

Q&A webinar Cost of Living Crisis

Where is the bridging the gap programme being piloted?

Julia Kirby-Smith 11:21 AM

It is planned to be across the UK but mainly in urban/city settings. It is still in the early stages of scoping and planning so do contact Sustain if you would like to be involved.

Julia Kirby-Smith 11:22 AM

<https://www.sustainweb.org/bridging-the-gap/>

You can sign up to the Bridging the gap newsletter here: <https://www.sustainweb.org/bridging-the-gap/>

Anonymous Attendee

IMHO we should promote vertical farming, processed foods and GMO seeds instead of “organic farming” because organic farming is neither sustainable nor resilient against climate change. The world population is expected to be around 10 billion in 2050 according to UN reports. Organic foods were good for hunters and gatherers but not for the humans of the future.

Julia Kirby-Smith 11:40 AM

Organic and regenerative food production is scaling up, and are often more resilient methods against climate change as they trap more carbon in the soil and protect biodiversity. But undoubtedly we will have a mix - it's not an either or.

Anonymous Attendee 11:44 AM

Here in Copenhagen, we are experiencing a lot of small food initiatives and business facing bankruptcy. Is this a common observation from the speakers local region? and what, if anything can we do about it?

Sophie Paterson - Food Plymouth 11:49 AM

This is certainly happening in our experience too and was the spark for our upcoming Community of Dragons event, as an opportunity for awareness-raising, promotion and meeting support needs of enterprises, albeit on a small scale. We are planning a peer-support network also, which we hope will facilitate shared, collaborative responses to challenges (e.g. streamlining deliveries, logistics)

Sophie Paterson - Food Plymouth 11:50 AM

We also know that increasing rents and utilities are a problem for enterprises, so seeing the continuation of meanwhile use / pop-up retail spaces supported by local authorities is also much needed.

Julia Kirby-Smith 11:51 AM

We are seeing customer numbers falling for many of our members, but so far only a couple have ceased trading. We are running a Business Support Week in January for all Better Food Traders with free, confidential 1:1 business advice. We are also linking members up with funders and training them in crowdfunding, fundraising etc

Anonymous Attendee

Crowd funding and a paying it forward model is good mix that worked well for small enterprises in NZ

Julia Kirby-Smith 11:56 AM

Thank you - pay it forward is something we should help our members explore. Great idea.

Anonymous Attendee

Definitely a system of value exchange... especially in the food system is a very important aspect today. **A food hub could support this kind of exchange outside cash flow?**

Sophie Paterson - Food Plymouth 11:59 AM

There is a great example of this at a micro community level in Plymouth - <https://jarsquad.com/> - exploring circular economy/barter around food preservation, by bringing people together to preserve food, and address food surplus/glut, waste.

Anonymous Attendee

How can we tap into the massive crisis funding volumes that are being mobilised by national governments? - it seems that initiatives rely strongly: mainly on own networks.

Karen Wohlerlert and Sophie Paterson - Food Plymouth are typing answers...

Julia Kirby-Smith 12:00 PM

In the UK, all businesses will benefit for energy price caps for the next 6 months, but that is the main national govt help. But I don't think it is wrong to rely on your own networks - it's good to see local food economies strengthen and grow.

Anonymous Attendee

With regards to volunteers, what is the age range? And is it skewed in any one direction?

Julia Kirby-Smith 12:22 PM

Volunteers in which context? It depends what the project or business, and the location...

Anonymous Attendee 12:02 PM

Could it be a solution to support food production in urban areas? (i.e. again vertical, hydroponic farming)

Sophie Paterson - Food Plymouth 12:20 PM

I think there is strength in a diversity of approaches and engagement, which could include these, yes. Access to community growing spaces and public Incredible Edible style growing opportunities are definitely in demand in Plymouth, as allotment waiting lists continue to grow.

Anonymous Attendee 12:05 PM

How do you support people who are educated and know what to do, but don't have the means or time? Preparing and cooking food is time consuming and requires equipment to do at home. For families especially with young children and two full time working parents this is a big challenge.

Julia Kirby-Smith 12:06 PM

I do think growers and traders need to begin to think about how to offer semi-processed food that will be easier for people to prepare and eat. But we can also support people with recipe cards, cooking classes etc.

Karen Wohlerlert 12:23 PM

Yes, that is an important question. Next year in Berlin, we want to start prototyping community kitchen for „food to go“, e.g. big jars of soup families can pick up and reheat at home.

Anonymous Attendee 12:07 PM

the community based projects really serve as a good start, and pilots for possible models. Panelists: **which projects are scalable? what challenges do you see in scaling? What is next step required?**

Karen Wohlerlert 12:19 PM

For the Berlin food hub network: Our next step is to systemize our knowledge (how to organize a neighborhood food hub), as we're getting more requests from interested spaces in Berlin and from other cities.

Anonymous Attendee 12:10 PM

Conventional farming keeps being written off as bad for the planet, very polluting etc so we need to go & only eat organic. This is not true especially as many natural organic chemicals were banned e.g. Bordeaux Mix. We need to promote both types of farming

Julia Kirby-Smith 12:20 PM

I agree to some extent - and I think there is some good work being done by traditional farmers to work in more sustainable ways. But the shift needs to happen quickly to tackle the climate crisis.

Karen Wohlerlert 12:27 PM

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317563385_Food_beyond_the_city_-_Analysing_foodsheds_and_self-sufficiency_for_different_food_system_scenarios_in_European_metropolitan_regions