

Food Power

Food Power aims to transform the way that people in food poverty access support and create long-term, sustainable lives that are free from hunger. Critical to this is engaging local people and alliances, giving voice to those experiencing food poverty, influencing practice on the ground and leveraging in additional resources.

They support coordinated approaches to tackling food poverty in areas across the UK, tailored to the particular locality and unique policy contexts across the four nations. The four year programme is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and is led by Sustain and Church Action on Poverty.

Middlesbrough Food Power Alliance

Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) successfully obtained £10,000 funding through the Food Power programme to tackle food poverty and food insecurity in Middlesbrough. There is now a dedicated member of staff at MEC coordinating the project who has been recruited to engage with representatives from organisations supporting people who are in food poverty and food insecurity. The alliance is working together to create a food poverty action plan addressing four areas: School Holidays, Maximising Income, Surplus Food and Optimising Healthy Start.

Middlesbrough Food Power Alliance Members

There is a diverse range of organisations who are involved in the bi-monthly meetings developing the Food Power Action Plan all providing input from varying perspectives:

- Middlesbrough Council Public Health
- Middlesbrough College
- Middlesbrough Environment City
- Hope 4 Boro
- Thirteen
- Teesside University
- Together Middlesbrough Redcar & Cleveland
- Middlesbrough Food Bank
- Middlesbrough Council Finance, Governance and Support
- MIMA
- Middlesbrough Primary Schools
- Islamic Diversity Centre
- Mind
- Middlesbrough Community Hubs
- Citizens Advice Bureau

School Holiday Provision Mapping

Middlesbrough Food Power has been working with an intern from Teesside University to research the extent of food poverty across Middlesbrough and the current levels of emergency provision that are available in each ward. Following on from this initial research we have been focusing on mapping the current provision available through the summer holidays identifying

a good selection of provision available across the town. However, this has highlighted four key areas of expansion:

More venues – Currently we have 19 different providers of holiday provision however, we have 13360 primary age children currently on roll, 5217 getting free school meals so the current venues do not have the capacity to cater to all children.

More external providers – enrichment is very expensive and although there has been some input from external providers we can always gain more to make sure the children are not hungry in body or mind.

More days - the current provision is mostly focused around the summer holidays for a two to three days per week. We would like to support each group to offer at least 12 days provision during the summer holidays and to expand their provision across other school holidays.

Strengthening the food offer – the current programme is working at fully capacity and the current meals are sometimes stretched. Providing this area with support would be ideal to offer a nutritious meal each day.

Middlesbrough Food Power has been working with Middlesbrough's primary schools to see what is currently on offer throughout the school day, after school and during the holidays each school will also be invited to a networking session on 8th November to discuss what each school can do to potentially set up their own holiday provision with the support of Food Power Middlesbrough and Feast of Fun.

In April 2018 Organisations, local authorities and charities were invited to bid for a share of The Holiday Activities and Food Research funding to work in partnership for initial research into holiday provision during the 2018 summer holidays. Middlesbrough did not apply for this fund due to a very short deadline. This will be followed by a targeted pilot programme in the 2019 Easter and summer holidays that we are interested to be involved with as a South Tees programme.

Recommendations

- A joint South Tees application for The Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund lead by a community partnership with the support from both local authorities.