

FOOD ACADEMY

FEASIBILITY STUDY

Sarah Phillipson MSc | February 2019

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1.0 Executive summary

This report used primary and secondary research from a 4 month scoping project led by education consultant Sarah Phillipson. The purpose of the work was to scope the options and strategic attractiveness of a range of food-related training and education opportunities that could be delivered through the Food Academy. The Food Academy is one piece of food leader Kay Johnson's overall strategy to address unfairness in the global food system in the city of Preston, Lancashire. By taking a 3 part approach combining **access**¹ (via a food co-operative model) **experience** (via a café and catering business to provide individuals with experience of 'good'² food), and **education**³ (via the Food Academy), the 'Preston Food Hub' model is Kay Johnson's vision and practical response to facilitate transition to a fairer food environment. In Kay's words "thinking globally and starting locally" because "the challenges we see locally are representative of what's happening globally", and "we have to start somewhere"

. The work was considered important for a number of reasons:

- Everyone has the right to experience 'good' food
- Systemic challenges at both global and local levels are resulting in 'hostile' food environments where few have access to 'good' food
- A generation is growing up without the knowledge, skills or access to gather, prepare and cook 'good' food

¹ '**access**' in this context is used to express food procurement strategies that connect local food producers and consumers in fair and sustainable ways that promote the health, prosperity and wellbeing of both people and planet. A practical example of this in Kay's work is the establishment of a local food co-operative that connects local farmers in Lancashire with institutions such as education, health, and public service institutions within Preston.

² '**good' food** in this context is used to express fairness in terms of food that is good for both people and planet. In this respect, food that is grown/gathered, prepared, cooked and consumed in ways that promote the health and well-being of people and planet

³ '**education**' in this context is used to express a range of accredited and non-accredited/informal learning opportunities to empower fairer food practices within the city of Preston. These are likely to range from accredited catering courses delivered by qualified professionals to half-day practical lifestyle classes (such as vegetarian cooking or mindful eating) delivered by experienced volunteers (eg The Food Champions programme).

- Rising obesity and health problems are putting pressure on an already strained healthcare system
- Significant need for a holistic response that addresses both individual and systemic barriers to good food practices

Following consultations with national and local individuals and organizations, and extensive conversations with the core Larder Team, this report scopes the options and strategic attractiveness of a range of training and education opportunities that could be delivered through the Food Academy. The report makes recommendations on what could be delivered, including not only when, where, who and how, but also costings and pricing recommendations. The report also considers potential economic and social impact scenarios.

2.0 Introduction to the report

The global food system is an important and socially relevant area of study as “understanding the global food system is a great way to understand the world” (Susan George 1976). The challenges we see within the global food system highlight wider system crises (within economic, financial, energy, environmental and political systems), providing perhaps some of the most robust insights into powerful forces operating within society – both globally and locally.

Lancashire and Region Dietary Education Resource (www.larder.org.uk) is a Community Interest Company established by food leader Kay Johnson in 2015 as part of her wider initiative Sustainable Food Lancashire. At the heart of SFL is a Charter; a set of 6 goals for the community to unite around to tackle the complex food challenges in Lancashire: larder.org.uk/mission.html. In 2018 The Larder was successful in its application to the National Lottery and was awarded £250,000 to facilitate its goals.

Kay Johnson’s vision is to use the investment in a pioneering way. Calling upon 25 years experience (of grass-roots food intervention work), Johnson is keen to avoid the pitfalls of many funded projects; impacts fading as funding ends, or limited impacts due to underestimating the complexity and interconnectedness of issues. Johnson’s vision is to use the investment to establish a holistic self-funding model that understands this interconnectedness whilst addressing the commercial need for self-funding practices.

3.0 Context

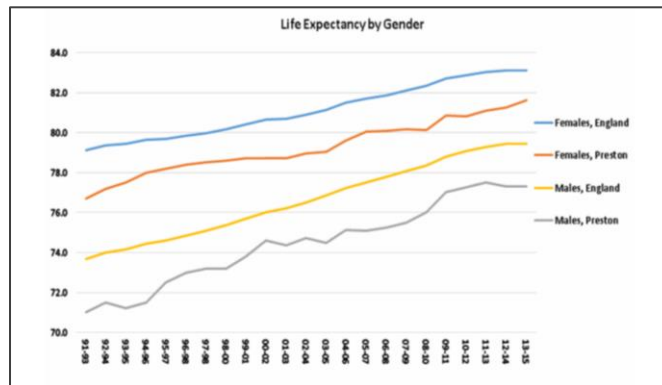
Preston is located in the North West of England, forming the third point of a triangle between Liverpool and Manchester. It has a population of around 142,000 is part of the wider Central Lancashire area of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble, which represents nearly half of Lancashire's economic wealth.

Alongside exciting and ambitious development plans across the city, The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal is a landmark agreement to help achieve even more transformation of the area, creating thousands of new jobs and homes. A total £434m new investment will lead to the expansion and improvement of the transport infrastructure in Preston and South Ribble at an unprecedented rate, enabling a forecast 20,000 new jobs and 17,420 new homes to be created. It will provide a huge boost to the local economy, which is expected to grow by £1 billion over the next ten years.

3.1 Evidence base for demand (for disadvantaged community support in Preston)

Source: Lancashire County Council: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/preston-district>

- The 2015 Indices of Deprivation reveals that Preston was the 72nd most deprived area out of 326 districts and unitary authorities in England, when measured by the rank of average rank.
- Figures for [life expectancy at birth](#)⁴ at birth for Preston males and females are noticeably below the national averages. The following graph reveals life expectancy changes in the authority, and for England and Wales, by three-year time periods from 1991-93 onwards:



⁴ Source: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/preston-district>

- The Preston Health Profile⁵, published by Public Health England, reveals that the health of people in the area is generally worse when compared with the England average, notably on suicide and physical activity rates.
- Many of the communities and district areas of the Lancashire-12 area perform poorly against the national indicators associated with a poor lifestyles and chronic illness, and also have issues with premature mortality and low life expectancy, two key outcomes associated with an unhealthy lifestyle⁶
- The 2015 health behaviours JSNA (PDF 1.9 MB) examined the extent of health-enabling and health-compromising behaviours in Lancashire-12. Based on a comprehensive lifestyle survey (sent to 67,000 households across Lancashire-12 and Blackpool), and an extensive data analysis exercise and literature review (PDF 786 KB), the JSNA provides a wealth of evidence-based intelligence and recommendations for use by stakeholders and partners. There are also district and clinical commissioning group profiles.
- The 2015 health behaviours summary report⁷ and lifestyle survey findings⁸ for Preston provide further details on lifestyle behaviours such as smoking, drinking, substance use, physical activity, nutrition, excess weight and wellbeing:

⁵ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132701/pat/6/par/E12000002/ati/101/are/E07000123>

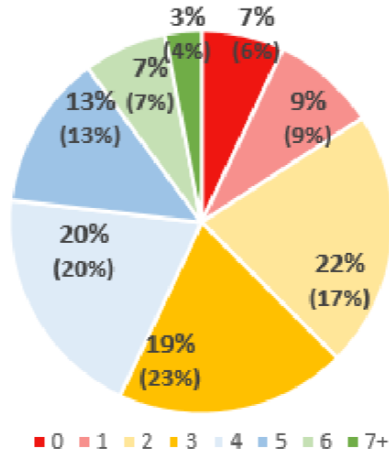
⁶ <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/health-and-care/lifestyle/lifestyle-overview>. Lifestyle-related illnesses include conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, hepatitis, HIV and liver disease. These place great demand on the health and social care services, by contributing to the growing burden of chronic disease. Such illnesses present public health systems with a difficult challenge due to their multi-factorial nature and strong links to lifestyle factors such as tobacco use, excessive alcohol consumption, poor diet, a lack of physical activity and having an unhealthy body weight.

⁷ <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/898052/preston-summary.pdf>

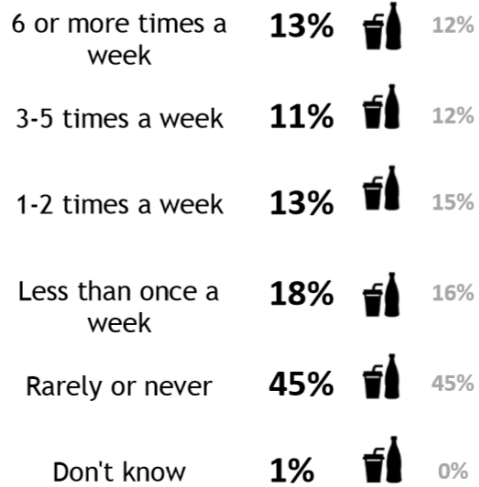
⁸ <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/898049/preston-lifestyle-questionnaire-findings.pdf>

Healthy eating and nutrition

How many portions of fruit and vegetables did you consume yesterday?



How often do you have fizzy drinks or soft drinks like squash, excluding diet or sugar-free drinks?



Source: 2015 Preston Health Behaviours Summary report:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/898049/preston-lifestyle-questionnaire-findings.pdf>

How often do you in a week...

	eat takeaways/fast food	eat a meal with family/other members of your household	cook/prepare a meal from basic ingredients for yourself, family or household?	eat out (excl. fast food and takeaways)
Never	17% <i>17%</i>	10% <i>9%</i>	7% <i>6%</i>	19% <i>16%</i>
Less than once	67% <i>66%</i>	13% <i>13%</i>	10% <i>10%</i>	68% <i>70%</i>
1-4 times	15% <i>16%</i>	28% <i>24%</i>	37% <i>38%</i>	11% <i>14%</i>
5 times or more	1% <i>1%</i>	49% <i>54%</i>	46% <i>46%</i>	1% <i>0%</i>

- Preston has around 62,600 dwellings and a large percentage of its housing stock is in lowest category 'A' Council tax band. In total, 14.1% of households in the authority were in fuel poverty in 2016, which was the 25th highest rate out of 326 authorities in England.
- Between 2009 and 2014, the employment number declined by a substantial 7.9%. The authority has a very high reliance on public-sector employment which has been under pressure over recent years.
- The authority has a large number of employment and support allowance (ESA) claimants. The housing benefit article includes details of the number of recipients and the impact of the spare room subsidy withdrawal in the authority.
- ESA⁹ is for people with an illness or disability that affects their ability to work. They must be under state pension age, and not receiving either Jobseeker's Allowance, statutory sick or maternity pay. The data is released by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and can be sourced via the DWP Stat-Xplore data download tool, or from the National Online Manpower Information System website (Nomisweb).
- In February 2016, the Lancashire-14 area had an ESA caseload of 68,270 people, and 49.3% of this number (33,660) were classified under the health condition of 'mental and behavioural disorders'.
- Blackpool (10,780), Blackburn with Darwen (8,560), Lancaster (5,720), Preston (6,670) and Burnley (5,320) had the greatest caseloads in the Lancashire-14 area in February 2016 and Ribble Valley 1,340 had the lowest.
- The weekly ESA benefit payments in February 2016 at the local authority level in the Lancashire-14 area were the highest in Blackpool (£121.60) and Lancaster (£119.49), whilst the lowest weekly rate of £107.79 was in Ribble Valley. The figure for Great Britain was £115.89.

⁹ <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/economy/income-earnings-and-benefits/employment-and-support-allowance>

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4.0 The Vision

Johnson’s vision to tackle unfairness within the food system takes shape in 3 interconnected parts; experience, education and access:

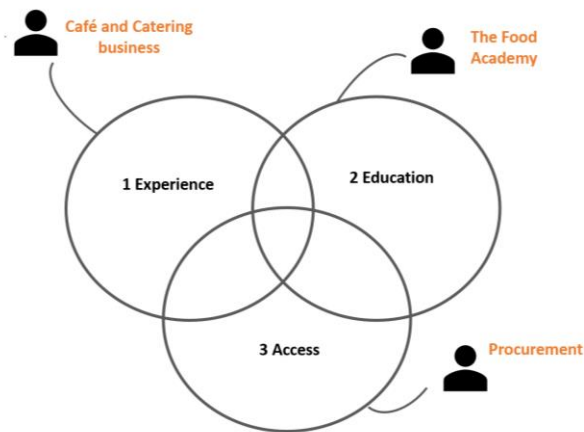


Figure [x] : Johnson’s vision to tackle unfairness within the food system; “thinking globally, starting locally” in Preston, Lancashire.

Experience – a Café and catering business in the heart of Preston to allow individuals and the community the opportunity to ‘experience good food’. ‘Experience’ in this context is used to mean the holistic experience of what ‘good food’ really means; “it’s not just what you eat, but how you eat”,..“my vision (for the Café) is for a space people can come to enjoy a meal and experience good food through eating, conversation, reading, retail, and events. To learn through menus and information about where the food was grown, gathered and prepared and the impacts on fairness and well-being. To have the opportunity to get people thinking about the central role food plays in our lives and develop that thinking through conversation and reflection with others. To have opportunities to experience ‘good’ food and new perspectives through tastings, talks, film screenings (Johnson in conversation 24 September 2018). A similar vision exists for the catering business arm of the project. Unlike conventional catering businesses, whose primary focus is often commercial, the ‘good food’ catering business has a more holistic focus; social and environmental as well as economic. “We won’t just be supplying food on it’s own; we will be sharing how and why that food has been sourced, prepared and cooked in the way it has, and not just through packaging, resources and materials – but through our staff and all their conversations and interactions with customers”. Like the café, the catering business is also an opportunity for the city of Preston to ‘experience’ good food as both an eating, learning and social experience that is fair for all”. (Johnson. September 2018)

Education – a range of learning opportunities to empower fairer food practices within the city from food gathering through to preparation and consumption. Opportunities are likely to range from accredited catering courses through to short, practical lifestyle classes, delivered by a range of educators (formal and non-formal) and in a variety of environments (face-to-face and online, and classroom as well as community)

Access - food procurement strategies that connect local food producers and consumers in fair and sustainable ways to promote prosperity and wellbeing of both people and planet. Establishment of a local food co-operative to connect local farmers with institutions and organisations within Preston will be at the heart of this; alongside other initiatives.

4.1 The Food Academy vision

Contributors/Acknowledgements:

The Larder

Kay Johnson, The Larder, Founder and Director

Alison Watts, The Larder, Manager

Helen Weir, The Larder, Catering Manager

Dr. Charlie Clutterbuck, The Larder, Director

Andrea Veda, The Larder, Food Champion

Chryssa Malfa-Erguvan, The Larder, Community Teaching Programmes

Local charities supporting a similar target audience (who can help us understand the demand for this type of service, understand the learner and their needs, help us identify funding, potentially share resources (learning spaces for example) and help us recruit students

Housing Associations

Community Gateway Association - Preston

Progress Housing Group – Leyland

Regenda – Lancashire

Salvation Army Housing Group - Preston

Non-traditional Education organisations

Steve Egan, CEO Creativity Works 07946612666 steve@creativityworkspreston.org.uk

Traditional Education organisations

UCLAN academics – Dr. Brigit Ransing

Lancaster University Academics – Dr. Rebecca Whittle, Dr. Katerina Aikaterini

Independent Academics – Dr. Charlie Clutterbuck

Experts

Gillian Oliver – Journalist, and Labour Councillor, Preston

Jo Dodd

Simon Ross

Andrew Peart

Subroto Mozumdar

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Neil Flanagan – Recycling Lives. neil.flanagan@recyclinglives.org

Local networking organisations

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Dawn – Selnet. dawn@selnet-uk.com

Recruitment organisations

Probation service: anna.jarved@probation.gsi.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions - Frances. Starkie
FRANCES.STARKIE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK

Course providers

NCFE lady – Awarding body

ASDAN – Awarding body

Other

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Sources/References:

Public Health England: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132701/pat/6/par/E12000002/ati/101/are/E07000123>

ONS Office for National Statistics:

Preston City Council: <https://www.preston.gov.uk/businesses/economic-regeneration/d.whyte@preston.gov.uk> 01772 903401. <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/preston-district>

Lancashire County Council:

Community Gateway Association (Preston): 01772 268000

Creativity Works (Preston): Steve Egan. 01772 555123

Glossary

Creativity Works

NCFE

BIAB

City and Guilds

Community Gateway

ESFA European Social Funding Association

DWP Department for Work and Pensions