomes possible to recognise those who might be facing food poverty at a local level (MacMillan and Dowler 2012), and to develop policies that can help alleviate these problems and foster social inclusion and social justice (Dowler et al. 2001). Inherent within this is the need to develop the social and cultural acceptability of food at a local level, educate people about the nutritional benefits of local food, and provide them with the necessary skills to both access and grow it for themselves.

While the Local Food programme was never intended to make a significant contribution to the overall quantity of food produced in the UK, it is evident from the findings in this report that it has the potential to play an important part in helping to ensure the resilience and security of the UK's food supply chains. However, for this to be acknowledged in policy circles, the notions of access and affordability need to be understood in the terms described above, whereby they incorporate social inclusion and indeed social justice; furthermore, "the notion of food security needs to focus more on the micro-level and the needs of communities, households and individuals, rather than simply at a national level" (Kirwan and Maye 2013, p. 98). As MacMillan and Dowler (2012, p. 197) caution, "national per capita availability is not a proxy for household food security", in that it fails to ensure equal access to healthy food or recognise the need for individual and community empowerment through the development of skills and knowledge in relation to food.

The primary focus of Local Food funded projects has been on developing the social and physical infrastructures of the communities and towns or cities in which they are situated. Seyfang and Smith (2007) describe this in terms of being 'intrinsic' benefits, which essentially are internally focused and practical in nature. This is the case with most of the projects supported by Local Food. Within these contexts, while change may be quite profound at the level of individuals and communities, it is likely to be incremental at a broader level. However, Seyfang and Smith (2007) also identify what they term 'diffusion' benefits, which are more ideological in scope and intent on leading to more widespread change beyond the level of the project itself. In these cases, "through the development of raised levels of awareness, empowerment and capacity building, communities have the potential to make a contribution to more profound 'paradigm change' within society" (Kirwan et al. 2013, p. 3). There is evidence of this happening in some of the bigger projects, where local food is starting to be coordinated at a larger scale and the culture of some of the organisations involved (such as local authorities) is changing in relation to (local) food; in such cases, there is the potential for a step-change in policy, in part resulting from Local Food funding.

This evaluation, in examining the outputs of Local Food in terms of capacity building through social innovation, has demonstrated that the true value of the programme is best assessed at the level of social practice rather than simply material benefits. While its material outputs have been relatively small, it has made a significant difference in helping to develop social agency, empowerment and organisational change. In this respect, it is important to acknowledge that it needs to be judged according to a different set of metrics, metrics that can encompass the value of cultural change rather than simply economic growth.

10. Recommendations

There is a need for on-going national funding

Evidence of increased participation, valuable impacts and on-going demand for this type of community activity would indicate a strong case for continued national funding to support and encourage the future evolution of new and emerging local food initiatives and enterprises.

The initial Local Food funding may be sufficient to allow some projects to continue indefinitely, but in other cases the nature of the projects means that they will need continual funding. There is a fine balance between meeting social and economic objectives. By their very nature, projects that focus on communities which are disadvantaged in some way, or are intent on supporting people with disabilities or learning issues, are likely to always require funding.

The main need for continued funding is to provide skilled teachers, trainers and people who can maintain sites and facilitate volunteers and trainees to develop skills in the future. In addition, funding is needed to enable projects to be brought together, on an ongoing basis, in order to share their experiences and to learn from each other, thereby creating mutually supportive networks.

Local authorities should be encouraged to support and engage with projects that are focused on developing local food

Food provides an opportunity to engage a wide range of people in a broad set of issues that face society today. Some of the larger projects such as 'Harvest Brighton and Hove' (BLF000374) and 'Capital Growth' (MLF000676) are clearly being successful at feeding into policy and helping to develop strategies.

If society determines that supporting localism is an important policy issue, there is a need to develop an integrated approach to food that can help facilitate tackling wider sustainability issues, such as resource use, obesity, general health and wellbeing. Local authorities should be encouraged to support and engage with projects that are focused on developing local food, integrating them into their overall planning strategies.

Local food engagement should be prescribed for physical and mental health benefits, and wellbeing

It is clear that an important outcome of Local Food projects is improvements to the physical and mental health of many of those involved; furthermore, that many of the projects contribute to a sense of physical, emotional and even spiritual wellbeing. While some projects are already partly funded by local health trusts, this is an area where further and greater funding should be sought in the future.

There is a need for greater cross-sectoral thinking and coordination. A key element of improved public health concerns changing public behaviour, greater exercise and better quality food. In this respect, food-related projects such as those funded through Local Food, provide a great opportunity. More links need to be made to health professionals such as GPs and clinical commissioning groups to prescribe engagement with local food projects and, in the process, justify supporting them through health-related funding.

Greater recognition should be given to the social benefits of local food projects

The evidence from this evaluation is that projects such as those supported by Local Food enable individuals and communities to build capacity at a social level in relation to accessing and affording local food, in addition to the more tangible outputs of physically producing more food.

It is crucial, therefore, to ensure that any evaluation conducted is able to recognise and value the importance of these social benefits, recognising them as significant outputs for the communities concerned alongside the more obvious quantifiable outputs.

Policy makers need to recognise the role that local food can play in helping ensure food supply chain security and resilience

Policy makers should give more recognition to the role that local food systems can play in helping to ensure

While the voluntary sector is adding significant value across the supported projects, this needs to be supported by positions that pay a realistic wage.

food supply chain security and resilience, seeing them as complementary to national and international food systems. While they may not make a significant quantitative contribution to the amount of food produced in the UK, they can have a crucial role to play in developing social agency, empowerment and organisational change at an individual and community level.

The success of local food projects should not obscure the need for broader structural change

In supporting and recognising the benefits of local food projects, policy makers should not use them as, in effect, a palliative measure that helps alleviate the problem of food insecurity and poverty in certain communities, without also addressing the need for structural-level changes to the food system to make it more equitable and accessible.

Funding should be provided to draw together the range of independent evaluations of Local Food-funded projects

This evaluation is concerned only with the overall delivery of the Local Food programme. While comprehensive, it has necessitated sampling the projects to be examined, as well as focusing attention on the wider evaluation rather than on the projects themselves.

A number of the projects have conducted their own evaluations, for the specific benefit of the organisations running them, which provide greater detail and insight into the projects involved. While some of the findings of these will be project-specific, others will be helpful to the development and implementation of local food projects more generally. At present, there is no funding or mechanism available for sharing the findings of these evaluations more widely. In addition, it would be helpful to provide funding to draw in the findings of the Big Lottery Fund's Making Local Food Work projects. This would enable a more comprehensive understanding of the local food sector and how it might best be supported in the future.

The internal evaluation of projects should be a higher priority

While some projects have conducted comprehensive internal evaluations, most have not. A lack of individual project data, especially quantitative data, has hampered both this main evaluation and the SROI.

This is partly to do with the design of the project report forms, but also the need to change the mind-set of those organisations that are in receipt of funding. Evaluation needs to be given a much higher priority and be seen as something very much worth doing. In this respect, reports should be about outcomes and not simply outputs. Future programmes must ensure that a given percentage of the grant awarded to a project is ring fenced to facilitate better self-evaluation procedures being undertaken. It may also be necessary to make funding available to train those in charge of running projects on how to conduct an internal evaluation, and to make clear why it is so important to do so.

The benefits of an SROI approach should be considered

Projects such as those supported by Local Food could consider undertaking their own evaluation using the SROI framework. A simple theory of change exercise will help reveal the nature of project outcomes, and indicate the extent to which the project is delivering on its objectives and providing value for the community, beneficiaries and wider society.

In addition, the process of undertaking this exercise should reveal potential improvements to planning, management, implementation and record keeping activities that will help ensure the project's longevity. Nevertheless, in utilising an SROI approach, it is important to recognise that programmes such as Local Food are primarily focused on cultural change rather than on delivering economic benefits. As such, the resultant ratio of benefit-to-investment should be understood in this context.

The management of volunteers must be supported

Projects that rely on either voluntary and/or low wage labour are unlikely to be sustainable in the long term. While the voluntary sector is adding significant value across the supported projects, this needs to be supported by positions that pay a realistic wage.

Policy needs to consider how to fund meaningful employment in projects that may not be able to generate sufficient funds themselves, to do this. It is clear that having a full-time worker is usually critical to running a successful volunteer

programme, since volunteers need a lot of support, skills training and encouragement.

Funding for adviser support in future programmes

The amount of Adviser time devoted to small projects relative to the size of funding applied for may appear disproportionate.

However, their advice has helped to build capacity amongst people and organisations in terms of thinking about and developing funding applications. In this respect, future funders should see it as critical to provide adviser help in order to enable communities and smaller / less experienced organisations to apply for the funding opportunities available.

Ongoing funding for the Local Food website

The Local Food website has provided a wide-ranging resource for those actively involved in, or considering developing, a local food project.

Initially, some of its content was restricted to those projects supported by the Local Food programme, but latterly it has been opened up more generally. At present, there is no funding available to continue to support this valuable resource, once the programme comes to an end.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Fact Sheets

- Area of land used by the project for producing local food
- Number of people involved in the practical production of food through the project
- Type and volume of food produced
- The number of food bearing trees planted
- Events: type, number, people attending
- Information published
- Number of enterprises producing food (animals and/or crops) locally
- Number of outlets selling locally grown or processed food
- Number of outlets processing locally grown or processed food
- New distribution systems/networks for local food
- Development of skills– type and numbers involved
- Volunteer involvement – type and numbers involved
- Jobs created

Appendix 2: Project indicators

1. Area of land used by the project for growing local food
2. Number of people involved in the practical production of food through the project
3. The type of food production system involved (Please tick all that apply)
4. Type and Volume of food produced
5. The number of food bearing trees planted
6. Events: type, number, people attending

7a. Information published (part 1)

7b. Information published (part 2)
> dissemination of information

8. Number of enterprises producing food (animals and/or crops) locally
9. Number of outlets selling locally grown or processed food
10. Types of processing undertaken
11. New distribution systems/networks for local food
12. Development of skills– type and numbers involved
13. Promoting the cultural diversity of food
14. Influencing 'new audiences'
15. Local participation
16. Volunteer involvement
    > type and numbers involved
17. Jobs created

Appendix 3: Steering Group, Selection Panel and Assessor interviews

Steering Group

Section A. Questions about the Steering Group

Section B. Questions about the Local Food Programme

Section C. The programme evaluation

Are there any further comments you'd like to make about:

- The Steering Group and its functions.
- The nature of the selection criteria.
- The nature of the applications submitted.
- The focus and relevance of the LF programme.
- Future funding for the local food sector.

Selection Panel

Section A. Questions about the selection procedure/structure

Section B. Questions about the applications

Section C. Partnership working

Are there any further comments you'd like to make about:

- The Selection Panel process.
- The nature of the selection criteria.
- The nature of the applications submitted.
- The focus and relevance of the LF programme.
- Future funding for the local food sector.

Local Food Assessors

Section A. Questions about the application and assessment procedure

Section B. Questions about the applications

Section C. Local Food fund and its legacy

Do you think the LF programme has achieved its aims so far? Please elaborate.

Are there any further comments you'd like to make about:

- The Selection Panel process.
- The Assessor role.
- The nature of the selection criteria.
- The nature of the applications submitted.
- The focus and relevance of the LF programme.
- Future funding for the local food sector.

Appendix 4: Grants Officer questions

Introduction

- What is your background/experience of local/community food projects?
- How did you become part of the LF programme?
- What do you see as the main role of a Grants Officer? Where do you fit in the wider scheme of things re. LF programme delivery?

Project management/projects managed

- How many projects have you been responsible for managing?
- What have been the key issues that you have encountered in managing these projects?
  - > In administrative terms?
  - > In project terms?

What makes some projects more difficult to manage than others?

Are there any notable differences between the 'types' of project (in admin./man. or project impact terms): enterprise, community growing, education and learning?

Are there any notable differences between the scales of project (in admin./man. or project impact terms): Beacon, Main, Small?

How would you describe your relationship with:

- > Project advisers.
- > Project assessors.

What was your experience of the Selection Panel?

Looking back at the LF programme more generally:

- are there things that worked well from your perspective?
- are there things that did not work so well and that might be important lessons to learn in terms of delivering a programme like this in the future?

Legacy and the future

- What are the principal lasting benefits of the projects you have been involved with?
- How confident are you of the legacies of the projects you have been involved with?
- What would have happened in the absence of LF funding?
- What needs to be done now?
- What, if anything, would you like to be different in any future manifestation of LF?

Finally

- Do you have any final comments you would like to make about the role of Grants Officer within the context of the Local Food programme?

Appendix 5: Case studies conducted (50 in total)

Project URN	Start and end Date	Theme	Grant Type	Type Class	Location
BLF000031	01.10.2009 30.12.2012	D)	Beacon	Community Growing	London
BLF000337	01.04.2010 31.03.2014	E)	Beacon	Education and Learning	North East
BLF000340	05.04.2009 04.04.2013	B)	Beacon	Education and Learning	Multi Regional
BLF000374	01.06.2009 01.06.2013	A)	Beacon	Community Growing	South East
BLF000385	01.10.2009 30.09.2012	C)	Beacon	Community Growing	London
MLF000013	01.01.2009 31.12.2012	D)	Main	Education and Learning	Multi Regional
MLF000029	01.02.2009 31.07.2011	C)	Main	Education and Learning	Yorkshire & Humberside
MLF000030	01.11.2008 30.11.2011	A)	Main	Enterprise	North East
MLF000050	01.06.2009 30.11.2013	A)	Main	Education and Learning	North West
MLF000089	01.09.2008 31.08.2011	D)	Main	Community Growing	Yorkshire & Humberside
MLF000177	01.11.2009 01.08.2011	E)	Main	Education and Learning	West Midlands
MLF000198	01.01.2010 31.12.2013	E)	Main	Education and Learning	London
MLF000200	18.03.2009 18.03.2012	A)	Main	Community Growing	East Midlands
MLF000325	01.09.2009 31.08.2012	A)	Main	Community Growing	West Midlands
MLF000409	01.07.2009 30.06.2012	C)	Main	Enterprise	North East
MLF000459	01.04.2011 30.03.2014	C)	Main	Enterprise	South West
MLF000620	01.07.2009 30.09.2012	A)	Main	Education and Learning	Multi-regional

2010 (19) | 2011 (10), | 2012 (10) | 2013 (11)

Project Type	Project Title	Location	Amount Awarded (£)
Community food growing	Growing Greenwich	London	347,419.00
Education & Learning	'Our Hands on the Land'	Wallsend	494,998.00
School grounds	Fruit-full Schools	Winchester	457,485.00
Community food growing (Sharing best practise / networking)	Harvest Brighton and Hove	Brighton	500,000.00
Community food growing	Sustaining Sutton	London	500,000.00
Sharing best practise / networking	Permaculture LAND Project:	Leeds	273,000.00
Celebrating food cultures	Manor Oaks Farm Enterprise	Sheffield	237,843.00
Community supported agriculture	Plot to Pot	Barnhard Castle	141,334.00
School grounds	Fresh Food for Fresh Pupils	Oldham	98,239.00
Community food growing - City Farm	Heeley City Farm Local Food Project	Norton, Sheffield	160,000.00
Education and Learning	The Great Staffordshire Picnic	Rugeley	73,500.00
Education and Learning	Oasis Local Food Growing Club	London	89,443.00
Allotments	Re-CHARGE (Re- Choosing Health and Reviving Garden Environments)	Nottingham	62,838.00
Community food growing	Healthy bodies, healthy minds - a user led mental health community org. horticulture and education	Solihull	94,140.00
Farmers' markets	North East England Farmers' Markets Ltd (NEEFM)	Hexham	97,984.00
Redistribution of Food	Love Local Food Phase 3	Exeter	300,000.00
Sharing best practise / networking	Growing Communities in England	Bristol	299,998.00

Appendix 5: Case studies conducted (continued)

Project URN	Start and end Date	Theme	Grant Type	Type Class	Location
MLF000671	27.01.2010 26.01.2013	A)	Main	Education and Learning	North East
MLF000676	21.09.2009 31.12.2012	A)	Main	Community Growing	London
MLF000710	01.04.2013 31.03.2014	A)	Main	Community Growing	London
MLF000810	15.03.2010 15.03.2012	A)	Main	Community Growing	South West
MLF000816	01.08.2009 30.07.2012	D)	Main	Community Growing	Yorkshire & Humberside
MLF001013	01.04.2010 30.03.2014	D)	Main	Community Growing	East Midlands
MLF001074	01.04.2010 30.03.2012	B)	Main	Education and Learning	South East
MLF001243	01.04.2010 30.04.2012	D)	Main	Enterprise (Ed. & Learning)	London
MLF001371	01.10.2011 31.03.2014	D)	Main	Community Growing	Yorkshire & Humberside
MLF001406	01.09.2010 31.10.2013	E)	Main	Education and Learning	South West
MLF001546	01.04.2010 31.03.2013	C)	Main	Community Growing	North West
MLF001557	01.01.2010 30.07.2011	C)	Main	Enterprise (Ed. & Learning)	North West
MLF001656	01.01.2012 31.12.2013	C)	Main	Enterprise	London
MLF001727	01.10.2010 31.12.2013	E)	Main	Education and Learning	West Midlands
MLF001763	01.09.2011 28.02.2014	D)	Main	Community Growing	East Midlands
MLF001842	01.06.2010 31.05.2013	A)	Main	Community Growing	Yorkshire & Humberside
MLF001876	05.04.2012 30.03.2014	A)	Main	Community Growing	South West

2010 (19) | 2011 (10), | 2012 (10) | 2013 (11)

Project Type	Project Title	Location	Amount Awarded (£)
Sharing best practise / networking	North Pennine Dales - Enterprising Food	Barnhard Castle	299,600.00
Community food growing	Capital Growth	London	299,999.00
Community Food Growing	Bedfords Park Walled Garden	Havering Atte-Bower	255,800.00
Community food growing - Allotments	Chyan Community Allotments and Apple Press	Penryn	30,000.00
City farms	Food for Thought	Bradford	265,136.00
Education and Learning	Growing Kelmarsh	Kelmarsh	66,755.00
Celebrating food cultures	Hedgerow Harvest	London	159,000.00
Catering	SE17 Community Food Cooperative	London	114,811.00
Composting	Community Composting	Sheffield	224,641.00
Education and Learning	Get Growing! Food growing in schools	Stroud	86,805.00
Community supported agriculture	Climate Friendly	St Helens	83,900.00
Catering	Bolton Kitchen	Bolton	42,218.00
Food co-ops	Local Food to Greenwich	London	80,199.00
School grounds	Kitchen and Garden development at Staunton-on-Wye Primary SchooL	Staunton-on-Wye, Hereford	26,040.00
Community gardens	Cultivating Futures	Nottingham	238,036.00
Community food growing	Growing Penistone	Penistone, Sheffield	114,650.00
Allotments	Grow-Allot	Devonport, Plymouth	155,226.00

Appendix 5: Case studies conducted (continued)

Project URN	Start and end Date	Theme	Grant Type	Type Class	Location
MLF002181	13.04.2012 31.03.2014	A)	Main	Community Growing	Eastern
SLF000005	04.08.2008 31.07.2009	E)	Small	Education and Learning	North West
SLF000113	01.02.2009 28.02.2010	A)	Small	Enterprise	North West
SLF000482	27.03.2009 31.03.2010	A)	Small	Community Growing	London
SLF000574	15.03.2009 15.03.2011	A)	Small	Community Growing	South East
SLF000632	24.03.2009 24.03.2010	E)	Small	Education and Learning	Eastern
SLF000898	28.04.2009 01.04.2011	C)	Small	Enterprise	South East
SLF000982	12.10.2009 12.10.2010	A)	Small	Community Growing	North West
SLF001033	01.11.2009 31.10.2010	D)	Small	Community Growing	Eastern
SLF001324	01.06.2010 01.06.2012	E)	Small	Enterprise (Ed. & Learning)	South East
SLF001349	18.03.2010 31.03.2012	A)	Small	Community Growing (Ed. & Learning)	South West
SLF001417	07.04.2010 07.10.2010	D)	Small	Education and Learning	Yorkshire & Humberside
SLF001781	01.10.2010 31.10.2011	E)	Small	Community Growing	London
SLF002114	17.11.2011 01.03.2013	A)	Small	Community Growing	London
SLF002170	15.01.2011 31.03.2012	B)	Small	Education and Learning	London
SLF002350	01.02.2011 31.01.2013	E)	Small	Education and Learning	South West

2010 (19) | 2011 (10), | 2012 (10) | 2013 (11)

Project Type	Project Title	Location	Amount Awarded (£)
Community food growing	Student Eats	London	266,879.00
Education and Learning	The Time is Ripe	Manchester	7,376.00
Box schemes	Organic for all	Bolton	9,603
Community food growing	The Growing Kitchen Community	London	10,000.00
Allotments	Cripley Island Orchard	Oxford	10,000.00
School Grounds	Green Fingers	Great Bentley	2,000.00
Catering	Ewelme Village Association Ltd	Ewelme	9,889.00
Allotments	Fork to Fork	Lancaster	8,936
Allotments	Jimmy's "Shakey Beans" Allotment	Cambridge	6,305.00
Food co-ops	Community Eggshare	Bexhill	3,430.00
Community land management	Monkey Sanctuary Community Edible Garden	Looe	4,125.00
Education & Learning	Veggies for Victoria	Leeds	7,065.00
Community Food Growing	Green Path Project	Leytonstone	9,965.00
Community Food Growing	Christ Church School	London	10,000.00
Education and Learning	Fun Family Vegetarian Cooking	London	6,800.00
Education and Learning	Growing People	Chard	9,600.00

Appendix 6: Interview schedule for the first 29 case studies

1) Introduction

- What is the background to the development of the project?
- What is the overall scope of the project?
- Project themes
  - > Why did you choose x as your Primary theme and y as your Secondary theme (taken from accompanying fact sheet 'background')?

2) Factual information

Check that you have the correct factual information. This may have been collected from fact sheets, the database, websites etc.

3) Additional issues not covered by the 'fact sheets'

4) Administration and management procedures

4.1 Application process

- What has been your experience of the application process?
- Getting match-funding?
- What could be/have been done better/differently?
- On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being very good and 1 being very bad) how would you rate the overall application process?

4.2 Selection process

- What has been your experience of the selection process?
- What could be/have been done better/differently?
- On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being very good and 1 being very bad) how would you rate the selection process?

4.3 Advisor function

- How well has the advisor function worked?
- How significant has the advisor been to your project?
- What other sources of advice have you used?
- What has been your overall experience of working with your advisor?
- What could be/have been done better/differently?
- On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being very good and 1 being very bad) how would you rate the advisor function?

4.4 Local Food Administration

- What has been your experience of dealing with the RSWT/ Local Food Grants Team?
- Any Match Funding issues and, if so, how supportive have RSWT been?
- Are there any aspects of the management/administration structure that you would like to see changed/improved?
- Filling in End of Grant/Quarterly feedback forms?
- Have you ever needed to complain?
  - > If so, how has this been handled?
- On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being very good and 1 being very bad) how would you rate the RSWT/ Local Food Grants Team administration?

5) Project legacy and the future

- How effective has your project been?
  - > Does it represent good value for money?
- What changes have resulted from your project that contribute to your chosen themes?
- To what extent has your project contributed to the overall goal of the local food programme 'to make locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities'?
- What does affordable and accessible mean in a local community context?
- What are the key lessons that you have learnt from this project?
- How might you do things differently in the future/future projects?
- What will be left on the ground at the end of the project? What is the strategic legacy after project funding has finished? Trying to understand the long-term strategic change enabled by Local Food funding.
- Where do you go now?
- How replicable is the project?

- Are there any messages for policy that you would like to see taken on board?

Appendix 7: Interview schedule for the last 21 case studies

1) Introduction

- What is the background to the development of the project?
- What is the overall scope and aims of the project?
- How well has the project been going?
- What would you identify as the main successes (so far)?
- What would you identify as the main problems (so far)?

2) Material Capacity (factual information – land, people, events)

Check that you have the correct factual information. This may have been collected from fact sheets, the database, websites etc.

Need to then probe beyond the actual outputs. For example:

- How much importance does the interviewee assign to material capacities?
- To what extent are material capacities critical to the success of the project? What is their relative importance in relation to the other outputs and outcomes of the project?

3) Personal Capacity Building

- How would you describe the impacts this project has had on people's lives?
- To what extent, and in what ways, has your project contributed to an increased knowledge and understanding of food?
- Has it improved understanding of the links between food production and the environment? If so, how?
- Has it raised awareness of the connections between food and health? If so, how?
- Are there any indications of improvements to health and wellbeing? Is so, what?
- To what extent, and in what ways, has your project changed people's relationships with the communities in which they live?
- Try and assess behavioural change amongst individuals. This might include buying or eating habits; school activities; community engagement.
- Has it changed people's eating habits; food purchasing habits; people's attitudes to food? If so, how?
- To what extent, and in what ways, has your project changed people's relationships with or within the communities in which they live? (again, looking for comments on changes to individuals and the evidence of this change)
- How have you sought to address the cultural diversity of food? What changes are you seeing as a result of the work you are doing?
  - > On individuals?
  - > On the wider community?
- What is the significance of skills development - especially in relation to empowerment – both in the short term but also as a legacy of the project?

4) Cultural Capacity Building

- How would you describe the impacts this project has had locally?
  - > What are the main wider benefits at a local community level?
  - > What evidence do you have (how are they evidenced)?
  - > To what extent are wider local or organisational benefits (cultural capacity building important to this project?
- Cultural capacity building goes beyond the individual. To what extent is the project focussed on the community(ies) rather than individuals?
  What is the reason for this?
- What do you mean/understand by 'community' in relation to your project – who are we talking about?
- What has happened around community engagement and community capacity as a result of the project?
- To what extent has there been community support and buy-in? What is the evidence for this?

- 'Audience creation' – to what extent has participation been widened and how/with whom?
- Is there evidence of changed relationships e.g. coordination between organisations like schools, hospitals, the council?
- Is there evidence of changes as a result of your project within your local/regional/national networks?

Your organisation

- In what ways has the project had a 'cultural change' impact on your project team and volunteers? (eg changed the way you work or what you do etc)
- What other benefits or challenges have resulted for your organisation?

Your users/beneficiaries

- In what ways has the project had a cultural change impact on your project users/beneficiaries? (eg changed the way things happen or how people relate to each other)
- Have any new structures been set up to encourage more local control and governance?

5) Project outcomes and legacy

Legacy

- What will be left on the ground at the end of the project, both culturally and physically?
- What is the strategic legacy after project funding has finished?
- To what extent has change at either an individual or community level been incremental rather than a step change?
- How effective has your project been overall?
- To what extent does it represent good value for money? i.e. What is £1 of public money buying for the public?

Themes and contribution to overall aim

- How useful were the themes as a way of structuring your project?
- What changes have resulted from your project that contributes to your chosen themes?
- To what extent has your project contributed to the overall goal of the local food programme 'to make locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities'? Please explain and suggest the evidence.
- What does affordable and accessible mean in a local community context – are there different perceptions of what it means?

Final reflections

- What are the key lessons that you have learnt from this project?
- How might you do things differently in the future, or if you were starting again?
- To what extent and in what ways is the project replicable?

To be linked with SC&I funds where appropriate:

- Where do you go now?
- Are there any messages for policy that you would like to see taken on board?

Appendix 8: Supporting Change and Impact funding interview schedule

Supporting Change grants:

Supporting Change can be used for activities that will ensure that the benefits of your project remain sustainable after the Local Food funding ends. This could include things like:

- Measuring the impact of your project
- Reviewing how the project is delivered
- Working with others to sustain the project
- Sharing learning from the project
- Marketing and promoting the project more widely
- Enabling those running the project to develop new skills

Supporting Impact grants:

Supporting Impact can be used for activities that will help make your project sustainable. Supporting Impact funding is not continuation funding, so the costs may be different to those of your current Local Food project, although they are likely to be similar. It could include things like salaries, volunteer costs, and training costs.

Interview questions

- How important has this funding been to your project and why?
- What has this funding enabled you to do that you could not have otherwise done?
- What has it achieved?
- What difference has this made already?
- What is likely to happen next?

Projects selected

Eight of the selected ten projects had received both supporting change and supporting impact grants:

- BLF000031 Growing Greenwich, London
- BLF000385 Sustaining Sutton & Sutton Community Farm
- MLF000013 LAND, Permaculture Association
- MLF000810 Chyan Community Field, Cornwall
- MLF000816 Food for Thought, Bradford
- MLF001074 Hedgerow Harvest, The Tree Council, London
- MLF001243 SE17, InSpire, London
- MLF000620 Growing Communities in England, Multi regional, Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

Two of the selected projects received only a supporting change grant:

- MLF001546 Climate Friendly Food at Fir Tree Farm, St Helens, Wirral
- MLF000200 Re-CHARGE, St Anne's Allotments, Nottingham

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Annotations

pg 5- [1]The 'More than just the veg: growing community capacity through Local Food projects' report was produced in two formats: one as a full length report that was available electronically; and a summary version that was produced in hard copy and available for all delegates at the mid-term conference held at City Hall, London in October 2012. Both reports are available from the Local Food website: http://www.localfoodgrants.org/. The data for these reports were based on the first 29 case studies conducted, whereas this final report is based on 50 case studies.

pg 5- [2]It is usual for the research methodology to be driven by the conceptual approach taken, but in this case the conceptualisation of the benefits of Local Food emerged inductively following the completion of the first 29 case studies and the production of the mid-term report. The resultant conceptualisation then helped to shape the nature of the remaining 21 case studies.

pg 6- [3]£50 million was awarded in September 2007, with an additional £7.5 million in March 2010 and a further £2.3 million in January 2012, taking the total programme value to £59.8 million.

pg 8- [4]This categorisation should not be seen as exclusive, as a number of the project 'types' fall into more than one of these groups. E.g. CSAs would fall into all three.

pg 10- [5]On their application forms, projects had to identify which of Local Food's main themes they were primarily addressing.

pg 14- [6]Geographical Information System (GIS).

pg 16- [7]Details of these various initiatives will be provided in Section 5.

pg 18- [8]The 'More than just the veg: growing community capacity through Local Food projects' report is available from the Local Food website: http://www.localfoodgrants.org/.

pg 19- [9]The other two elements considered are an evaluation of the Supporting Change and Impact funding, and the development of an SROI model. These are both additional to the main evaluation. Their relevance will be considered within the reflections and recommendations sections.

pg 20- [10]These ideas were originally developed in some detail in the 'More than just the veg: growing community capacity through Local Food projects' reports. As such, they will not be repeated here. These reports are available from the Local Food website: http://www.localfoodgrants.org/.

pg 27- [11]The reason for this has not been examined, either by RSWT or the evaluation team.

pg 27- [12]Notwithstanding that the programme was demand-led, and in reality there were not many applications from more 'unorthodox' projects.

pg 27- [13]These are concerns that clearly align with those of the Assessors.

pg 31- [14]Access to the films is available through: http://www.localfoodgrants.org/.

pg 47- [15]This is interesting, in that a key recommendation of this evaluation is that all projects should be encouraged to do this in any future funding initiatives.

pg 52- [16]In reality, a number of Pre-Application and Post Award events were held, incorporating elements of shared learning, which led in time to the more focussed Share, Learn, Improve events.

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