

Ludlow Food Network

How do we combat food insecurity in Ludlow?

I am Hannah James of Ludlow Food Festival
I am Ruth Davies from Ludlow Food Bank

What is Ludlow Food Network?

We are groups in the town who are all concerned with food but look at it from different angles.

Many of the groups have different emphases, e.g. green issues, helping to achieve fair prices for food producers world wide, reducing food waste, helping people with learning difficulties to name a few.

We don't have time to discuss all the groups in the network, but each group has provided contact details. We have a copy for each of you.

Who is in the Ludlow Food Network?

Hands Together Ludlow

Ludlow Food Festival

Discovery Centre Grow Cook Learn programme

Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group

Rockspring Community Centre

Zero Waste

Ludlow Food Bank

Slow Food

Working Together

Climate Friendly Diet

Local to Ludlow

What are the aims of the Ludlow Food Network?

Combating Climate Change and working for a fairer world

Think about the implications of what you eat!

Food matters. It is essential to sustain life and therefore a vast quantity is consumed every day.

What we eat, how this is sourced and packaged therefore has a profound impact on our planet and its inhabitants. We believe this should therefore be the subject of serious thought.

There are a number of voluntary groups who work on food issues in Ludlow. We seek to work closely together and with our local retailers.

We work to four key principles:

- 1. Good value nutritious food for all**
- 2. Source ethically**
- 3. Reduce food waste**
- 4. Reduce packaging waste**

Whilst all of us embrace these principles, different groups have a different focus to their work.

What is Food Insecurity?

Food Insecurity is defined as: Limited access to **nutritious food** ... due to lack of money or other resources.

Surely this should not be a problem in “Foodie Ludlow?”

Is there evidence of food insecurity in Ludlow?

Ludlow Food Bank and Hands Together Ludlow have been working tirelessly over the last 15 months to combat food insecurity in our town. The need for their services has been exacerbated by the Covid 19 epidemic, but both organisations were already busy beforehand.

In 2020 Ludlow food bank supplied 560 food parcels with enough food to feed 1202 people, including 441 children.

In 2020 Hands Together Ludlow provided 3585 cooked meals to people who for one reason or another were unable to cook for themselves.

This amounts to more than 2300 kg of waste food saved from landfill.

Real life Examples from the food bank

Lady and her 10 year old son who fled from domestic violence. She was too frightened to leave the house, and her benefits were delayed through lack of ID.

Single man who had to ask for another food parcel and was so depressed that he unsuccessfully tried to commit suicide, leaving himself with multiple fractures.

Family with 5 children. They are suffering from the child benefit cap even though both parents work - but with zero hours contracts.

Homeless man who had major mental health problems. He often told us that we were "Literally saving his life"

What are the main reasons for food insecurity?

- Insufficient or delayed benefit payments.
- 10% of children in Ludlow now living below the poverty line.
- Mental health issues.

The food bank sees a lot of single men who have mental health issues, and do not have the skills or inclination to cook, budget and plan. Hopefully we will be able to refer them to Cook, Grow Learn, and we have started to refer them to “Men’s Sheds”, an HTL initiative. Many are lonely, making their depression worse.

- Possibly a lack of sufficient affordable food and other items - only Aldi is seen as a “budget” shop. We have nowhere to buy inexpensive new clothing items. Charity shops are becoming more attractive to younger, eco-conscious shoppers. I hope this won’t push the prices up making second hand clothes unaffordable to many on benefits.

How Can the Ludlow Food Network help?

The Food Bank and Hands Together Ludlow are providing emergency food to those in need.

Our connection to Ludlow Food Festival has provided a good number of donations of food from exhibitors, which provided a lot of ingredients for Hands Together Ludlow to make meals, many of which were also distributed by the Food Bank. The Food Festival, HTL, Working Together and the Food Bank also offer chances for people to volunteer, which can help some people who are suffering from depression.

The food Network offers a chance for food suppliers, the Food Bank and Hands Together Ludlow to meet up and support one another. The food bank provides vouchers worth £5 for the independent greengrocers, butchers and (at Christmas) delicatessens where people can exchange the vouchers for food. This supports local businesses and hungry people.

Food Insecurity is a current hot topic

Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance, Sustain and Trussell Trust are all currently producing statistics to show that food insecurity is a national problem, and needs to be tackled at the highest levels of government.

What do we want from you?

We wanted to inform you that this network exists, and for you to remain aware of food insecurity and surrounding issues when you are making decisions.

We want you to work for all of your constituents, especially for those for whom life is a struggle.

Any Questions?

Feel free to contact us later if you need to.

Contact details are on the handout, which was given out at the last Town Council meeting.