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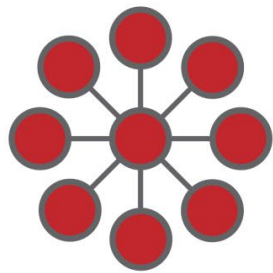
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SUSTAINABLE
PRACTICES
RESEARCH GROUP

Change in eating habits: the contribution of new local food infrastructures

The case of a Scottish initiative: Community Food Moray, Morayshire

Discussion Paper

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January 2013

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Introduction

The project 'Change in eating habits: an international comparison' is part of a wider programme of the Sustainable Practices Research Group headed by Professor Dale Southerton at the University of Manchester (<http://www.sprg.ac.uk>). The programme was set up in response to a growing recognition of the magnitude of the challenges posed by climate change; and thus of the need for fresh ways of framing problems of climate change, consumption and demand, as well as for new reflection on forms of intervention.

There is no doubt that substantial changes in the relation of our societies to food will be necessary to respond to issues of environmental sustainability, but how this should be achieved is far from clear. This project thus aims at casting a sociological and comparative light on processes of changing habits:

- 'sociological': eating habits have to be understood as socially, culturally and economically conditioned practices, with material, sensory, affective, cognitive and value-related dimensions;
- 'comparative': cross-national comparison (here between France and the UK) helps contrasting patterns of habit and processes of change not term to term but rather in their relation to the wider configurations of eating practices in these countries, paying attention to social/regional differences within each as well.

Since the ESRC programme on the 'Nation's diet' in the 1990s, which tackled food choice, its determinants and its implications for routines (Murcott 1998), research on food has greatly expanded. Yet analyses in terms of habits tend to be captured by a public health agenda and concerns with obesity: in other words, they tend to be framed *from within* one of the dominant normative discourses and policy frameworks. More sociological and anthropological approaches have been taken to specific aspects of eating habits (e.g. time patterns) and to specific change processes (e.g. the meaning of 'dieting' or the impact of migration on eating habits), with only few adopting a cross-national perspective (e.g. Warde et al. 2007, de Saint Pol 2010).

Our perspective is doubly comparative: [1] we are comparing different processes of change of habits in different situations and [2] we are doing this in two different national configurations of eating practices, France and the UK, which have many similarities (as they are exposed to the same wide drivers of change – marketisation; the spread of norms concerning nutrition and health etc.) and yet markedly different in the overall representations of and relations to food.

We thus study change processes in three different situations, each being tackled through a specific case study:

1. A change of context/environment as a result of life changes (e.g. moving together as a couple, migration);
2. A change in the immediate context/environment, through new food 'infrastructures'; and
3. Situations in which change in eating habits has been specifically targeted (e.g. dieting).

The present discussion paper is a contribution towards case study 2.

The initial research question behind this case study bore on the contribution of a new food infrastructure (a new shopping point) to change in eating habits. This concern led us to discard the study of new openings of local supermarkets/convenience stores even in relatively isolated areas, since most people would normally do their main shopping at a supermarket anyway and it was thus unlikely that the opening of a new store would have any impact other than allowing for shopping closer to home.

We thus turned to 'non conventional' provisioning. But organic shopping is typically done intentionally (people go to an organic shop, they do not just bump into it). Thus any local infrastructure effect (e.g. of organic markets or shops) is likely to be superseded by the affirmation of preferences and choices¹. Similarly, although this has been less studied so far, local provisioning, through 'short food chains' and 'circuits courts', still seems to primarily attract shoppers who already have a sympathetic value orientation to such schemes².

One possible way of addressing our research question could have been through the analysis of the evolution of supermarket shoppers with regard to organic and/or locally sourced products, since supermarkets have invested in both, in France and especially in Britain (although supermarket sales of organic products decreased by 5% in 2011 in the UK, in part due to a reduction in the shop space allocated to these – see Agence Bio 2012: 44).

Another way, more consistent with our qualitative approach, was to look for initiatives potentially modifying the local food supply in low income areas, and thus aiming to reach out not only to higher income and/or value-driven shoppers but to the local customer base. We identified two local initiatives, in France and Scotland, which are oriented by a desire to alter the local food supply for all, the Champ Commun cooperative and its grocer's shop which opened in July 2010 in Augan, Morbihan (Brittany) and the Community Food Moray shop in Mosstodloch (Moray, Scotland), which opened in April 2011.

¹ A 2011 survey finds that 54% of regular shoppers of organic products in France state 'personal initiative' as the primary factor underpinning their consumption of organic products (Agence Bio & CSA 2011: 60). The Organic market report 2010 prepared by the Soil Association (for the UK) highlights the reliance of the organic market on a "committed core of consumers": "Just 9% of households – those who will buy more than once a fortnight – are responsible for 56% of sales" and significantly entitles its first section "The organic shopper" (rather than, say, the shopper of organic products) (Soil Association 2010:7).

² INRA has been studying 'circuits courts' in relation to social cohesion in the last years, and hence their access by other customer bases than middle class customers choosing to shop with them. The number of initiatives they have collected is still very limited (personal communication with Dominique Paturel).

Overview of the Community Food Moray initiative and summary of the discussion

This discussion paper is based on fieldwork carried out in the greengrocer's shop of Community Food Moray (hereafter CFM) in Mosstodloch. The village of Mosstodloch is primarily an estate, which includes an industrial estate, and its population is quite mixed socially. There is however little sense of a village with a distinct social and economic local life, in contrast to Fochabers which is just one mile away. CFM is a social enterprise whose overall aim is to facilitate access to local quality food – especially vegetable and fruit – to groups and areas which only have restricted or even no access to such produce. The idea of the social enterprise is that profitable activities should fund less profitable ones, although all contribute to the overall purpose, and the shop spans both types of activities. It is both a base for the 17 outlets of CFM in Moray, a shop opened to the 'general public', especially the Mosstodloch residents, and it has a soup and fruit platter service especially meant for people working on the estate (although local residents also buy the soup). These background data are presented in section I below.

Sections II and III provide a starting assessment of the strategy pursued by CFM, which sits in-between a foundational educational, health-oriented remit and a will to contribute to the (partial) restructuring of the local food economy. On the basis of studies by David Watts (University of Aberdeen) and of accounts by respondents, we wonder about the feasibility of the latter, given the extensive commercialisation of agriculture in Moray, and the limited and highly selective movement of 'relocalisation' of a 'growing' activity, and about what this means for the positioning of the shop.

This is the background against which we study patterns of use of the shop (section IV). The notion of 'patterns of use' is especially relevant to point to the sourcing and provisioning practices in which the use of the new shop is inserted, rather than more classically first distinguishing profiles of users: this then highlights how very different social groups of users share common patterns of use.

We find that patterns of use of the shop are not hugely varied, unsurprisingly so perhaps, since it is mostly providing fruit and vegetable (as well as eggs and whole grain). But this is also due to the fact that most CFM shoppers were and are 'conventional' shoppers – their main sourcing point was and continues to be the supermarket, even though there had been quite extensive self-provisioning and exchanges between neighbours in the past. Here as well we find evidence of a generational break, as the local economy and social life is now radically different from what it was still 20 or 30 years ago on the estate. In this context we find that most people divert some of their fruit and veg shopping from the supermarket to the shop, and what varies is the extent to which they do this. The shop is used either as everyday stopgap shop, supplementing the weekly supermarket shopping, or as only substitute for the supermarket for fruit and vegetable. Some people also come only for the soup service. Overall, these new patterns of provisioning tend to show that shopping routines have been altered: we argue that there is clearly an 'infrastructure effect'.

Change in eating habits is discussed in section V, and the fact that this is a greengrocer's shop, selling mostly fruit and vegetables, is found to have a determining effect on the possibility and extent of change, especially as buying vegetables is associated with cooking. Thus most respondents were cooking, had always cooked, and shopping at the shop was connected to this practice: in that sense the change in eating habits can only be limited, except for the very specific group of people associated with CFM out of sympathy with its social aims, but who had not paid particular attention

to their own diet before. Rather than the eating habits, it is the shopping basket that changes, as customers take advantage of the possibility of buying loose produce to buy smaller quantities, and more varied. Shopping at CFM also connects with old values such as the avoidance of waste. The case study thus casts light on mechanisms of change, the role played by the design of the 'infrastructure' (and in particular the conception of retailing taking shape), as well as the possibility of making sense of it: easy insertion of the shop in the shopping routines of users can be seen to be due not only to convenience and affordability, but also for example to the fact that the kind of retailing offered connects with the memories of cherished practices for the older people on the estate.

However the infrastructure effect seems to be playing against recruitment of other types of users, because of the positioning of the shop as greengrocer's. This positioning gives an educational and social tinge to CFM which might be counterproductive for its purposes. The developing sense by CFM staff and volunteers as well as by customers that this is a 'real shop' might partly be offsetting this, but the paper concludes on the need to more decidedly emphasise the transformative character of the initiative – which therefore on the need for public support in the direction of a more diversified local food economy.

Research design

Fieldwork was carried out between 19/11 and 22/11/2012 and consisted in:

- Participant observation, essentially through presence in the shop and participation in some of the – simplest! – everyday tasks; and through participation in a meeting of the Community Food Network set up by the CFM development manager, which 4 other partners attended; and
- Both long and in-depth interviews (LI) as well as shorter interviews on the spot (SI - in the shop for customers, and some staff).

Interviews were carried out with the following types of respondents:

- 3 Board members (including the current chair and the representative for volunteers) and the development manager, who also sits on the Board "in attendance": L1-L4.
- People currently employed by CFM, two of whom were volunteers previously and still volunteer on top of their paid hours: L5-L7, S4.
- Partners of CFM in the local food network currently being set up: L12-L13.
- Customers: long interviews with 4 individuals at their homes, L8-L11; and 15 short interviews.

The interviews with Board members and the development manager bore on the history of their engagement with CFM and their vision of what CFM is doing and where it's going/should go, its strategy and organisation, their view of the area (Moray/Mosstodloch), its economy and ways of life there, and their own shopping and eating habits.

The interviews with employees and the volunteer representative bore on their link to and role in CFM; their view of CFM and the link with customers; as well as on their own shopping and eating habits – before and since the shop opened.

The interviews with partners bore on their views on the local food network being developed.

Long interviews with customers bore on their link to the area (for the 3 living in Mosstodloch), ways of life (especially around provisioning and neighbour sociability) in the area – past and present, their reaction to the opening of the shop, their provisioning, shopping and eating habits before and since the shop opened. In the short interviews (SI), customers were asked about their shopping of that day, and more generally about their shopping habits at the shop, their other provisioning sources, what they make of the shop, and about any changes in their eating habits. The duration and scope of these interviews on the spot varied greatly from one customer to the next (from just 2' to an exceptional 15'), depending on their greater or lesser readiness to talk – as this is not a market survey exercise, and there was no point in subjecting people to a formatted questionnaire.

Referred to in text as	Customers: gender, estimated age
L8	Female customer, +80
L9	Female customer, late 60s
L10	Female customer, early 60s
L11	Female customer, early 30s
S1	Female customer, late 50s
S2	Male customer, mid 50s
S3	Female customer, +50
S5	Female customer, age not noted
S6	Female customer, age not noted
S7	Male customer, in his 60s
S8	Female customer, in her 70s
S9	Female customer, in her 50s
S10	Male customer, age not noted
S11	2 Female customers, in their 50s
S12	Male customer, about 60
S13	Male customer, beg 60s
S14	Male customer, beg 60s
S15	Male customer, in their 50s
S16	Male customer, mid 40s

I – CFM, Mosstodloch, Moray

1. Introduction to Community Food Moray

CFM is a charity, which was set up in April 2011, after a pilot of one year by the parent organisation Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE). Initially the idea had been to provide affordable fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grains to “priority areas” in Moray (“those experiencing rural isolation, economic deprivation, lack of easy access to affordable, fresh produce” – see CFM 2012), from a base located in the village of Mosstodloch, by the A96 service station.

Despite CFINE’s decision to pull out from Moray at the end of the pilot, the development manager they had hired for developing that project decided to take the project further with the help of the local volunteers mobilised at that stage, and thanks to funding provided by NHS Grampian, which was keen for the service to continue, as well as through individual donations. This led, over the course of a mere 18 months, from 2 outlets and 2 volunteers to the opening of 17 food outlets throughout Moray to which fruit and veg are delivered from the base in Mosstodloch, mainly provided by 8 registered local farmers for the veg and other suppliers for fruit; and to the transformation of the Mosstodloch unit from a base into a greengrocer’s shop in its own right (L1).

CFM have now secured LEADER funding³ as well as matched funding (Robertson trust, Lottery fund) for 3 years, to develop into a social enterprise – i.e. a viable business supporting social ends. There are 3 branches of activity at present:

- The **fruit and vegetables shop** by the Mosstodloch service station, serving “the general public” – in particular the local population of the village (of around 1,000), at a mark up of 25% on top of producer prices; the shop also sells soup, and will sell smoothies and salads later in 2013. In addition to the fruit and vegetables, CFM sells free-range eggs as well as whole grains, and some locally produced honey;
- **Commercial services** (approximate margin of 30%):
 - o catering for local businesses, for example those which have subscribed to the Healthy Working Lives NHS programme, organisations of the Moray social enterprise network (fruit platters, fruit baskets); and
 - o training (provided by the development manager, who is now trained to teach the food and health certificate).

This commercial arm of the activity is still very much in its beginnings;

- **Social activities:** stalls in outlets in isolated and/or deprived areas, and/ or targeted to specific groups (e.g. through Women’s aid – a charity combating domestic violence, a Step by Step group of young mums etc.). There the mark up is only 10%. There are also boxes for

³ Leader (now Leader +) is one of four initiatives financed by EU structural funds and is designed to help rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local region. http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/index_en.htm

homeless people which they access through vouchers. Finally there is now also an activity as food bank, working with donations of food, to face emergency situations⁴.

The idea is that the development of the first two areas will subsidise the third in the future, taking over from public subsidies at present. They constitute around 75% of the income at present.

The fruit and veg shop was initially the base for the outlets throughout Moray, and it retains this function. It is located in a group of 5 shops on the service station along the A96 from which the 'village' of Mosstodloch extends (the recent bypass between Mosstodloch and Fochabers means that there is little traffic on this section of the road, except for traffic with a local purpose). The other shops include a hairdresser's, a grooming shop for dogs, a Chinese take away which has closed, and the shop of the service station which is quite large and functions as a grocery store, with very little fresh produce, selling above all dry groceries, milk and dairy products, drinks and basic home products. It looks derelict and dark. The 5 shops belong to the same owner.

2. Mosstodloch and Moray

Mosstodloch, with a population of 1,017 in 2001, is a series of estates rather than a village, although it has a community hall with some activities (gym, dancing lessons, playing etc.) especially for pensioners and a primary school, just off the shops. It has a residential part and an industrial estate (Garmouth road – e.g. including various welders – working, in part, for the whisky distilling and malting industries, a blast cleaning business etc. but also the Environmental Services of Moray Council), which at the time of the plans for the bypass (2008)⁵, was "almost full"; as well as 2 other businesses – a saw mill (built in 1995, 64 staff), and Baxter's, food processors, (headquarters and factory, as well as visitor centre), which is a major employer in the area.

The village of Fochabers lies only one mile away. Fochabers has a population of about 1,500, and retains the character of a village with still quite a few independent shops – a bakery-cafe, a butcher, a hairdresser's, a chemist etc. + 2 outlets of the Co-operative supermarket.

Elgin is the larger town close to Mosstodloch, it is about 8 miles away. Elgin counts with numerous supermarkets – including Tesco, Aldi, Liddle, Asda.

Although Moray is largely rural, this is not reflected in its economy which is much more geared to manufacturing than the rest of Scotland. Public employment is also higher, especially due to the defence sector, which however is under restructuring (one of the 2 RAF bases, in Kinloss, has closed. The other one, in Lossiemouth, has escaped closure for the moment).

⁴ There were several articles in the local *Press and Journal Moray* on 14/11 (front page), 16/11, 20 and 21/11, mentioning the initiative and its social context. Cf Front page article: "Desperate youngsters flood food banks with help pleas. EMERGENCY food banks have been set up across Moray to help the rising number of youngsters going hungry. The 15 centres are being staffed by volunteers, who appealed last night for vital donations of food parcels for teenagers."

⁵ The Fochabers and Mosstodloch Bypass is a road scheme which constructed bypasses of the villages of Fochabers and Mosstodloch in Moray on the A96 trunk road. It was completed in the Spring of 2012.

The figures of the last census available are unfortunately still those of the 2001 census. These showed that Mosstodloch was clearly geared to manufacturing, and employment in the public administration and defence sector was closer to the Scottish average than to that of Moray. This is likely to have remained so.

Industry of employment	Mosstodloch	Moray	Scotland
All persons aged 16-74 in employment (excluding full-time students)	472	39832	2163035
- % A. Agriculture and hunting and forestry	2.12	3.91	2.2
- % B. Fishing	0.42	0.91	0.31
- % C. Mining and quarrying	1.48	2.37	1.29
- % D. Manufacturing	26.27	13.44	13.65
- % E. Electricity and gas and water supply	1.27	0.52	1.02
- % F. Construction	9.32	7.9	7.76
- % G. Wholesale & retail trade and repairs	11.65	12.99	13.3
- % H. Hotels and restaurants	3.81	4.96	4.95
- % I. Transport and storage and communication	5.93	5.12	6.89
- % J. Financial intermediaries	2.54	1.73	4.74
- % K. Real estate and renting and business activities	5.3	7.54	11.42
- % L. Public administration and defence and social security	8.05	15.19	7.23
- % M. Education	6.14	6.69	7.42
- % N. Health and social work	10.17	10.41	12.63
- % O.P.Q. Other	5.51	6.32	5.18

Source: Scotland's Census. 29/4/2001

Unemployment is relatively lower than in Scotland as a whole, but Moray has a disproportionately high number of low paid jobs. "In 2006 the gross median full-time weekly wage for Moray was £383, which was amongst the lowest in Scotland. Moreover 25% of employees earned £275 or less" (The Moray Council and Communities Scotland 2007: 3). The 2011 economic strategy document for Moray notes that "despite high employment average wage levels some 14% lag behind the rest of Scotland" (Moray Community Development Partnership 2011: 10). A previous report had highlighted the high numbers of working poors (Voices from the Edge, Poverty in Moray Report, 2004, quoted in Fyfe, A., MacMillan, K., McGregor T., and Reid, S. 2009: App.8 p.2).

The 2001 Census showed that the proportion of Mosstodloch residents who were plant operatives and in elementary occupations was significantly higher than in Moray; similarly the pattern of lower qualification levels amongst was even more pronounced in Mosstodloch than in the rest of Moray.

Occupation groups	Mosstodloch	Moray	Scotland
All persons aged 16-74 in employment (excluding full-time students)	472	39832	2163035
- % Managers and senior officials	10.17	10.89	12.63
- % Professional occupations	5.3	7.34	11.2
- % Associate professional and technical occupations	13.98	17.54	14.33
- % Administrative and secretarial occupations	12.08	9.61	13.03
- % Skilled trades occupations	15.25	16.8	12.59
- % Personal service occupations	6.57	7.55	7.13
- % Sales and customer service occupations	5.72	7.31	7.33
- % Process and plant and machine operatives	17.16	10.37	9.97
- % Elementary occupations	13.77	12.6	11.79
Highest Qualification			
All persons aged 16-74	737	63191	3731079
- % No qualification	33.79	31.47	33.23
- % Highest qualification attained - Level 1	30.66	28.61	24.69
- % Highest qualification attained - Level 2	14.25	15.26	15.65
- % Highest qualification attained - Level 3	6.65	6.79	6.95
- % Highest qualification attained - Level 4	14.65	17.86	19.47

Source: Scotland's Census. 29/4/2001

The socially mixed character of Mosstodloch was perhaps better reflected in the 2001 Census by data on house tenure, as there were both a significantly higher proportion of home owners as well as a higher proportion of council flat dwellers in Mosstodloch than in Moray and the rest of Scotland.

Tenure	Mosstodloch	Moray	Scotland
Total number of households (with residents)	432	35803	2192246
- % Owned	71.76	63.32	62.59
- % Rented from council	23.61	18.3	21.57
- % Other social rented	0.23	3.78	5.58
- % Private rented (Unfurnished)	1.39	8.23	3.1
- % Private rented (Furnished)	0.23	2.48	3.61
- % Living Rent Free	2.78	3.9	3.55

Source: Scotland's Census. 29/4/2001

As put by one respondent,

It's very mixed, young families... This part here is all private houses owned by occupants [in this area of the village]. Teachers and nurses, retired people from businesses. There are poorer families in the council estate, at the other end, single mums... (L3)

II – Community Food Moray and the Moray food network: from a health focus to a more global strategy of relocalization?

The aim of CFM is “[to support] healthy eating through access to low cost fruit, local vegetables and wholegrains in Moray. Through this we aim to improve healthy eating choices and contribute to community well-being. The ethos of Community Food Moray also focuses on using local produce where possible, reducing food miles and food waste.”

The health focus is definitely important for the promoters of CFM as well as for its volunteers and staff, and it is part of the educative activity carried out. However, underpinning this objective is an analysis of the health problems faced by the population which puts the structure of the supply and distribution at its core – especially regarding fruit and vegetables:

- the high cost of vegetable, especially if considered as accompaniment rather than as key pieces of a meal; and the high cost of fruit;
- the fact that, as they often come in packs, they are ill-suited for single people or even for couples, resulting in significant waste which makes them appear all the more costly.
- Food and hygiene regulations for mass retailing were also at stake (and directly incriminated by some customers) – “washed carrots rot quickly”; not to mention their “lack of taste”, which further reduces their attractiveness etc.

Hence when CFM, in their self-presentation, mention their will to use local produce, reduce food miles and food waste, it is not to tick unrelated boxes: rather **the current economy of food provisioning is at the centre of the diagnosis**. This certainly informs their LEADER initiative “Taste not Waste”, and the projected outcomes. Their very tightly interconnected and consistent phrasing perhaps marks a new step in the strategic orientation of CFM:

- ❖ **Revitalise Communities** - Moray Food Outlets address social and economic deprivation and create a community-based infrastructure that creates a sense of identity, local commitment and social cohesion. The shop and hub bring local people together, training and workshops improves opportunities, confidence, self-esteem, skills, employability.
- ❖ **Increase Community Capacity** - As above, volunteer opportunities build community capacity, access to produce and services.
- ❖ **New Markets and Products** - CFM aims to bring increased sales of fresh fruit and vegetables to communities that previously struggle to access/afford them. Our 'healthy take away' will produce new products to locations that currently cannot easily access healthy food items.
- ❖ **Progressive Rural Economy** - Supporting local growers, access to affordable produce. Local community based solutions to local issues/needs.
- ❖ **Conservation of the Rural Environment** - Supporting local growers. Reducing waste, food miles, carbon footprint. Education changes attitudes and behaviour.

Source: Nawrocki, R. and Roberts, J. (2012), *'Taste Not Waste' Information booklet*. Community Food Moray

In the last year CFM has started working together with other organisations, such as the Rural Environmental Action Project (REAP), other charities, the health improvement manager of the Moray Council, to set up and promote a **local food network in Moray (provisional name: Moray**

Community Food Network), whose aims are geared to rethinking the local food economy and, on that basis, to raise awareness, knowledge and skills around food and health.

Certainly some of the aims and objectives are about raising awareness and promoting skills around food and health, but the potential is there to also look at some of the broader environment... What influences the choices that people make? Supermarkets are a good example. At the national level, the Scottish government is involved in talks with supermarket chains. What can supermarkets do to support the obesity strategy? But any kind of agreement is going to be voluntary, supermarkets are about their bottom line, not necessarily about healthy eating unless profitable, so it's a difficult one. Yes we can engage with supermarkets but there will be limitations to what supermarkets are prepared to do. Potentially I suppose networks can help having some of that discussion and that debate, create forums where we can look at different models. (Network member)

The ambition of the Moray local food network is to find ways of bringing together local farmers and growers, alternative retail and delivery systems like CFM, and “communities” , i.e. “geographic communities” or specific groups. The group is just at its beginnings, but the aim is to reflect on how to make local fresh and tasty produce (not just fruit and vegetable) available and affordable and how to turn this into a concrete reality. CFM themselves are already working with 8 Moray based farmers, who are offering them “quite good rates”. Reflection on rates however is necessarily encompassing, and will probably be a major topic for the economic sustainability of the network as well:

They sell to us at a very good rate – but at the same time the last thing we want to do is to go to a farmer and get the prices down. We're about supporting local people, farmers are part of that. (L1)

The other background to the initiative is the recent awareness in Moray, which, according to the current Chair of CFM, is fairly general, that **the economy of the area has so far been “unsustainable”** – meaning that it is far too dependent on one sector (specifically the RAF bases) for which decisions are made without much possibilities of a say by the local population. This dawned on people on the occasion of the announcement that the second base (Lossiemouth) was going to be closed, after Kinloss, which had been traumatic. At the same time as people campaigned for the continuation of Lossiemouth, they started realising that even if they managed to stop the closure (which they did) this was likely to only be temporary: “people know that they need a more diversified, strengthened, sustainable economy : and that means buy local, support local producers.” (L2).

This is a powerful argument for developing a local food network in which “local” does not just mean encouraging local production and distribution but rather ensuring that the whole of the economy associated with it (including the generation of income) and control over decision making remain local. Such reflection is bolstered by the work of David Watts and colleagues (at the Institute of Rural Research of the University of Aberdeen), which is known to members of the Moray local food network, on alternative food networks and local food enterprises, where local is understood as producing, processing and/or retailing local food and generating local trade flows (Watts et al. 2011: 1190). Watts et al. suggest that, although conventional retail might be sympathetic to local and regional products,

where local or regional food circulates through conventional distribution networks, the value added to it will gravitate towards their already powerful 'actors' (for example, multiple retailers, large processing companies). Thus, ... the potential to generate endogenous economic development in rural areas is likely to be strongest and most durable where alternative food networks are used to retain value added in the area where the food is produced.(ibid.: 1201).

However, more research is required as there are indications from other areas of Scotland and the UK that

individual producers are often involved with alternative and conventional food networks simultaneously (ibid.)

This is indeed the case of one of the suppliers of CFM, TIO (This Is Organics), which is one of the 2 “fully dedicated organic root vegetable suppliers to Tesco, supplying the entire UK from facilities in England and Scotland” (<http://www.tio.co.uk/tesco.html>).

Significantly, these authors seek to measure what they call (following Ilbery et al 2001) “relocalization”, which implies that de-localisation has taken place before, prompted by productivism in agriculture. Evidence for this includes indications (which needed further probing) that the geography of conventional farms, as captured by the Agricultural survey, does not appear to influence that of ‘farm-based local food enterprises’: new local food activities seem to be set up without necessarily any relation to the fabric of local conventional farms. And whereas the main primary produce of these new local food ventures is horticulture (immediately followed by cattle and sheep), horticulture appears as primary activity for only a very reduced share of Scottish farms (Watts et al. 2011: 1196). There does seem to be a lack of continuity between these two types of food providers.

Only for one type of areas where they find high indices of local food activity, the remote Northern and Western Isles, do they venture the possibility that this might correspond not to relocalization but to local conditions curtailing productivism in the first place, namely the croft system and thus to the maintenance of a local agriculture over time (Watts et al. 2011: 1197). The type of land tenure and modes of life associated with them are certainly yet another research path worth exploring for the development of local food networks.

In Moray, we are certainly talking about relocalization, and a limited one at that, as the number of food enterprises identifying themselves as “local” seems very small and the concentration of ‘local farm-based enterprises’ in the North East (Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray) is one of the lowest in Scotland (ibid.: 1196)⁶.

These findings are echoed by reflections couched by respondents in this project in generational terms – with the generation above 60 having experienced a form of unspecialised, almost subsistence-based, agriculture, which became unsustainable with the turn to a more mechanised and commercial agriculture. Even those of that older generation whose parents had not been

⁶ Thus, if Watts’ approach is followed, not all suppliers of CFM could be called local: in addition to TIO, which supplies Tesco for the whole of the UK, some of the suppliers of CFM are local but conventional farmers dedicating, for example, most of their land to grain for the malting industry and thus largely for the exporting whisky industry, and vegetables are only an aside for them, and CFM probably a minor outlet (L3 – also L4):
How should this type of dual activity and dual trade circuits be designated?

working on the land would often grow vegetables in their garden – a type of activity which is now rediscovered as ‘educational’ but has slid out of rural modes of life:

You’ve got a lost generation here, every time I go into schools, they tell me, one of my grands helped me plant this or that, but the parents don’t have these skills. (L12)

What everybody was doing then [in the generation of the respondent’s parents] was organic farming. I can remember the first fertilisers we ever got, in 50 kg paper sacks. I’m old enough to remember the commercialisation of agriculture. Now it’s denuding the land of people basically, because of mechanisation. Originally we had very little inputs into farming, because everything is a cycle. You produce crops, farming on manure which went back into land again... You didn’t need a lot of inputs. Now high input farming is not sustainable, because the basic input is oil... A lot of the elderly customers [of CFM] are still probably country people, brought up in country cottages with gardens which produced a lot of their own produce. These were hard times, but we were probably better off than some people now. ... Small farms were not specialised, you tended to have a bit of everything, cattle, pigs – you could slaughter a pig, milk cows... All this stopped around the time I got married (1968). The units were too small, the overheads were too high, the machinery... When we came here first I always grew vegetables in our garden, potatoes, cauliflowers, carrots – until I couldn’t do it anymore. Not fruits but there were farms along the road so... People have been so used to supermarket shopping. Older people might maintain a garden. In this cul de sac only 1 person has a garden – so that’s 10%, and not throughout the year. (L3)

This generational loss is perhaps the reason why members of the Moray local food network talk about “growers” alongside farmers, as it would seem that the drive for “re-localization” stems from a varied array of actors, only few of whom are farmers – there are individual growers (e.g. amongst the CFM customers), growers on allotments, “community” growers, and schools, and indeed any kind of educational centre could have a ‘grower’s’ activity. However access to land is a serious limit.

The growing thing is something we would like to encourage. We know that Fochabers, the village down the road, are working on allotments. And currently we have some local people bringing their surpluses, often for free [to the shop]. We have arranged with local growers looking for car boot sales, they bring their surplus herbs... again it’s a low volume but still a business transaction. We’re hoping to do this for surplus apples... This is what we’ll try to do through the Community food network, to connect with producers and surpluses. In Mosstodloch I don’t think there are allotments, but it’s got individual growers. Fochabers are going for allotments and organic. There’s Gordon castle and this is where they’re hoping to get their land from, cos land is often the issue. In Elgin they have a very strong allotment group, but they find it very difficult to get land. Whereas Forres has got a transition town’s group, they have a community garden group, and there was strong pressure, they demanded allotments. Moray council now has an allotment policy. Forres’s got a culture of its own – it has Findhorn nearby so it’s got a lot of alternative people. So when transition town opened up its community garden, 30 to 40 plots were taken up straight away, and there’s a waiting list. They’ve got a health and well-being centre in the middle of an allotment. That’s again another dimension. We’re working with them, they’re part of the Community food network, we’ll get some produce from them (L2).

The long-term ambition of the food network is to open up a reflection on the local food economy – not just for a few “alternative communities” in the way that some seem to have successfully done

(especially the Findhorn community near Forres – which has become a beacon for Moray and is even advertised in the Moray Economic Strategy document), but rather at the level of the whole of Moray and for its population in general⁷. However it has been easier to mobilise usual partner charities and organisations in the network, which tend to be oriented to providing educational activities around food and the environment (‘grow your own’, allotments, growing activities at school) for specific target groups – children, people with disabilities etc. This is also probably due to the lack of “local” farmers just mentioned.

It is interesting that the thought which has gone into the set up of the Moray community food network in parallel with CFM is also informing the educational activities of CFM, in the sense that the health component tends to be included in a wider perspective, informed by the old principles of household economy, such as frugality. These principles were carried by the older generation and the aim is to have the younger generations (e.g. ‘young mums’) rediscover them, not through any moralising discourse but rather as both a condition and implication of the relocalization of food sourcing. Thus the possibility of such frugality is underpinned by the choice of CFM to source locally, for the produce appears to be not only much more tasty but also nutritious, which reduces the quantities needed. “Taste Not Waste” seeks to pull all these strings together.

However there seems to be a **risk of divide** between a health orientation of the network, taking support in educational activities and the reconnection to the “land” through “growing” things which might also be a source of local provisioning, but necessarily a limited one; and the attempt at rebalancing the local food economy, which demands a joint effort by “local” farming enterprises and community groups regarding new local conditions of food production and distribution (including through new forms of retailing such as CFM). The current membership of the network might gear it more naturally towards the former orientation, despite awareness of the importance of the latter also for health reasons.

III – The Mosstodloch shop: a “hub”

In this context, the shop in Mosstodloch is taking on a role which is much more important than may have been anticipated at the beginning: indeed the idea now, with the new LEADER funded project, is to transform it into a “hub” for the local community⁸.

The notion of hub conveys an idea of **place which fosters the most diverse social interactions and activities** – and may make it able to reconcile the very varied objectives and targets that CFM is trying to achieve:

- Bringing the people of ‘the local community and the surrounding villages’ together, but providing special attention to older people, young mums, people living in isolation and/or deprivation, through the activity of the shop and its space as meeting place, especially across

⁷ In this sense, the name currently envisaged for the network (“Moray Community Food Network”) is perhaps not reflecting its ambitions well enough.

⁸ Other outlets, although located in specific organisations (such as Dr Gray’s hospital in Elgin, or the sheltered housing unit for the elderly in Tomintoul), may also be open to the general public. It is also important to note that CFM supply other local shops which they consider to fulfil similar functions as them (e.g. in Garmouth). However their location in specific organisations as well as at limited times is likely to constrain this opening to the wider public.

generations. Interactions take place around the act of shopping, without being planned, without any particular purpose or target: this means reinvesting the idea of retailing which was once carried by local independent shops without knowing it. Arguably, such **non-purposive facilitation of local encounters** has become rare in contemporary ways of life but there is an ongoing public debate about purposive and non-purposive use of space and the effects on the “vitality” of “communities”. This function of CFM is identified, recognised and valued by customers:

I think it [i.e. the shop] is doing quite well actually. It's a shame that there is not more choice in the village, shopwise. There're a lot of older people who can't go into town ... The shop's great, really good, good for the whole village, something we could have done with years ago. It's a community-run thing, and it's going to help a lot the younger people, to get fresh fruit and veg, and to learn to use it. ... But I've seen young people there, it's been a boon for the village. (L9).

- Providing an **educational space**, with education and training as well as employment opportunities;
- Providing a **base both for a network of outlets**, bringing local affordable produce to people in remote locations, in areas experiencing economic cutbacks, and to vulnerable groups of people more generally; but again making this a vehicle for a broader action on shopping, cooking and eating practices:

What really attracted me with CFM is that they are physically taking food into communities and saying here it is: not only food with affordable prices but also recipe cards, demonstrations, events... a social dimension to healthy eating (L2)

- Potentially serving as a **platform for organising local producers** as well, by leading them to think about how they can make use of alternative retailing and perhaps act together to set up/support other alternative retailing platforms/outlets. This will be done in link with the Moray food network.

What all this points to is to a **new function for alternative forms of retailing**, which **both**

- **revive the older conception of local independent shop**, the crafts and social bonds associated with this, including knowledge of the customers and their habits, small gifts on top of the usual shopping etc.:

You get to know the locals and know exactly how to treat them, somebody you can have a lot of fun with, somebody you just let them get on with what they want... Also an older couple in a very remote area. They really need our service, and I can be on the phone with her 15', she'll ask if we have any cheapies, they don't have a lot of money, and food for their animals, and our wooden boxes for their fire... She loved my tomatoes, I grew 23 plants of tomato last year in my greenhouse. I just gave a few ones to her, that's the personal touch with people, it makes the difference. (L5)

Whoever was available would give a hand for customers. We all got to know customers very well, and they all like to have a chat... We make them aware that if they want something we will get it, it's possible. I fetch herbs from my garden, rosemary... a lot of customers donated parsley... You always

have far too much in your garden that you'll never use so it's good for them to bring it in for other people to buy it...With customers as well we exchange recipes, I made this I made that, so you try out new things. People might now know how to use sweet potatoes... Initially they come in to get their goods, but we get to know them, and they ask me, oh how's your husband today... a bit family oriented as well. ...It's bringing back old shops, bringing it up-to-date. You get to know their make-up sort of thing [of customers], so you know the ones with whom you can interact more, you have to gauge what kind of a chat they're ready for – most of them are just very easy. (L4)

- and foster a **new conception in which alternative retailers incorporate new (e.g. health, environmental) concerns** in their know-how and advice to their customers and help structure **new economic circuits** also mindful of these in a meaningful concrete and consistent way. For example, because keeping prices down is paramount, there is no fanaticism about selecting organic products, even though some customers ask about it.

There is definitely awareness now about waste. Supermarkets have a huge responsibility with the offers. There's an appetite in popular society for doing something about it, and a local shops where you can buy 1 banana etc. [help with this]. And a shop where we say we're going to do soup and smoothies with our own waste, it can be as demonstration: this taste not Waste initiative has come of its time ... It's connecting with a lot of things: we need to reduce packaging, our carbon footprint, we've got to reduce the energy, and we can reconnect all this with something that we all did. We also have this cross-generational thing here too. The generation of my mother, they were the most sustainable people on the planet. We've got to tap into that. This is a hub. Changing behaviour is about engaging with other people and do it with them. (L2).

The other thing is that they can get the quantity that they want – if they want half or quarter of a turnip, we'll cut it for them. So it saves them money because in the supermarket you don't get things for a single person or even a couple, and it's always buy one and get one free. Whereas here they can buy individually – half a cabbage... they really appreciate that... (L4).

Yes people are keener on local produce than organic. They want to support the area. More and more farmers are becoming organic anyway, perhaps not 100% organic but at least it's not as mass produced as it used to be. (L4)

One day we got cauliflowers which had suffered from a sudden frost but we explained to people, we cut the price and they bought them, because people trust us and they can come in the next day and say what they think.(L2)

There are clearly **tensions** in the definition of this hub between:

- an encompassing conception of the 'community' and the targeting of particular groups (the term community is thus quite misleading as it can refer to 'geographic' communities, to be served as a whole, and without distinctions; as well as to 'issues-based communities', as put by one respondent, which are in fact target groups for specific policies/strategies, although some of them might also be social groups in which people relate to each other);

- a strategy seeking to alter the economy of food and seeking to inform/educate specific target groups (with the risk, again, of identifying them and singling them out as in need of redressing their 'bad' habits) etc.

Nevertheless the new concept explored in CFM, of **retail as social and economic function, grounded in the shop and the shop activities**, has the potential to hold all of these together.

An added challenge is the **internal organisation** of the shop and hub. Due to the large reliance of the charity on volunteers, especially until the beginning of the LEADER project, the tasks have been divided into many subtasks and thus made suitable for entrusting to different people for the length of time they're able to dedicate to the shop. Similarly the tasks have to accommodate the possibility of supported employment for people who for various reasons have been out of the labour market for some time (+18 months).

As the shop also operates as a base for the other outlets, purchasing for, preparing and delivering the orders to the various outlets and remote customers constitute tasks in themselves, alongside sales to customers in the shop, and can thus be allocated to different people. The LEADER and match funding have made it possible to recruit 3 more staff alongside the development manager, store person and driver: in particular there is now a store manager ensuring the purchasing and overall supervision of both reception and dispatching of food; and hence of the other store staff and volunteers. But the initial division between shop sales, purchasing and orders has been maintained and accommodates the various levels and modes of commitment of the team.

Shop sales are taken care of by different volunteers each day of the week, who each have become the person of reference for that day, although all other volunteers and staff in the shop may give a hand if need be. The 'skill' of shop-keeping (with which some volunteers were familiar) has had to be learnt by doing by most volunteers.

Retailing is a skill. The first time I came here, there was this rack here with all these awful looking fruits (the cheap ones): it was the first thing you saw when coming in... It was off putting! Now we've got the soup, it smells good... the place has got to be attractive.(L2)

As I didn't know when I first came: I thought it was just a private place, not an actual shop, but we've come up a long way since then (L5).

Indeed, **there is a heightened need** (in my view) **for sharing a common understanding of this retailing function as a whole amongst staff and volunteers**; and a common feeling that they are actually piloting this new, alternative, retailing function, and that this requires collective reflection about how it is being operated, about difficulties and challenges. It is this retailing function which grounds the constitution of CFM into a social enterprise and hub, and I believe it is this which will help overcome potential drifts of orientation and organisational tensions. Taking the full measure of this retailing function will probably mean arranging shop space and tasks differently so that the 'base' activity does not interfere too visibly with attending shop customers.

IV – Uses of the shop

The shop is open Tuesdays-Saturdays from 9 to 1. On the Tuesday I was there, about 25 people visited the shop. Tuesdays are the busiest day usually, but that particular day it is likely that fewer parents came than usually because the school was closed. Hence the main bulk of customers I saw were regulars, living in Mosstodloch, often aged above 50. Despite the problem linked to the specific day of my visit, this seems to be the main customer base of the shop anyway.

Four main patterns of use were identified:

1. Frequent shopping of a few items;
2. Weekly shopping of all the fruits and veg, which may be supplemented by more frequent shopping or not;
3. Use of the soup service, supplemented with limited shopping or not;
4. Occasional infrequent use associated with unrelated journeys.

Before turning to describe them in more detail, it is useful to report on shopping routines before the shop opened (some of which are maintained) and on memories of past sourcing patterns.

1. Past sourcing patterns

Almost all respondents are and have been shopping at the supermarket: as they often put it they “shop in Elgin” (which means shopping at one of the supermarkets – any other kind of shopping is referred to in a more specific fashion), except for a few who do not have a car and shop online (S4, S6). Most would maintain this as their main sourcing mode, although some now subtract fruit and veg entirely from their supermarket shopping, and they do this because the shop is there, accessible: in general it is not something that they had been thinking of organising before. In that sense there is definitely an infrastructure effect on shopping habits.

A few people were also using the independent shops in the vicinity, especially the butcher’s in Fochabers. It seems that the butcher does some home deliveries as well, and there is a fishman coming every week with his van. The only other food shop in the village, the shop of the service station is a rundown convenience store, and belongs to an altogether different category.

Only very few had been/are opting for alternative solutions. There is some “growing” activity amongst customers (*A lot of them still grow their own potatoes, but they’ll come for another thing, like a leek, kale... L4*). One customer mentioned a fruit ‘farm shop’ in ‘the village’ (Fochabers), which he used to go to but access to which has become difficult because of the bypass, another mentioned a vegetable shed 3 or 4 miles away she and her parents used to go to until it closed (L10), and yet another customer said he and his wife were going to farmers’ markets. Only two respondents (L2, L11) explicitly sought to limit their supermarket purchases, even though most respondents regretted having no alternatives to supermarket shopping.

I do most of my shopping in town anyway. I like to do a big shop every few weeks. I don’t really like shopping so I try to get as much as I can in one shop.(L9)

The customer base is not, in the main, one of alternative shoppers, purposefully shopping with CFM for its local produce, although there are such customers: rather, CFM seems to be fulfilling its objective for the Mosstodloch shop as it has become the local greengrocer’s and has become a part

of the shopping routine. And in becoming part of the routine it is changing it quite substantially, since it is now possible to just “pop in” (S1). Although this may reconnect with the experience of shopping in the past, for many this is quite a remote past since there have never been such local shops in Mosstodloch (the service station shop being the exception, but it is a very degraded version of a local shop).

However the shop also connects with other kinds of memories – memories of family gardens and what was grown there, which often catered for vegetables almost throughout the year, and also more recent memories of their own vegetable gardens, even though both husband and wife would be working and raising children; for those having long lived in Mosstodloch, memories of the kind of relationships that used to exist in the village, as neighbours not only knew and greeted each other but also helped each other out and offered gifts in kind to each other, including the produce of hunting, gardening etc. Activities and exchanges around food used to be an important component and ferment of bonds between neighbours:

When my dad retired they bought a house here [in Mosstodloch]. In the garden here at the back my dad grew vegetables, potatoes and carrots and leeks, and he gave me some. (L10)

That’s right. We always had [a garden]. We grew our own potatoes, carrots, leeks, parsnips, beetroots. It fed us most of the year... I used to work at Baxters, my husband worked with [inaudible], Baileys, and then Elgin engineers.

Qu - Whilst you were working, did you keep your garden?

Yes – we did.

Qu – And did you have children?

Yes, 3. (L8)

My husband was a great fisher and shooter in his days, so I was quite used to have him come home with fish that had to be gutted and birds that had to be plucked, cleaned, singed, and ready for the oven. I know all about it, the horrible stench... When I first came to live here [Mosstodloch], I used to come home from work sometimes, and find a bag hanging on the back door and find a couple of pheasants which I had to hang for a while... People used to do these things back then, not so much now. You found who it was and we had fruit trees and we would give fruit, but you didn’t have to, because people would not leave a note in the bag saying who it was. It doesn’t happen anymore, perhaps in the smaller villages. I can’t say people are less friendly, but they are more cautious about becoming friendly... It’s certainly changed here since we first came, there was a time when we used to know everyone. There was a super community spirit. Down at the village hall there was always a lot going on down there. (L9)

There is still a community life in the village, but not so much around food anymore, and CFM comes to take on that social function for most respondents across the patterns of use described below:

I know quite a lot of people in the village. I don’t go out very much because I’m a carer for my mum. But they have a “brew and a blether”, sometimes they play cards, in the community hall (over 60s group). And there’s bowling down in the hall, and exercise classes. (L10)

If I go to the shop because I’ve run out of something, I know I have to plan half an hour because I know I’ll run into somebody and have a chat, I probably still know 2/3 of the people in the village. There’s only ever been the one shop in the village, at the garage [she means the service station shop].

It used to belong to the people who had the post office. But it's nice that we have the fruit and veg shop now, as well as the poodle parlour, the hairdresser's. But they've always been on and off, over the years. (L9)

2. The 4 patterns of use of the shop

2.1 Frequent shopping of few items

(S1, S2, S6, S9, S13, S14, S15 – L9)

The convenience of having a proximity shop was expressed by respondents by reference to specific concrete activities – such as receiving many people at once, or starting to prepare the soup and finding out that some ingredients are missing, which shows how proximity shopping, ‘popping in’ has become part of daily routines:

I was delighted that the shop opened, it's very handy, especially over the summer when you get a lot of visitors, you can pop in here whenever. (S1 - Comes several times a week, carries on doing her big shopping every week “in Elgin”).

I come regularly, probably 2 or 3 times a week, I buy some of my fruits and veg here. The tatties are cheaper here so I buy them here, I buy bananas... Unfortunately my wife's a Tesco fan. I prefer Lidle and Aldi. I got up early this morning and I put on chicken and tomato stock, I didn't have carrots so I got one carrot, celery, onion [at the shop], and now I'll make a soup (S2: this suggests the convenience of having the local shop, you let your stock on the stove and come and fetch whatever is missing).

Sometimes I go more often than that, sometimes I pop in maybe 2 or 3 times in a day – I start doing something and find out I've run out of this or that. (L9)

Moray Older People's Survey on Food & Related Issues. January 2010.

Overall this pattern of use corresponds quite well to the needs of older people ascertained in a study conducted by Community Food and Health Scotland, Community First Moray in 2010, on older people and food, where interviews were held with 100 old people across Moray (65+, but with an “uneven weighting towards” the 75+; 66% home owners, 76% living on their own – locations of respondents and access to shops were not specified in the description of the sample):

76% of interviewees identified problems with shopping for food and 10% did not do shopping at all, (8 women and 1 man). In order of importance, (most important first) the problems were: heaviness of the shopping, distance to the shops, difficulty finding small portions of food to buy, and good food being too expensive. Also identified were eyesight problems...

99% of interviewees shopped once a week or more with 14% using mostly local shops and 27% walking to the shops as the main way of getting there. Comments from researchers indicated that many of the older people walked to the shops several times a week to get small amounts of food. This also provides exercise and encourages positive relationships with local shopkeepers who are part of their social network. (Community Food and Health Scotland, Community First Moray 2010: 7-8).

The notion of proximity is not only valid for the people living in Mosstodloch but also for those working there, e.g. on the industrial estate:

I come usually 2 or 3 times a week. I live in Keith and I work in Mosstodloch. Some of my colleagues also come. I like the soup packs for making soup, and my bananas, and my fruit, and the animal food as well. Before, I used to shop at the shop of the service station – and to be honest the fruit and veg there are just rubbish. It gives you more choice on the doorstep, otherwise I would go to the supermarket, that's the only other choice really (S9).

2.2 Weekly shopping of all the fruits and veg (supplemented by more frequent shopping or not)

Some people living on the estate have switched to use the shop as their main base for their fruit and vegetables of the week (S4, S5, S12, L8, L10, L11).

I come here once a week. I shop for myself. I live in Mosstodloch. I mainly get my vegetables and fruit here. It's usually on Tuesdays when the vegetable and fruit bowl are empty. I used to go to Tesco before (S5).

Some of them do this through a previous order with the shop and collect their box at the shop. This might be for reasons of time constraints and/or because they have come to like the possibility of ordering what they want – as usually CFM will try and provide specifically what they have ordered, rather than just what is available in the shop. But they still collect from the shop, as they enjoy the specific kind of contact that one gets there. The weekly shopping can also be supplemented with soup, on soup days at the shop.

I put in an order [with the shop] every week and then collect it on Tuesdays... And of course they make soup as well. On a Tuesday I go to the exercise class, I pick my vegetable when I'm coming back and get soup. (L10)

However there are also a few isolated cases of housebound people who are brought their orders home (they might also order a soup). This is a service that CFM wants to develop.

I get the shopping once a week. I could get it twice or three times if I wanted. But to save Karen's feet I order it once a week. The shop is very handy for me. The soup's good too. Sometimes I put it in the fridge and I think I'll eat it the next day, and then it's gone (grand-children). They used to go and buy their soup at dinner time. It's a good thing especially in winter time. (L8)

Some local customers also shop for others who live further afield. For example a local couple is shopping at CFM every week for their fruits and vegetable, and they get a box ready for their daughter who lives in Elgin but is keen on eating local produce and 'wants to support the shop' (S12).

Finally this pattern of use also corresponds to purposeful shopping, where customers who do not live in Mosstodloch nevertheless use the shop (either by visiting it or by having a box delivered to them) because they want to buy local, and possibly organic, produce, and consciously seek to limit their supermarket purchases:

I tend to come here when it's quiet and fill my box, and because we're vegetarian and vegan, I will easily spend £35 a week. Everything comes from here. I'm definitely anti-supermarket, the only one I go to is the Co-Op, and I would use the Phoenix in Forres [i.e. the community store of the Findhorn Foundation] if I was going there but it's far (L2).

I have to go to the supermarket, because there's nothing else. But when I heard from the shop, I thought it's brilliant. I don't care if a carrot is squint whereas farmers can't sell them because of EU regulations, and then it gets damped, it's such a wastage. + it doesn't travel, so I love to support them. It's more natural to me, and it tastes better as well. For me this shop is really important, it should be more known, it will keep money in the area, it's much better tasting, and you can buy 3 carrots if you want, so it prevents the wastage of packaging. I recycle everything. I go to the recycling point, I ask someone to take me there. In my bin there is only plastic packaging. Now the food, I don't have waste of food. (L11)

In both these patterns of use (1 and 2), the people concerned are very **wary of waste**, for economic reasons due to their present circumstances but also, especially for the older ones, because they grew up in a context of restriction, frugality, or simply because this was the way things were done. CFM's idea to provide loose produce so that people can buy according to their needs and avoid wasting resonates very deep with most customers.

The elderly all knew ration books. To me it's almost criminal to waste fruit. This is how we were brought up. You don't need to preach to them. If there is anything left over it's used. (L3)

Well tonight it's chicken and ham and mushroom pie, we had ham on Saturday and chicken on Sunday so for left-overs we made it into a pie yesterday, enough to leave for tonight. It's the way I was brought up, nothing was ever wasted, you just used everything. At the end of the week, veggies going very soft they go into soup. (L9)

Respondents make the link with regulations, and with supermarkets; for example they find that the "dirty carrots" (still soiled) offered by CFM "keep better" (L3, S5), they make a point of using the left-overs (S4, S15). They appreciate the fact that produce is loose, both for picking the required quantity and because it saves packaging: thus old ingrained habits are found to be in accord with more contemporary concerns.

Yes they do [taste better], because they're local. They come from the fields round about, so they're straight in here, they're not from Spain or Portugal or whatever... They do taste better, and they keep. Supermarket carrots go rotten quite quickly" (S5).

2.3 Use of the soup service (supplemented with limited shopping or not)

The soup service on Tuesdays and Thursdays is well received by people living on their own (e.g. widows), who have lost any interest in cooking (S7,8,10)

I just come for soup only, and for some fruit. I eat a lot of fruit and vegetable and this shop suits me very well, I try to keep as fit as I can. It's handy, just handy really. When you're on your own you're not inclined to cook so much really. I just come on Tuesdays for soup and some vegetable. (S8, female, +70)

But the soup service also brings in people working in Mosstodloch – from the salespeople of the shops next door to staff on the industrial estate (S11). For some of them this is also an opportunity for buying fruit and veg to consume at home.

We usually come here Tuesdays and Thursdays for the home-made soup. We work on the industrial estate. Before we used to get something from Fochabers a sandwich or something but we enjoy the home-made soup. There's 4 or 5 of us doing this... Sometimes I get my fruit and veg here as well. I live 7 miles away from here. I usually shop in Buckie and Elgin, at the supermarket, also for fruit and veg.

Not a lot of people would take soup with them, but if it's there... Quite a lot of the Polish workers here get it (L8)

2.4 Occasional infrequent use associated with unrelated journeys

(S3, S16)

Finally the location of the shop also brings in people who drop in on their journey (e.g. a lady coming to take care of her grand-children every week, drops in as the shop is on her way from the bus stop – S3) or who have come to the other shops from further afield (e.g. S16 respondent waiting for his partner who went to the hairdresser's, came in for 15').

It is not that they would go to just any shop: the S3 respondent is pleased to find there bananas and cereal bars for her grand-children, but she could also have brought them from Elgin. Similarly the customer waiting for his partner came in because he remembered CFM's romanesco on a stall in Elgin – he is generally a fan of cooking and knows a lot about vegetables. But the fact that the shop is located by the road and close to other shops is important to get customers from further afield.

V – Changes in eating habits

Among the 4 patterns of use, it is the second one that seems to foster most change in eating habits.

In particular ordering seems to make a difference, for a variety of reasons indicating very different ways for people to make use of orders: whether it is thanks to

- choosing in advance and then having to eat what has been bought;
- seeing names of unusual fruits and veg on the list and deciding to try them out, which brings about a more varied diet;
- or because the box is ordered without any specific requirement re contents and thus comes as a 'surprise box' and a spur for cooking new things.

I say to Jo, I don't care what you give me, because I eat everything, I just want fresh things. I get the fruit and veg and then I decide what I will cook, it's very nice every week, it's a surprise box. I say to

Jo if you have something interesting and for a good price just give it to me... If I let Jo give me a surprise, I eat such a variety of foods, I try different recipes, never from the cookbook. Basically I love soup. I eat a lot of fresh salad as well. I bake my own bread. (L11).

I put in an order [with the shop] every week and then collect it on Tuesdays. I have always eaten quite a lot of vegetable but probably not as much fruit as I should have. I know that you should eat a lot of fruit, so I just order it, and then I know that I'll eat it! I don't like to waste (L10)

However, increase in variety is noted more generally by respondents across patterns of use:

I shop as much as I can in the shop, my husband is not a vegetable person. But I am, and I've certainly eaten healthier since I've been with the shop. I have been trying new things, such as aubergines, lime, fresh herbs. Of course I've got my moments, a pie here and there, no harm in it.(L5)

The improvement of taste is also noted by most respondents, and most relate this to the fact that the produce is local. In the short interviews, I usually had to ask them the question as to whether they noticed a different taste; some of them responded with a “yes, because it's local” – which sounds as something rationally constructed rather than experienced (S4, S5, S11). Nevertheless, in the longer interviews, issues of taste came up without me prompting them, in quite some more detail and in a less rehearsed and more “felt” way, which suggests that what appeared to be a reconstruction in the shorter interviews was probably due to the specific interview situation.

And they've got dirty carrots, which I quite like rather than the one that's all been washed. And the potatoes are much nicer, cause a lot of this stuff is local grown. There are some things which are obviously not local, like I get avocado every week, they have to get it from somewhere else, but in the summer, they've got raspberries, strawberries, in the supermarket they've got just no taste (L10).

Interestingly, one respondent mentioned that this had caused her to go to the butcher's in the other village and stopping to buy it from the supermarket – because everything has to be at the level of quality of the freshness of the vegetables.

I buy all my fruit and veg from here. In fact I very rarely go to the supermarket now, because, even from here I prefer to go to buy my meat from the local butchers, because taste has changed, so I'd much rather have butchers meat now. It is more expensive but the taste is so much better. We always cooked fresh, but because it's now just me and my husband, we cook more. I probably only go to the supermarket every 2 or 3 weeks. Since we've got everything on our doorstep. I didn't use to before arriving here I must admit [she means shopping at small shops].(L4)

The name “Taste not Waste” seems to be pointing to something actually taking place for customers, who find that the vegetables taste better and feel more nutritious, which also means that less need to be consumed. This is an argument which particularly committed customers use to convince people around them to buy local produce, and probably could be made use of by CFM and in the Moray Local Food network.

There also seems to be a common pattern of cooking habits amongst customers, who go to the shop for their vegetables because they have always cooked them. Most shoppers cook – including men – and explicitly link this to the way in which they were brought up, thus implicitly pointing to the

generational difference mentioned above. Soup is frequently mentioned as something prepared by respondents (S1, 2,6,9,13,15).

I shop here every week, most days. Today I'm getting tatties, broccoli. I just shop for myself. I still do my big shopping with Tesco on line, but I still tend to get my veg, tatties mainly from here. I cook from scratch everyday. Tonight I have fish cakes with mixed veg and potatoes, tomorrow chicken kiev along with broccoli and carrots... I do cook soup now and again at lunchtime (S8).

I shop everywhere and anywhere, but always fresh, I don't buy ready made, or tin soups, it's all made from scratch. It's just the way I was brought up.(L9)

My mum and dad were farmers ... They never ever bought in convenience goods, it was all home cooking. (L10)

Diets seem quite varied, and eating fresh produce matters, beyond just fruit and vegetable, with fresh fish often being mentioned alongside meat:

I eat a lot of fish. So because we don't live in town where you can go easy to a shop, I go to Buckie so I get fresh fish, and then I go to Tesco for the rest, which wouldn't be my first choice, but I have so little time... (L10)

However, the soup service is attracting people who have ceased cooking or have never cooked, and this has probably improved the diet of some elderly people living on their own (widows) who get their soup from the shop (S7, 8, 10). As they come for the soup, they occasionally take with them a bit of fruit and veg on top.

I live in Mosstodloch. I still shop in Elgin, but I come here for the soup. It's part of my lunch, I've got a bowl of boiling water waiting in my kitchen, I'll put this in, along with my sandwiches and an apple. In the evening I'll have a proper meal.

- Question: You don't buy your fruit and veg here?

No

- You don't like to cook?

I used to cook but after my wife died... Tonight I'll probably have a chicken hotpot from Asda (S7)⁹.

More generally the pick up service (soup, smoothies, salads) might become a point of entry for people who are not used to cooking, in addition to those who used to cook but have stopped to.

⁹ It is interesting that this customer considers the Asda chicken hotpot as a 'proper meal': this presumably refers to the fact that there is meat with side veg and/or staple, and that it is a 'cooked dinner' even though he's not cooking it. (cf. the notion of the cooked dinner as proper meal in Murcott 1982).

Conclusions

The Community Food Moray shop in Mosstodloch clearly shows evidence of an 'infrastructure' effect. Residents of the estate have started shopping on a regular basis at CFM, and have incorporated it in their shopping routines. This for some has meant switching to CFM for the purchase of fruits and vegetable completely and only leaving dry goods to buy from the supermarket. Some customers have also acquired a habit of ordering their shopping and this has its own logic and implications. Ordering seems to have been the main factor underpinning change in eating habits so far, although the reasons for this are diverse.

The shop has so far particularly made a difference for the elderly residents in Mosstodloch. It clearly filled a gap for people whose mobility is restricted. The soup service is crucial for that customer base as well, especially for widows who have lost taste for cooking. The shop not only caters for the needs of these residents but fulfils a crucial social function, in a very natural way, both through the contacts between customers, and through the contacts with the team of volunteers and staff. This connects with memories of a denser social life around food, which vanished with the generalised switch to supermarket sourcing.

Thus, for people aged +60 in Mosstodloch, the shop and the kind of produce sold (especially the local, fresh vegetables) can be inserted in ways of doing which make sense to them. Most respondents cook, all have been brought up to prepare food in ways that avoid waste – soup and pies are particularly important for that. The CFM shop brings about a new shopping routine but it is a routine that is consistent with lifelong patterns and practices around food, as well as tastes: in fact it is much more consistent than supermarket shopping, and in this sense it is not surprising that old people use the shop the way they do. As put by one Board member:

It's growing because everybody's going back to the taste that they used to - rather than sort of market taste chemically grown, sprayed (L4).

Unfortunately no younger families resident in Mosstodloch and shopping with CFM could be interviewed and this is a limit of the present study. Apart from one younger customer (of the box scheme) respondents from younger generations were linked to CFM in other ways (volunteers, staff): shopping at CFM is part of their commitment to it. For some of them, this commitment is primarily to the charitable purpose of CFM, the fact that it caters for poorer, isolated people, and that it can educate people to eat 'more healthily'. Working for CFM was not primarily to do with a political commitment to fostering a different local food economy: they had not been on the lookout for the model of shopping and the type of produce promoted by CFM. Change in shopping and eating habits can be very noticeable here, an 'infrastructure effect' of a particular kind, since it stems from working and volunteering there. As explained in this report, only few of the customers were of a 'purposive' kind (deliberately buying organic and/or local) before CFM.

The remark concerning the kind of commitment felt by part of the volunteers and staff to the charitable aims of CFM links into broader conclusions about the CFM project. Clearly, the starting diagnosis underpinning the creation of CFM was that specific groups were deprived of access to fresh vegetables and fruit and that there was also a lack of education about food and cooking that caused ill health. This then corresponds to a vision of CFM as providing for and advising the needy,

and can have moral undertones to it. Other dimensions of the project contribute to this vision of CFM:

- the fact that the shop mostly sells fruit and vegetable – identified as the produce that is typically lacking in the diets of the poor and the lack of which is associated in public campaigns with the incidence of obesity;
- the fact that outlets are often located in institutions and organisations catering for these specific target groups.

But CFM also carries a more political project, in the sense of seeking to transform structural conditions, through a reflection on the economy of food provisioning, shopping and waste and its implications. It does this through two main avenues:

- first the shop in Mosstodloch: having a shop catering for local residents and opening every day carries its own logic and dynamic – there has to be adequate provisioning, certain arrangements of the physical space of the shop are necessary, a certain type of relations develops with customers etc.: it is remarkable that it is staff and volunteers who were and are wedded to the charitable aims of CFM who also noted this and acknowledged that shop-keeping is a profession in itself, which requires learning and that they are in this process. It is also remarkable that customers refer to CFM as ‘the shop’. The shop is progressively taking its place in a new local food economy as retailer and anchor to the rest of the productive chain.
- Secondly through the Community Food Network. The network is only starting but could lead to a more encompassing and systematic re-structuring of the local food economy in some areas of Moray where for some reasons (especially restricted mobility, no internet access) competition with supermarkets is not unthinkable. Of course given the current conditions and regulations (lack of), it is difficult to imagine a return to independent local retailers: but CFM and the Community Food Network are putting this question back on the agenda.

CFM is still economically very marginal, although the project put forward to the LEADER programme foresees that it can be a self-sufficient social enterprise after 3 years (by 2016). The model of the social enterprise is definitely going to help and the development plan has been found convincing by the local LEADER programme. Nevertheless if the political project is to take over from a charitable conception of CFM, it will be important to stress how each component of CFM contributes to that project (rather than seeing some activities purely as sources of funding for economically unsustainable but ethically worthy aims).

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Annex 1 – Aims and objectives of Community Food Moray

Source: Nawrocki, R. and Roberts, J. (2012), *'Taste Not Waste' Information booklet*. Community Food Moray

- a) Improve health and well being through increased access to and promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption, in particular to areas of deprivation and isolation in Moray, including rural isolation.

- b) To create Community Food Outlets (CFO)s in economically disadvantaged, excluded geographic and interest communities e.g. regeneration areas, rural areas, sheltered housing complexes, facilities for people who have health issues or are homeless, to promote the consumption of fruit, vegetables, pulses and other healthy food products by ensuring they are both accessible and affordable. CFOs open weekly selling produce at a range of community based venues e.g. schools, community centres, hospitals, church halls etc.

- c) Promote Community Development with people in Moray with the aims of engaging people who are socially and/or geographically isolated, relieving poverty, addressing health inequalities, building community capacity and social cohesion and advancing community based health education and promotion.

- d) To develop active working partnerships with key agencies including The Moray Council, NHS Grampian, Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership, local voluntary and community organisations, schools and other community based organisations engaged in health promotion, both locally and nationally when appropriate.

- e) To support the development, implementation and delivery of the Moray Joint Health Improvement Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and local and national health promoting programmes and policies. Engage effectively with local and national strategies and priorities and contribute to the wider health, social, economic, and cultural agenda within Moray.

- f) Improve employability through being active partners in supported employment schemes, creating local jobs, providing supported work placements for young people and long-term unemployed with the aim of moving people on to permanent employment with local employers.

- g) Improve well-being, confidence, community capacity and employability through a range of quality volunteering opportunities.

- h) To promote affordable healthy eating by distributing healthy recipe cards, and other relevant health/ information and advice.

- i) To organise/deliver a range of training, education, information distribution and awareness-raising opportunities for volunteers, customers and partner organisations, for example Food & Health, NHS 'Confidence to Cook', (Cooking on a Budget), food hygiene, Moving and Handling training.
- j) To actively raise the profile of CFM and its objectives through a marketing strategy and by participating in local events especially in partnership with the key agencies identified above.
- k) To develop Community Food Moray as a sustainable social enterprise giving equal importance to the 'triple bottom line' of its social, environmental and economic objectives. To grow CFM by developing a business development plan that will increase trading activity and sustainability.
- l) CFM will aim to be an active member of the Moray Social Enterprise Network and aim to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with other social enterprises in Moray.
- m) To develop a Moray Community Food Network with the aims of ensuring effective and efficient networking and sharing of contacts, ideas, experience and information.
- n) To aim to develop a Moray **FareShare** franchise to distribute free produce from the food industry that would otherwise be dumped in Landfill, to people on low incomes.