

WALES COMMUNITY FOOD HUB TOOLKIT HANDBOOK



WHAT IS A FOOD HUB?

A food hub links people with local growers, producers, suppliers and wholesalers.

Run by volunteers with weekly orders and collection from a local venue.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SET UP A FOOD HUB

- Customers
- Suppliers
- Venue
- Volunteers

Wales Community Food Distribution helped set up 15 Food Hubs in 2022-23.

This Toolkit will help you set up your Food Hub.



HOW IT WORKS

Wales Community Food Hubs run on a simple model.

1. Customers order and pay a week in advance.

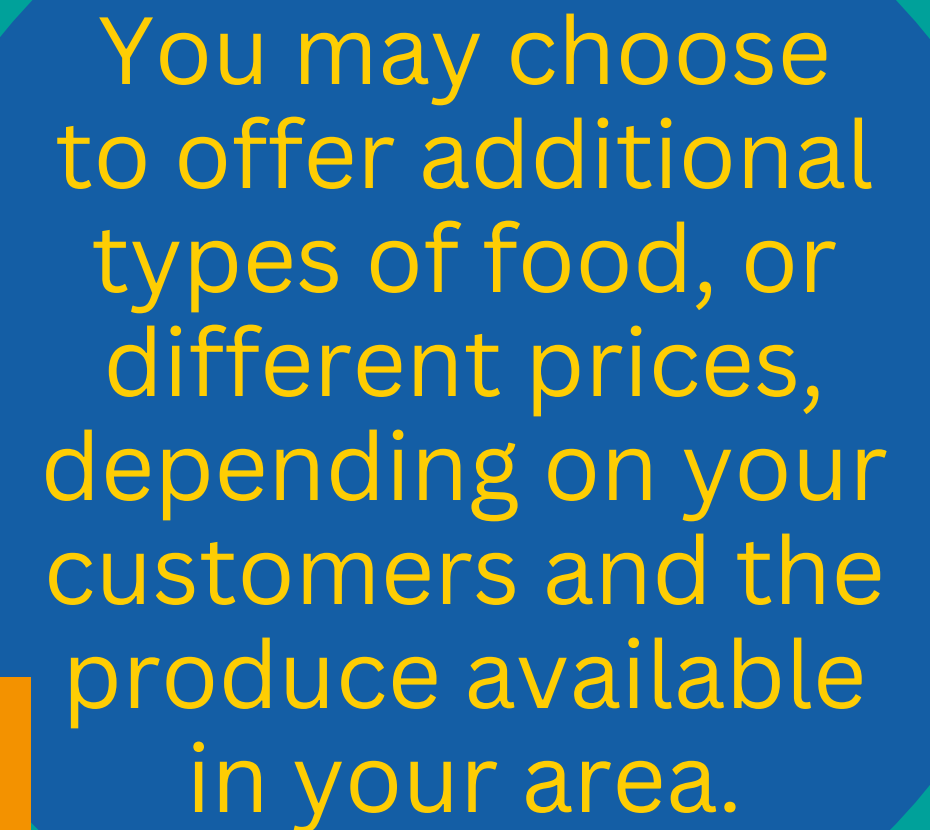
2. Customers can order a bag of fresh vegetables &/ fruit &/ salad. Each bag costs £5 and will feed two people with a variety of veg/fruit/salad.

3. Food Hub volunteers place orders with the supplier(s) for delivery the following week.

4. Supplier(s) deliver the orders to the venue.

5. Food Hub volunteers open for the set hours.

6. Customers collect their food order (veg/fruit/salad) and place their order for the following week.



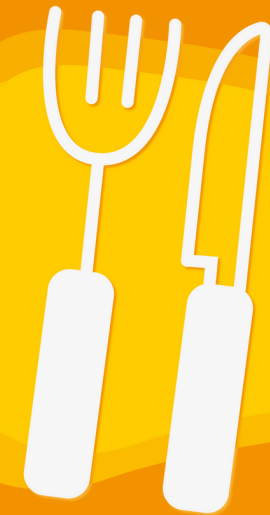
You may choose to offer additional types of food, or different prices, depending on your customers and the produce available in your area.

CUSTOMERS

Getting to know your customers' wants and needs will help you understand your market.

What matters to your customers?

Value Local Organic
food suppliers Lifestyle
Meeting people Recipe Community
ideas activities
Local collection point Privacy Variety
Seasonal Easy to use Meeting suppliers
Connections Cost



What food do your customers want to buy?

Fruit Meat
Dairy
Veg Bread
Salad Fish

What days and what times of day suit them for food collection?





“Everything is so fresh... Better than the supermarket for several reasons; very good value for money, good variety, food security on a local level.” – Lampeter Food Hub Customer

Read the [case study](#)

TOP TIP

Pro-actively collect feedback and respond promptly to complaints.

SUPPLIERS

Do you know what food is available locally?

You can research and map your local area to identify all the food growers, producers, suppliers and wholesalers.



Speak to them about what they can supply, at what price, their order process and when they can deliver.

- ✓ Pre-orders
- ✓ Local delivery
- ✓ New customers
- ✓ Payment on delivery
- ✓ Feeding local people
- ✓ Improved community connections

There are benefits for Food Hub suppliers:

TOP TIP

Add your supplier's logo to your poster.



“We’re so pleased to have saved locals the amount of money we have... We try to encourage people to develop their cooking skills when they come into the shop, so supplying the food hubs is a great opportunity for us to help with our customer’s food journeys and to encourage them to use different produce than they usually would along with their staple foods.

We try to get our produce as fresh as possible, so the quality is as good as we can possibly make it. We truly care about local, high quality produce.”

– Dai’s Five a Day, Pembroke Food Hub Supplier



Read the [case study](#)

VENUE

Choosing a venue which is well used and accessible to everyone will help your Food Hub to be seen and attract new customers.

Running your Food Hub when other activities are taking place can also help attract customers.



Village halls, schools and other community spaces are good venues for Food Hubs. These venues are more likely to offer space for free. In return the Food Hub may increase footfall to the venue and offers a valuable community service.

It's helpful if your venue has:

Parking

Easy access

Hand washing facilities

Space for a table and chairs

Is under cover or indoors

TOP TIP

Check holiday changes for your venue and supplier well in advance.

VOLUNTEERS

Food Hubs are run by volunteers. It helps if there are a few of you to spread the responsibility and ensure you can all have a break.

"We enjoy creating recipes with the customers and sharing photos after we've cooked."
– Food Hub Volunteer

The volunteer team will initially set up and promote the Food Hub and then every week you will...

- Open the Food Hub to receive delivery from suppliers

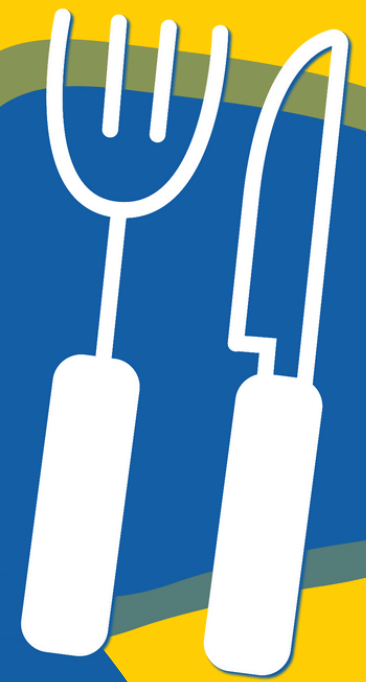
- Welcome customers and give them their order

- Take customer orders for the following week

- Order supplies

In addition, you will promote the Food Hub to attract new customers. You may also want to add new suppliers to expand or vary the products you offer.

Someone on the team will also be responsible for ensuring you comply with GDPR and food hygiene regulations. See the 'Useful documents' and 'Useful links and organisations' for further resources.



PROMOTING YOUR FOOD HUB



Tell
people
about what you're doing, where and when!

Attracting customers and suppliers is important when you first get going.

Remember to keep going with promotion - for new customers and to maintain interest for existing customers.

You could also have a regular newsletter or blog for your Food Hub with recipes and information about your suppliers.

Pembroke Food Hub volunteers and customers contribute to their blog.

Your venue and other local community spaces may have noticeboards for posters.

They may also have a website, Facebook or other social media where you can post online.



There are example posters and other promotional materials in the Toolkit, which you can adapt for your own use.

They're created in Canva, a free online platform for creating and editing images and documents.

If you've not used it before check out, ['How to Use Canva: A Beginner's Guide'](#).

MEASURE YOUR IMPACT

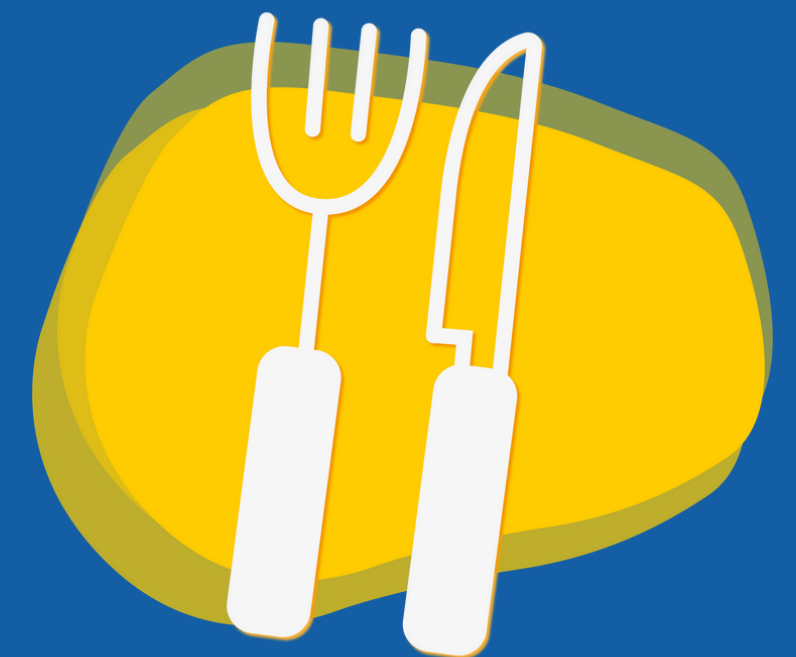
Collecting data about your Food Hub can be a great way to measure the impact.

It can help to get support for your Food Hub, attract new customers and suppliers and show everyone the difference you're making in your local area.



WHAT'S IN YOUR TOOLKIT

- Toolkit Handbook
- 7 Easy Steps to Start a Food Hub
- Volunteer form
- Volunteer booklet
- Customer order form
- Promotional materials on Canva
(including posters, recipe template...)
- Feedback form



USEFUL LINKS AND ORGANISATIONS

[Wales Community Food Distribution](#)

[Wales Community Food Hub Case Studies](#)

[Wales Community Food Hub videos on YouTube](#)

[PLANED](#)

[Pembroke Food Hub Blog](#)

[Kidwelly Food Hub](#)

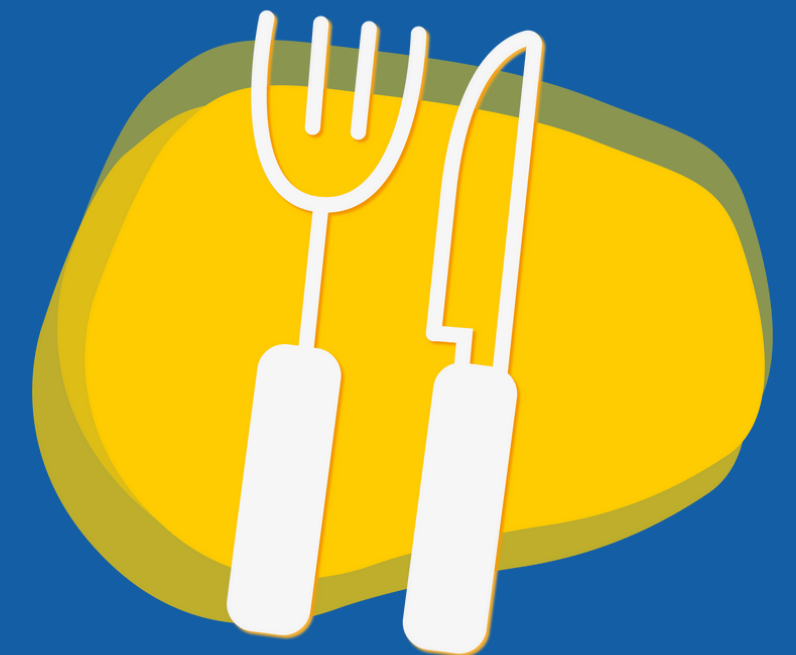
[Seasonarians](#) – all about eating seasonally in the UK

Social media advice from [Business Wales](#)

County Voluntary Councils (CVC) offer support and advice for volunteers and voluntary organisations, you can find your local CVC on the [Third Sector Support Wales](#) website.

The CVCs in West Wales are:

- [Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services \(PAVS\)](#)
- [Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services \(CAVS\)](#)
- [Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations \(CAVO\)](#)



“We’re very appreciative to the PLANED team for helping us to launch our food hubs and we’re now looking forward to building our produce offer and finding new ways to build our customer base more and more...”

– FRAME Food Hubs in Pembroke Dock and Haverfordwest

A big THANK YOU to everyone who was involved in our pilot stages and whose valuable feedback and ideas have helped create this toolkit. We’re excited to see what’s coming next for all the food hubs and wish you all the best.

From everyone at PLANED

