

Appendix 3: Affordable Food Clubs

Shifting away from the traditional food bank model towards an affordable food club approach, offers greater resilience and financial sustainability for the local food support system. It also offers many benefits for residents.

An affordable food club (sometimes known as a social supermarket) sells a wide range of grocery items at a heavily discounted price for people in need of food support. Typically, a person will pay about £5 for about £20 worth of food and toiletry items (this can be scaled up according to household size).

As with food banks, there is normally a degree of eligibility required to access the social supermarket, and boundaries around frequency of access (e.g. one shop a week for 6 months). It can work well to prevent people from reaching crisis point, or as a step-down option to transition people away from free food parcels. It also gives people more autonomy over the items they receive and paying a contribution towards the cost of the food helps to support dignity.

Food for the social supermarket can still be sourced through donations and surplus, but the income generated assists with costs. A group of social supermarkets working together can also take a co-operative approach to buying in bulk at a discount. Community growing schemes and allotment associations can contribute fresh produce.

We have been linking with **Feeding Britain** (<https://feedingbritain.org>) which supports a network of over 150 affordable food clubs across the UK, supporting 20,000 households. This has allowed us to connect with and learn from affordable food clubs about what works well.

Examples include:

ThreeHills Community Supermarket Glasgow

[Home - Threehills Community Supermarket Glasgow \(threehillsglasgow.org\)](http://threehillsglasgow.org)

Shrublands Community Food Club and Café – Great Yarmouth

[Community Food Club \(shrublandstrust.org.uk\)](http://shrublandstrust.org.uk)

Barking and Dagenham Community Food Club

[Community food clubs | LBBD](#)

Number 7 Citizen Supermarket, Café and Advice Hub Birkenhead

[Number Seven - Birkenhead - Citizen Supermarket, Cafe and Advice Hub | Wirral InfoBank](#)

Affordable food clubs can be of particular benefit if there is a wider support offer co-located (eg community hub, café, etc). Feeding Britain are very keen to work with and support us in Torbay in developing this offer. We have a number of organisations in Torbay who are interesting in exploring the model, some of whom are currently providing a more traditional food parcel offer.