



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

FOOD

Oldham Council

From Grassroots to Boardroom

Community involvement in Oldham means more than asking residents for their views. We're empowering local people to take ownership, as part of our ambition to create a co-operative borough where everyone does their bit, and everybody benefits.

(1) VEG IN THE PARK – a grassroots project

Veg in the Park community growing hub is a vibrant place with many volunteers, local groups and emerging enterprises focused around growing, cooking, sharing, selling (and eating!) locally produced food. The physical growing space was built by Oldham Council's Parks team with residents central to developing a space for their community to enjoy. The hub was started by a passionate resident and the idea grew from a gardening session and an opportunity to turn a disused bowling green into a brilliant community asset now run and managed by residents.

(2) OLDHAM FOOD NETWORK – a co-operative approach

The community-led Oldham Food Network was established following a Borough-wide Fair Access to Food Workshop. The Network has grown from a group of volunteers into an active movement, driving Oldham's co-operative approach to food and growing.

It led a crowdfunding campaign for a Community Kitchen for Oldham Food Bank raising £20,000+ in under 8 weeks. This collaborative approach to community involvement, created a swell of support that continues to grow beyond the campaign. By empowering a Network for all of Oldham, we're fostering a culture of collaboration by default. Funded with Food is a community crowdfunder with a difference – aimed at local people with local ideas and funded by the community itself. In return for a donation, individuals receive fresh surplus food from Real Junk Food Project, and a vote for the idea they like best, raising £2,000+ for 4 projects through the crowd so far.

(3) GREEN DIVIDEND – co-operative communities

The Green Dividend Fund puts residents at the heart of design, delivery and maintenance of community gardens and edible landscaping projects. So far 500+ households and 1,500 residents have been involved, with 50 projects delivered in places and spaces across the

borough. It is helping communities develop a shared sense of belonging and promoting closer neighbourhood ties through their enjoyment of greener spaces.

(4) GET OLDHAM GROWING – creating the right climate

The public-health funded Get Oldham Growing programme has inspired and encouraged people to be active and engaged in food growing. Local people are at the heart of this, co-designing a Growing Conference with residents working alongside the Council to deliver community-led workshops for 120+ people. It invests in people and places, supporting 80+ community food initiatives, engaging 800+ people, 5 growing hubs and employing community-based Health and Growing Ambassadors. This enables the building of strengths and assets in communities to make schemes owned and sustainable.

(5) GROWING OLDHAM: Feeding Ambition Partnership – the boardroom

Growing Oldham: Feeding Ambition is a partnership co-ordinating the delivery of fair access to food for all. The Partnership is made up of representatives across the food sector, to ensure engagement and feedback across all parts of the system. By growing relationships, it creates a sustainable approach to the future of food.

The most effective way to design services and deliver outcomes that matter to residents is to do it with them; or even better, to create the right conditions for them to do it for themselves.

For further information contact:

Dominic Coleman - Oldham Council

Dominic.coleman@oldham.gov.uk | 0161 770 5443 | www.oldham.gov.uk