Local Food Networks and Policy Implementation in Christchurch and Dunedin: A Comparative Case Study

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Abstract

Concerns regarding the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the global industrialised food system continue to grow. Environmentally, the current food system is criticised as being responsible for contributing 14% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions and degrading vital world ecosystem services. Socially, it fails to feed the world’s population, and has led to the ‘Westernisation’ of diets with rising rates of obesity and other illnesses. Access and resilience are also concerns, as the long supply chain of the current system is inherently fragile and susceptible to political and environmental disruptions. Lastly, the food system has also negatively impacted on rural economies as large corporations have commoditised food production. Due to these impacts, localisation has been viewed as a means in which sustainability can be achieved in the food system.

Diverse local and ‘alternative’ food networks throughout the world are attempting to take back control of food system. At the same time, urban governments globally are beginning to engage with food issues, through local level policy and governance arrangements, most notably food policy councils.

This research aims to explore and compare local food networks in both Christchurch and Dunedin, New Zealand, and also investigate how local councils could engage with and address food issues more effectively. An in-depth qualitative, comparative case study was undertaken to address this aim. ‘Our Food Network’ in Dunedin, and ‘Edible Canterbury’ in Christchurch were two local food networks investigated. This research established, that as with other contexts, there were numerous differences between the two networks in question, being formed through context-dependent social, economic and political processes. While both networks were concerned with food justice and resilience, they were employing different strategies to change. The presence of a key ‘staff champion’ in the Christchurch context enabled the group to work in a genuinely collaborative way and ‘scale-up’ its impact through the enactment of food policy. Conversely, the Dunedin group lacked this collaboration with Council and thus worked more independently to create change. Both councils viewed engaging with food issues as within the remit of local governments in New Zealand, however several barriers to this engagement were identified. This included that councils are just one player in a larger food system, and current approaches to food were viewed as un-coordinated. It was recommended that there is a need for councils to work in genuinely collaborative ways with grassroots initiatives, ensure activities and regulations reflect broader policy goals relating to food, and play a stronger advocacy and leadership role on food issues.
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<td>AFN</td>
<td>Alternative Food Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
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<td>OFN</td>
<td>Our Food Network</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>Edible Canterbury</td>
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<td>FPC</td>
<td>Food Policy Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Christchurch City Council</td>
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<td>DCC</td>
<td>Dunedin City Council</td>
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<td>CERA</td>
<td>Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority</td>
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<td>LIVS</td>
<td>Life in Vacant Spaces</td>
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<td>FRN</td>
<td>Food Resilience Network</td>
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<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Act (2002)</td>
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<td>RMA</td>
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1 Introduction

Food is a basic human right and plays a central role in our lives. In relation to sustainability, a notably complex and hard to define concept, food provides a considerable opportunity to examine and confront this issue. Sustainability encompasses multiple factors, all of which are both present, and also intersect in the food system. Thus, an understanding of the food system allows for complex social, environmental and economic factors to be transformed into understandable ideas, policy and action (Blay-Palmer, 2010a). Addressing and examining the food system can allow for the investigation of interconnected relationships between these different aspects of sustainability (Blay-Palmer, 2010a). Further to this, there are immense issues associated with the current globalised, industrial food system. The current corporate food regime built on neoliberal policies has resulted in a food system that fundamentally fails to meet the world’s needs, as negative impacts have been ‘externalised’ leading to immense social, environmental and economic issues (Lang & Barling, 2013). These issues have resulted in the rise of local, alternative and sustainable food movements globally that are bringing together diverse groups of people, uniting around numerous social, economic and environmental issues and opportunities.

1.1 Food and Sustainability

Sustainability is a concept with a diversity of meanings, making it difficult to both measure and implement in practical terms (Hassanein, 2003). The term includes contention over values and uncertainties about outcomes, with definitions changing depending on different political or ideological perspectives (Hassanein, 2003; Hinrichs, 2010). The definition of the concept is most commonly linked to the form presented at the Brundtland commission of 1987 including three different aspects of the environment, society and the economy, which all need to be reflected in decision-making (Risku-Norja & Muukka, 2013).
However, despite this widely recognised approach to sustainability, research has demonstrated that over 80 different definitions can be found on the concept (McLean & Borén, 2014). It is evident that there is the need to recognise the term as a diverse idea, taking different forms in different contexts. Due to these issues, research has demonstrated that sustainability principles can have little impact in reality, with significant barriers and challenges to implement due to its ‘fuzzy’ nature (McLean & Borén, 2014). Thus, sustainability is often criticised as being vague and broad in nature (Lang & Barling, 2013). McLean & Borén (2014), for example, argue that many examples and case studies around the world demonstrate failure of sustainability at a policy level. Reasons behind these failures are linked to the uncertain definition of sustainability and the difficulty of applying this in practice. Furthermore, in relation to planning, the author outlines that sustainability has become focused on ecological concerns, lacking integration between all three dimensions that form the concept (McLean & Borén, 2014). Thus, while the concept of sustainability is clearly vital to create a future that is more socially, economically and environmentally positive than current bleak outlooks, there are difficulties with implementing the idea, largely due to the confusion and contentions over definitions and practical implementation of the concept.

### 1.1.1 The Food System as a Means to Implement Sustainability

The food system can provide a means for practically understanding the somewhat abstract concept of sustainability. It is argued that the food system both provides evidence of, and is a significant component in, global environmental and sustainability challenges (Lang & Barling, 2013). The food system as a whole, which encompasses the way in which food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed and then consequently disposed of provides important insights and understandings of multiple social, economic and environmental issues that sustainability encompasses. Blay-Palmer (2010:21) argues, “food offers a prism to consider and address sustainability challenges as it translates complicated issues into meaningful ideas, policies and actions”. Food is central to our lives and has direct influence on the wellbeing of every human being. Thus, the three dimensions of sustainability can be found in our everyday experiences with food. Hinrichs (2010:19) highlights this, arguing that “food’s material and cultural salience, and its extraordinary reach into and throughout our lives, makes it a compelling focus for research and practice”. Furthermore, the importance of a food system’s sustainability as a marker of community vitality also demonstrates the need to address food issues (Feenstra, 1997). The power of food is also evident due to its various social, environmental and economic impacts (Hinrichs, 2010).
Food production has significant environmental consequences, while over and under consumption has critical consequences for health and encompasses important social meanings and functions (Hinrichs, 2010). Thus, the food system offers important insights into sustainability as it encompasses interrelated social, economic and environmental issues and furthermore plays a crucial role in every person’s life.

The importance of applying the concept of sustainability to food is further emphasized by the current negative impacts that result from the globalized, industrial food system. The system is critiqued as being unsustainable in environmental, social and economic terms (Lang & Barling, 2013). Environmentally, the current food system has been calculated as contributing 14% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions and 17% of developed countries’ fossil energy use is used in production, processing and packaging of food products (Lang & Barling, 2013). Furthermore, the UN’s Millennium Ecosystem Assessment has determined that fifteen out of twenty four of the world’s ecosystem services are being degraded or used unsustainably, with agricultural production processes being a major cause for this (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Socially, the current food system primarily fails to feed the world’s population, with an estimated 795 million undernourished people globally in 2015, 780 of these being in developing regions (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2015). Conversely, the ‘Westernisation’ of diets has led to rising rates of obesity and other related illnesses (Lang & Barling, 2013). The prevalence of obesity has doubled between 1980 and 2014, with more than 1.9 billion adults classed as overweight, and 600 million being obese in 2014 (World Health Organization, 2015). Access and resilience are also major concerns due to the long supply chain of the current food system being inherently fragile, with the potential for disruption from both political and environmental reasons (Sumner, 2012). For many producers, the current food system is also criticized as damaging rural economies as large corporations have taken control of food production that has been commoditised (McClintock, 2013). Sumner (2012:33) thus highlights that the global system has transformed food from “an article of local provisioning to a commodity traded on world markets, with all the instabilities associated with a speculative economy”.

Due to these criticisms, research has highlighted specific elements of the current system that are argued as needing to be addressed. These elements include the increasing consolidation of corporate interests, underinvestment in grounded, scale-appropriated agricultural research for developing countries, demand-side pressure on food supplies from declining food reserves, increasing meat consumption and biofuel use, supply side
pressures stemming from poor harvests arguably linked to climate change and the emergence of food commodities as a source of international speculative investment (Blay-Palmer, 2010a). These concerns are thus questioning how best to create an equitable, viable food system that incorporates all three aspects of sustainability (Blay-Palmer, 2010a).

1.1.2 Localisation and Sustainability

In order to address these issues, local food systems have been proposed as the predominant way in which sustainability in the food system can be implemented in practice. It is argued that local food systems incorporate all three aspects of sustainability holistically, which has been lacking in sustainability policy efforts (Lang & Barling, 2013). Environmentally, locally produced food is argued to provide an example of decreasing impacts through the reduction of food miles (Blay-Palmer, 2010a). Socially, reasons for encouraging the development of local, food systems include that localisation can allow for better food security and access (Sumner, 2012). Furthermore, local food systems are also argued as allowing for food sovereignty, providing people the rights to choose their own forms of agriculture, food markets and modes of production (Carney, 2011). Local food systems are also argued as providing positive social and economic outcomes through supporting local farmers and other food systems workers, local communities, local economies and the local environment (Sumner, 2012).

Thus, food systems offer a simultaneous understanding of environmental, economic and social factors which sustainability encompasses. This is particularly important as the term is being increasingly criticized as broad and difficult to implement in policy and practice. It is evident that food and food systems offer an important opportunity to analyse and encourage sustainable development. This desire is being reflected in many local initiatives working towards achieving more sustainable outcomes for the food system. However, Hinrichs (2010) discusses that sustainability itself is a developing process, not a final target, with new methods emerging relating to how to make the food system more economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. Thus, it is clear that research is required in order to understand how different groups are attempting to create more sustainable food systems in different contexts, where this term can encompass different meanings and interpretations as research is highlighting that approaches to creating sustainable food systems are not homogenous (Blay-Palmer, 2010a).

A growing number of diverse, context-specific, ‘alternative’ food movements (AFNs) have proliferated globally in response to the heavily criticized current food system. While these
movements have been criticised by some as lacking capability of creating structural change, it is evident that they do present a starting point for social, economic and environmental transformation. Rather than being a simple reactive alternative to the current food system, AFNs are argued to represent demonstrations of “new governance models founded in public priorities and citizen and consumer sovereignty” (Marsden and Franklin, 2013:640). AFNs are however faced with challenges of scaling ‘up and out’ in order to create considerable change, given the small nature of these initiatives compared with the dominant industrial food system. There is a clear challenging of scaling-up their impact without sacrificing the commitment to alternative values and approaches to food that differentiates them from the conventional food system (Wittman, Beckie and Hergesheimer, 2012). The rise of these movements is also occurring at the same time as cities are beginning to address food issues through local level food policy, representing one way in which AFNs can scale up the impact they are having. Urban governments throughout the world have begun employing local level policy solutions in the form of strategic documents and also governance arrangements, notably food policy councils (FPCs) (Sonnino, 2013). However, it is evident that policy areas such as food, which have not traditionally been addressed by local or municipal governments, can be difficult for these authorities to engage with as they are cross-sectoral, do not have clear jurisdictional boundaries, guidance or regulatory tools to facilitate their enactment (Mendes, 2008).

In New Zealand, local authorities (LAs) are beginning to engage with food issues. In the cities of Christchurch and Dunedin, local councils are at early stages of considering, or have recently implemented specific food policy. Furthermore, both contexts are home to relatively well-established strategic local food networks that are attempting to provide overarching bodies for local food initiative within the cities. Thus, there is an opportunity to examine in detail the form of these local food networks operating in the two different localities, research that in lacking in the New Zealand context. This understanding has the potential to allow insights into how best governance mechanisms or policy could support the context-specific way different groups are engaging with the food system in both locations. Research has indicated that local governments throughout the world are increasingly being pressured to partner with non-governmental actors on complex social, economic, environmental and health policy issues, due to neoliberal processes which have ‘rolled back’ the state (Bedore, 2014). Thus, this research will provide insight into how this is occurring currently in the New Zealand context and provide recommendations for how these two local governments could engage with food systems issues in more effective ways.
1.2 Research Aim

The sections above have detailed the importance of researching food, given the significant issues with the current food system and the potential for using this as a tool to translate the ‘fuzzy’ and complicated concept of sustainability into practical action. As noted, diverse AFNs throughout the world have emerged that are representing different approaches to changing the existing food system. At the same time, urban governments have begun to engage with food issues, traditionally dealt with through higher-level government. Namely this has occurred through local level policy and governance arrangements, primarily food policy councils. Thus, informed by these ideas, the primary aim of this thesis is:

**Primary Research Aim:** To explore and compare local food networks in Christchurch and Dunedin in order to investigate how local councils could support and engage with food issues more effectively.

Due to a lack of literature on local food networks in the New Zealand context, this research aims to develop a detailed, comparative case study of two local food networks, ‘Our Food Network’ (OFN) in Dunedin, and ‘Edible Canterbury’ (EC), in Christchurch. Given that AFNs globally have been diverse and context-dependent, this study seeks to reveal the form that these movements are taking in different New Zealand cities. Both networks selected were formed in 2013 and both are undertaking a strategic function, playing advocacy or ‘umbrella’ roles for local food initiatives in their different contexts. Additionally, this research aims to explore the ways in which the two local governments are currently engaging with food issues, and what potential there is for governance mechanisms to enhance this engagement in the future. While research has been undertaken in New Zealand on food policy implementation, food systems planning, and also how planning mechanisms could better enable urban agriculture, this study will connect research on community-driven initiatives and food policy implementation. It is evident that communities and local governments engage with food for various reasons, and thus it is important to bridge community aspirations and motivations with councils’, in order to enable the most effective engagement with food issues. Thus, this study aims to shed light on both local food networks, and also councils’ engagement with food issues in New Zealand, and provide insight into how the councils in these two contexts could engage better support and engage with local food issues and initiatives.
1.3 Research Questions

Three research questions were devised to guide this study and address its primary aim. These will be explained below, with a brief justification given for each, including insights into what each question sought to achieve.

1. What form have local food networks taken in Dunedin and Christchurch and how has the particular context shaped the actors involved, their motivations and the purpose or focus of the network?

Research undertaken on AFNs highlights that these movements take diverse, context-dependent forms (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013; Jarosz, 2008). Thus, there is a need to examine in detail how AFNs are developing in the New Zealand context, in order to understand better the motivations of the actors involved, which can vary immensely due to different issues in different places. In particular, the two contexts chosen have significant differences, particularly due to the city of Christchurch being one in recovery after being devastated by a series of earthquakes that began in the city in 2010. Thus, examining the differences and similarities between the networks chosen will enable insight into why these have emerged in the different contexts, including what food issues are considered important by the initiatives in the two locations. Furthermore, as both networks were formed around the same time, the factors that have allowed the networks to progress, or conversely created barriers to progress will also be analysed. Thus, this question aims to provide insight into how the two different contexts have shaped the different networks in question to understand the different ways in which these groups are attempting to create change in the food system.

2. What involvement have local governments in Dunedin and Christchurch had with food system issues and what potential is there for governance mechanisms to address food issues more effectively in these localities?

Local governments in New Zealand are beginning to address and consider food systems issues, for example through policy. Examining how the two LAs have engaged with food issues will shed light on how this is occurring in New Zealand, including what mechanisms are being used and also what barriers or enabling factors exist for the local governments in questions. It is hoped this research will bridge the desires of the councils and the community-led AFNs in question in order to provide insight into how best the two groups can work together.
3. How are goals, opportunities, challenges or barriers being addressed by the networks and the councils in the two localities?

Understanding in-depth the goals and opportunities of the different networks will allow for a more thorough understanding of the form of the networks and also the potential for the councils’ engagement. Furthermore, understanding how challenges or barriers are being addressed by the networks and the councils could provide lessons for other contexts on how this can be done effectively. Research on AFNs has highlighted that these are influenced by various, place-dependent political, social, economic and ecological process and thus this research aims to examine these in the two different New Zealand cities in question (Jarosz, 2008).

This study was influenced and guided by several theoretical approaches including phronetic social science, discussed by Flyvbjerg (2001), who emphasizes a form of social science that can create context-dependent knowledge, providing insights into action that should be taken on a particular topic. A comparative case study was selected for the research, with primary data collection taking the form of 21 semi-structured interviews, in order to best explore the complex themes involved. The research is also participatory in nature, as the researcher has prior involvement in OFN in the Dunedin context, which has presented both opportunities and limitations for the study. The specific methodology will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 that follows, including a more thorough justification for the chosen approach.

1.4 Thesis Structure

This thesis first begins by providing an overview of the current research relating to AFNs and how local governments have engaged with food issues in Chapter 2. Current debates regarding AFNs will be discussed, including difficulties of defining these initiatives, critiques relating to their ability to create structural change in the food system, and the challenge currently facing AFNs of how to ‘scale-up’ the impact they are having without sacrificing core values. The ways in which local governments have engaged with food issues through policy and food policy councils will also be discussed, including both the challenges and potential opportunities these groups provide. Chapter 3 will then provide a detailed discussion of the methodological approach taken, and will also detail the specific ways in which data was collected to address the research questions. Chapter 4 will then
provide context on food policy and the networks in the two locations in order to allow for the results of this research to be better understood. Chapter 5 will detail the key empirical findings in the Christchurch context, followed by Dunedin in Chapter 6. A discussion of these key findings will then be undertaken in Chapter 7, which will provide a synthesis of the case study research in relation to the overarching research questions. Chapter 8 will then conclude the thesis highlighting its significance and implications, including recommendations for policy makers. Future recommendations for research will also be given.
2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

As highlighted previously, food offers a unique chance to address sustainability challenges and opportunities. An understanding of the food system can help translate complex social, environmental and economic factors into relevant ideas, policy and action (Blay-Palmer, 2010a). As demonstrated in Chapter 1, it is clear that food issues can allow opportunities to address social, environmental and economic elements of sustainability in an interrelated manner. Due to this, and the increasing criticisms of the current globalised industrial food system, diverse local, alternative and sustainable food movements have been growing throughout the world. Furthermore, urban governments are also beginning to act on food issues through local level policy and governance arrangements, most notably being food policy councils (Sonnino, 2013). This literature review will address these ideas, providing a theoretical basis for this study and situating the research in academic literature and key debates to date. This literature review will primarily discuss research regarding ‘alternative food networks’ (AFNs), which illustrate the diversity of initiatives and approaches to creating a different, more sustainable food system. Research regarding how local governments have begun to address food issues will also be discussed, including through planning mechanisms, local level food policy and also food policy councils. Literature on the New Zealand context, including the role of local government and previous research undertaken on local food in the two localities will also be outlined.
2.2 From ‘Alternative’ to ‘Diverse’ Food Initiatives

As previously noted in Chapter 1, localisation has been viewed as a primary way in which a more sustainable food system can be implemented in practice. Thus, this section will explore academic research and debates that have emerged over the last couple of decades examining local and alternative food initiatives (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013; Sonnino, 2013). Given their extremely diverse nature, this section will utilise the term ‘alternative’ to describe local, alternative and sustainable food networks, as it is broader in scope, allowing for the exploration of food networks which are different to the ‘mainstream’ but not necessarily strictly local in nature. However, a critique of this term and its shortcomings will also be provided later in this section through a discussion of a new discourse in the research relating to ‘diverse’ food initiatives. The rise of AFNs will first be contextualised by providing a more thorough critique of the current food system. Debates surrounding the definitions and approaches of AFNs will then be given. Major critiques of the initiatives will then be discussed.

2.2.1 The Corporate Food Regime

Growing interest and concern with food system issues has resulted in an increasing number of diverse AFNs across Europe, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Canada (Levkoe, 2011). The current globalised food system has been heavily criticised, as previously noted, including for the fact that it primarily fails to meet the world’s needs equally, highlighted through power and resource imbalances (Levkoe, 2011). The ‘disembedding’ of the economy from social relations that previously played a significant role in economic exchanges has been held accountable for many modern issues (McClintock, 2013). The current industrial food system is driven by profit maximization, market dominance, efficiency and externalized costs, factors which have broken down social relationships between consumers and producers that previously existed in the food system (Campbell, 2004; McClintock, 2013). Thus, due these characteristics, the current food system is criticised as leading to negative sustainability impacts for the environment, producer and consumer wellbeing (Forssell & Lankoski, 2015). As previously highlighted in Chapter 1, specific issues include high rates of fossil fuel and resource use in agricultural practices, imbalances in global food distribution, with over 795 undernourished people globally, and negative impacts on rural economies as large corporations have taken control of food production (Lang & Barling, 2013; McClintock, 2013; Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005; The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2015).
Holt Gimenez and Shattuck (2011) discuss the history of this global ‘food regime’ the world is currently in. A food regime is defined by the authors as being a “rule-governed structure of production and consumption of food on a world scale” (Holt Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011:110). It is argued that we are currently in a third, corporate food regime that began in the 1980s. Influenced by the economic issues of the 1970s and 80s, this current regime is outlined as being built on neoliberal expansion and globalisation. More specifically, the authors argue that it is characterised by “the unprecedented market power and profits of monopoly agrifood corporations, globalised animal protein chains, growing links between food and fuel economies, a ‘supermarket revolution’, liberalized global trade in food, increasingly concentrated land ownership, a shrinking natural resource base, and growing opposition from food movements worldwide” (Holt Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011:111). Thus, this current corporate food regime, as Holt Gimenez (2011) describes, has spurred the development of various local, national and international social movements relating to food and agriculture. Furthermore, neoliberal influences are argued as hindering the ability of governments to meet people’s needs, with local level organisation occurring as a reaction to this trend (Allen, 2010). More specific factors have also been proposed as an explanation for this rise, including the ‘quality turn’ and the ‘new food equation’, which are argued to be responsible specifically for the rise in alternative and local food initiatives (Goodman, 2003; Morgan & Sonnino, 2010). These trends include the food price surge of 2007-2008, sharp increases in food insecurity, food quality issues, climate change effects on agri-food systems around the world and increasing land conflicts (Morgan & Sonnino, 2010).

### 2.2.2 The Rise of the ‘Alternative’

Due to these criticisms and influencing trends, early research into AFNs emphasized their potential as a sustainable, localised solution to these social, economic and environmental issues associated with the current global food system and corporate regime (Sonnino, 2013; Tregear, 2011). Forssell and Lankosi (2015) discuss different issues that AFNs are engaged with in relation to sustainability. Economically, AFNs are highlighted as supporting livelihoods of producers and others, and encouraging local, particularly rural economic development (Forssell & Lankoski, 2015). Socially, AFNs are purported to positively increase labour rights, safety of workers, consumer health, food culture, accessibility, availability and affordability of nutritious food (Forssell & Lankoski, 2015). Environmentally, due to shorter supply chains, AFNs decrease transport distances and thus
oil consumption (Jarosz, 2008). Furthermore, AFNs often encompass organic, holistic and environmentally conscious food production (Jarosz, 2008). A key feature of AFNs is that they aim to re-socialise, and also re-spatialise food, challenging the disembedding characteristics of the current food system (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013; Wittman, Beckie & Hergesheimer, 2012). Thus, Forssell and Lankosi (2015) highlight that a key characteristic of AFNs is short supply chains, with an emphasis placed on the relationship between producer and consumer. Other key features often include the redistribution of value through the food system, localness, quality and trust among food system participants (Forssell & Lankoski, 2015).

The strong social aspect to many AFNs has linked the initiatives to the broader concept of the social economy. The social economy is viewed as a response to negative impacts of social and economic restructuring (Connelly, Markey & Roseland, 2011). It includes activities undertaken by democratically controlled organisations that include social and economic objectives (Connelly, Markey & Roseland, 2011). Thus, the social economy prioritises the social wellbeing of communities over state or profit objectives (Sumner, 2012). Sumner (2012:31) furthermore outlines that the social economy is part of a larger category of the civil commons, closely linked to sustainability, that “involve co-operative human constructions that protect and/or enable universal access to a range of life goods”. Similarly, AFNs have also been linked to the concept of sustainable community development. This idea examines sustainable development at the local level, arguing that democratic processes activating citizens and governments can create change through balancing and encouraging the value, visions and activities of differing community actors (Connelly, Markey & Roseland, 2011). Thus, AFNs more broadly are linked to overarching concepts such as the social economy and sustainable community development. The initiatives are being argued to represent ‘diverse economies’ which are emerging throughout the world, where civil society is acting as a driver of change creating platforms to reconfigure local social, environmental and economic structures (Blay-Palmer, 2010a; Gibson-Graham, 2008).

Despite these similarities, the definitions of what constitutes and characterizes AFNs are extremely variable in the current research, with confusion over how to define alternative practices, and to what extent these are actually ‘alternative’ (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013). Numerous authors in the literature highlight the diversity in meanings and form that AFNs have taken (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013; Forssell & Lankoski, 2015; Tregear, 2011). Forssell and Lankosi’s (2015) review of AFN definitions for example emphasises that meanings in
the research vary significantly. The authors argue that although major definitions are not in contradiction with one another, with AFNs fundamentally being in opposition to ‘conventional’ food systems, it is clear that AFNs are often comprised of diverse combinations of background, core and outcome characteristics (Forssell & Lankosi, 2015). Background characteristics are defined as “participants non-conventional values and goals”, while core characteristics include “increased requirements for products and production”, “reduced distance between producers and consumers” and also “new forms of market governance” (Forssell and Lankosi, 2015:66). Outcome characteristics are lastly “strong relationships, exemplified by notions of trust and social embeddedness” (Forssell and Lankosi, 2015:66). The authors highlight that the combination of these characteristics demonstrated in reality can differ greatly. Furthermore, there has been debate over whether the prominence of certain factors are more important than others (Forssell & Lankosi, 2015). This diversity is further emphasized as AFNs are often comprised of a range of stakeholders and actors with various motivations and goals (Campbell, 2004). Thus, the contextual importance of AFNs is rather emphasized. Jarosz (2008:232) argues that AFNs are “constituted out of multiple, contradictory processes and relations, which they internalize in place and through time”. This contextual importance is also highlighted by Dansero and Puttilli (2013), who outline that these alternative movements have arisen from varying contextual arrangements. Dansero and Puttilli (2013:629) summarise this important feature of AFNs arguing “Embeddedness appears to be the distinctive characteristic of AFNs, in other words the reference to specific social, environmental, local and cultural contexts that define the specificity and uniqueness of every experience, network and territorial practice of food production and consumption”. Thus, AFNs are inextricably tied to the context in which they reside.

In addition to Forssell and Lankosi (2015), there have also been other attempts to categorise AFNs. Dansero & Puttilli (2013) offer two different perspectives, with these initiatives being either ‘formal’ or ‘substantial’ in nature. Formal AFNs focus on the spatial form of organisation and re-organising food networks, while substantial AFNs are characterised by the features that result in them appearing ‘unique’ when related to conventional food systems (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013). Levkoe (2011) further uses a different typology to categorise AFNs. The author divides AFNs into those of social justice initiatives, ecological sustainability initiatives, community health initiatives and democracy-enhancing initiatives (Levkoe, 2011). Some authors have also attempted to classify different AFNs as either ‘weaker’ or ‘stronger’ in nature (Watts, Ilbery & Maye, 2005). Watts Ilbery & Maye (2005) for example undertakes a classification of AFNs on a
strong to weak scale in relation to what extent AFNs engage with or are subject to current
global food supply chains functioning under neoliberal influence. Thus, the way that AFNs
are categorised is diverse and the term lacks a clear conceptual definition, with researchers
categorising these initiatives using vastly different typologies. This diversity highlights the
need to examine AFNs that clearly arise from differing motivations and have diverse goals
in different locations.

Tregear (2011) argues that this conceptual confusion with the term AFN is a key problem
in the research itself, and has negatively impacted on the way AFNs are researched.
Tregear (2011:423) outlines “In the literature, ‘AFN’ tends to be employed as a universal
term, to denote food systems that are somehow different from the mainstream”. Thus,
AFNs are often defined according to what they are not, with a diverse range of movements
falling into this broad categorization. However, it is clear that this definition is somewhat
limiting. Marsden and Franklin (2013:640) for example argue that these movements are
much more than simple reactive ‘alternatives’ to the current food system and rather are
demonstrations of “new governance models founded in public priorities and citizen and
consumer sovereignty”. Thus, AFNs are argued to be examples of civil society acting as a
driver for change (Blay-Palmer, 2010a; Marsden & Franklin, 2013). It is therefore clear
that a simple encompassing definition of these movements as being counteractive to the
mainstream is somewhat insufficient to understand how these varied initiatives are
operating in reality.

These ideas regarding the limitations of the term AFN can be explored further through
literature regarding ‘diverse economies’. Gibson-Graham (2008) outline that throughout
the world, movements of economic autonomy and experimentation are rapidly emerging.
The authors propose that rather than marginalizing these growing alternative economic
activities which are contributing to social and environmental well-being, these need to be
acknowledged as more mainstream in order to “make them more “real”, more credible,
more viable as objects of policy and activism” (Gibson-Graham, 2008:618). Thus, the
authors argue for an understanding of these activities and movements as ‘diverse
economies’ (Gibson-Graham, 2008). Cameron and Wright (2014) discuss these ideas in
relation to food initiatives and outline that an issue for those researching ‘alternative’ food
initiatives is how to portray them. The authors discuss that the ‘capitalocentric’ framing of
AFNs is restrictive, as it does not recognize the different ways in which food is produced,
distributed and consumed. Thus, these authors argue that an ‘alternative’ label takes power
away from these movements by assuming that there is a mainstream. The authors also
argue that research into these diverse initiatives is a performative practice, through making these initiatives more real, as previously noted. Thus, although AFNs were initially proposed and praised for their nature as being in opposition to the current food system, it is clear that there are limitations associated with labelling these initiatives in this manner. Rather, the research agenda is shifting to instead frame AFNs in a way that makes them more ‘real’ and ‘credible’ with more acceptance towards the diverse nature of the economy when not considered in a ‘capitalocentric’ framing.

2.2.3 The ‘Local Trap’ and Neoliberal Critique

Despite the positive social, economic and environmental outcomes that AFNs are proposed to provide, AFNs have also been heavily critiqued. Born and Purcell (2006) proposed the idea of the ‘local trap’ which has developed as a prominent criticism of localisation. The authors argue that assumptions cannot be made regarding inherent qualities about the local scale (Born & Purcell, 2006). Rather, localised food systems are equally as likely to be just or unjust, sustainable or unsustainable, or secure or insecure (Born & Purcell, 2006). The authors also emphasize the contextual nature of food systems, relying on actors and agendas that are enabled by unique social relations in a particular food system (Born & Purcell, 2006). Thus, localisation can produce different outcomes in different locations due to varying actors involved who often have diverse motivations. Sonnino (2013) highlights that the research agenda surrounding localisation has shifted due to these critiques to focus on understanding the nature, meanings and goals of relocalisation in different contexts.

Researchers have also raised critiques regarding the ‘bifurcation’ of key concepts associated with AFNs. Many authors have argued that food systems and AFNs infrequently function solely in the artificial margins of ‘local’ or ‘global’, or the ‘mainstream’ and ‘alternative’ (Campbell, Carlisle-Cummins & Feenstra, 2013; Forssell & Lankoski, 2015; Tregear, 2011). Campbell (2004:346) argues “Global and local food system processes are dynamic and interrelated, influencing and feeding back into each other”. This critique of the application of binary terms to food systems can also be linked to debates regarding different forms of localism. The idea of ‘defensive localism’ is a further critique of the assumption that the local scale is inherently positive, with researchers instead proposing that relocalisation can rather result in elitists and insular strategies that are not beneficial to wider societal interests (Campbell, 2004; Tregear, 2011). For example, localisation can result in ‘fetishization’, with access to locally produced food restricted to the most well-resourced consumers (Connelly, Markey & Roseland, 2011). Levoke (2011) outlines that without a direct social justice focus, AFNs can result in niche alternatives, with farmers
markets for example often located in wealthier neighbourhoods. Several authors are therefore arguing for a ‘cosmopolitan’ form of sustainability for AFNs which emphasizes locally produced food, but also global food which is fairly traded in order to avoid defensive and exclusive strategies of localisation (Campbell, Carlisle-Cummins & Feenstra, 2013; Morgan, 2009). Thus, current research is emphasizing the complexity of food systems, with clear separation between binary terms such as ‘local’ and ‘global’ difficult to ascertain (Tregear, 2011).

Further critiques of AFNs have been made regarding their perpetuation of neoliberal thinking. Numerous authors have argued that AFNs provide solutions to social problems in the market, filling gaps left by government reductions and consequently reinforcing individualised responsibility (Levkoe, 2011; McClintock, 2013). Thus, this critique of AFNs argues that they have limited potential to create real structural change. However, many authors are maintaining the potential that these movements do present. For example, as previously noted, Marsden and Franklin (2013) suggest that AFNs are much more than simple reactive alternatives to the current system. McClintock (2013) also argues the importance of recognising that AFNs are one of many means to creating structural change, rather than an end in themselves. The author suggests that accepting the contradictions presented by AFNs will enable activists, policy-makers and practitioners to be in a better position to create this change (McClintock, 2013). Furthermore, McClintock (2013) also emphasizes that AFNs cannot be categorized as either radical, or neoliberal but can be both and operate at multiple scales. Levkoe (2011) also addresses this critique by proposing three elements necessary for AFNs to create structural change in the food system. Firstly, this includes a transition to ‘collective subjectivities’, with a shift from an individual consumer perspective to having agency and responsibility outside of simple purchasing power (Levkoe, 2011). This factor is argued as allowing for food to be used as a catalyst for greater political engagement. Secondly, the author argues for the necessity of a ‘whole food systems approach’ integrating social justice, ecological sustainability, community health and democracy, enabling broader social, political and economic relations to be understood and addressed. Thirdly, the author argues for a reflexive form of localism, highlighting that ideas of local must be contextualised by different historical and social elements of a particular place, acknowledging that the local level does not contain inherent qualities. Thus, it is acknowledged that while AFNs can be critiqued for having little ability to make change, and for their role in perpetuating neoliberal ideas, it is recognised that these movements do have potential to create change when their contradictions and critiques are recognised and addressed. Marsden and Franklin (2013:639) discuss that it is important
to conceptualise local food within the wider “advanced capitalist conundrum” and that alternative food scholars “should shake off the conceptual local trap with which others may wish to encompass and marginalise them”.

Despite these suggestions for how best AFNs can create structural change, it is evident that AFNs do face several interrelated challenges. Campbell Carlisle-Cummins and Feenstra (2013) undertook a bibliographic analysis of the literature and highlighted three major challenges that community food systems in particular face. Firstly, this includes an economic challenge, where producers need to be supported while improving low-income consumers’ access to healthy food (Campbell, Carlisle-Cummins & Feenstra, 2013). Social and political challenges of addressing racial and class bias, and connecting ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ strategies are also cited as common challenges, either “emphasizing reform at the margins or more fundamental systemic change”. (Campbell, 2013:129). Insider strategies are viewed as undertaking action within mainstream institutions, often implementing incremental change that may require compromising of objectives to achieve short-term goals. Conversely, ‘outsider’ strategies seek deeper, structural change with values preserved in their ‘purest’ form, even though short-term goals may be sacrificed (Campbell, Carlisle-Cummins & Feenstra, 2013). Issues of scale have also been raised in the research, with ‘scaling-up’ being viewed as a key challenge for AFNs (Mount, 2012). In response to the criticism of AFNs lacking the capacity to create structural change, it is argued that AFNs need to scale up in size in order to provide access to food to larger groups (Johnston & Baker, 2005). Johnston (2005) argues for ‘third sector’ models of food provisioning that have an entrepreneurial aspect, but are also supported by state funds. However, scaling up has also been argued as risking ‘conventionalization’ resulting in negative consequences including negative power disparities and environmental impacts in production and distribution (Wittman, Beckie & Hergesheimer, 2012). Wittman, Beckie and Hergesheimer (2012) outline that in their research, participants viewed scaling up as a potential threat to the values of authenticity and inclusion, education and economic advantages offered through farmers markets and other forms of direct marketing. Thus, Sonnino (2013:6) outlines that there is a new research agenda emerging on the “role of the multi-level state, food planning and sustainability research in stimulating, scaling-up and scaling out initiatives and niches that are redefining the role, meaning and development potential of local food systems”.

Thus, recent research on AFNs has highlighted the diversity and complex nature of these movements. Though several critiques have been raised in the literature arguing that AFNs
have limited potential to create real structural change, many authors are conversely proposing that these movements are instead a demonstration of civil society acting as a driver for change. Thus, the complexity with definitions and variety of AFNs present in the literature highlights the need to analyse these initiatives in place to create a better-informed understanding of how these are operating in different contexts. It is clear that sustainable food systems are complex and there is a need to understand realities that exist in order to gain better insights into these “globally local activities” which are occurring throughout the world (Gibson Graham, 2008:617).

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives

AFNs have been examined from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Goodman (2003:1) outlines that initial examination of AFNs was linked with an interest in the local level, with research “often being micro-analytical and ethnographic, investigating place-based and socially embedded alternative food practices”. Research on AFNs has differed in North America and Europe, with the former often associated with links to activists concerned with the socio-political transformative potential of AFNs, and the latter associated with incremental change concentrated at policy makers with links to food safety and rural development (Goodman, 2003). Tregear (2011) presents an analysis of the research agenda for alternative and local food networks. The author outlines that AFNs have been addressed from three major theoretical and conceptual perspectives (Tregear, 2011). Firstly, AFNs have been researched from a political economy perspective, which views these movements as in a “constant struggle against the threatening forces of global capitalism” (Tregear, 2011:420). AFNs have also been studied from a rural sociology or development perspective focusing on implications for rural areas (Tregear, 2011). This perspective has focused more on interpreting AFNs as social constructs, utilizing micro-level analysis (Tregear, 2011). However, Tregear (2011) highlights that both of these perspectives acknowledge AFNs as contributing potential solutions to the marginalising and dehumanizing impacts of the current food system. Thirdly, AFNs have also been examined through a modes of governance and network theory perspective which has concentrated on meso-level analysis.

Tregear’s (2011) analysis also raises some issues with how research into AFNs has been undertaken. The author argues that uncertainties in knowledge about AFNs are a result of how they have been conceptualised and investigated (Tregear, 2011). As noted previously, this includes inconsistent and unclear key concepts, the ‘local trap’ and also a lack of consumer perspective (Tregear, 2011). Furthermore, Tregear (2011) argues that analysis using a mix of different theories is needed for future research. This study will pull from a
mix of these approaches and different theories, through undertaking a place-based analysis of the two contexts, but also incorporating a policy-change perspective through analysing the two local government’s involvement with food issues also. The specific theoretical approach used will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 that follows.

2.4 Local Governments and Food

The market economy doesn’t solve urban problems; it creates them. Its pathetically narrow vision for the future comes down to one syllable, “more”. More is better than less. Growth is mandatory. Consumption is a civic obligation. But, in fact, the materialism of the consumer society has very little to do with the good life, which is rather about the quality of human relationships. As I see it, then, the challenge for us planners is to redefine ourselves and our profession in ways that will make our work congruent with what I take to be the hallmark of the new political economy, the re-emergence of civil society as a collective actor in the re/construction of our cities and regions in search of the good life (Friedmann, 2011:112-113).

This section will discuss the primary ways in which local governments have engaged with food, focusing on urban planning, local food policy and food policy councils. Firstly, until recently, food has infrequently been on the agenda for urban planning. However, over the past decade, planners have engaged with food systems in multiple ways (Brinkley, 2013). Sadler, Gillian and Arku (2014:3) outline that both planners and also policy makers have “often overlooked the food system as an integral urban system influencing the residents’ quality of life”. Research regarding planners’ roles in the food system has developed greatly, as practitioners have also integrated food into the planning of cities in various places (Brinkley, 2013). Despite this recent momentum of engagement, however, planners have traditionally engaged little with food, which has often been considered a rural issue (Morgan, 2009). However, it is evident that planning and sustainable food systems share many of the same goals through similar social, economic and environmental objectives. Pothukuchi (2000) for example outlines that the planning profession holds the objectives of being future-oriented, public interest-driven and concerned with enhancing the liveability of human settlements. Clearly, food has a significant impact on the present and future liveability of communities and is thus an issue that planners should be concerned with, both in theory and practice. Furthermore, as Friedmann (2011) above argues, planning as a
profession should be supporting and engaging with groups who are attempting to create more positive futures, clearly something AFNs are attempting to do.

Links between food and planning were however formed as early as the 1920s (Campbell, 2004). For example, influenced by Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City concept, regional planners in the United States were concerned with improving negative impacts of urban industrial life and sought to reconnect urban consumers with rural producers (Campbell, 2004). However, Campbell (2004) outlines that this movement lost popularity in both theory and practice, only emerging again as the environmental justice movement gained momentum. Thus, while early links between the profession and food can be found, these have only resurfaced recently. These links between the profession and food issues are being recognised and demonstrated by planning associations in different parts of the world. In the American context, this importance is illustrated through the American Planning Association’s Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning in 2007 (Morgan, 2009). The policy highlights links between the food system and its impacts on communities’ health, economic and environmental wellbeing. In Europe, The Association of European Schools of Planning also undertakes an annual ‘Sustainable Food Planning’ conference (Brinkley, 2013).

Theoretically, AFNs also offer insights into various critical debates in planning literature (Wekerle, 2004). Wekerle (2004) argues, using food justice movements as an example, that these can provide examples of the role of civil society and urban movements concerned with social and environmental justice. Furthermore, these movements provide insights into the ‘subaltern’ strategies of resistance to globalisation and changes in urban governance (Wekerle, 2004). Thus, Wekerle (2004) outlines that AFNs provide examples of citizen planning through their involvement in local organising and community development. Thus, AFNs clearly link to the overarching goals of planning, and also offer an opportunity to understand how communities are attempting to create more sustainable futures.

Various examples can be found in current research that demonstrates ways in which planners and local governments are engaging with food issues. Both planning academics and practitioners have engaged with food policy councils, and food has also been addressed in the urban plans of a growing number of cities (Brinkley, 2013). Brinkley (2013) discusses that planners have largely influenced three areas of food planning investigation being foodshed analysis, urban food production and food access. Castillo et al. (2013) outline that interest in urban and peri-urban agriculture has influenced some US municipalities to modify local planning ordinances in support of these activities. However,
the author uses a Chicago case study to outline that even despite these efforts, zoning can still be viewed as a major barrier to urban agriculture, often operating in a “legal limbo” (Castillo et al., 2013). Thus, it is evident that planners only have a brief history of engaging with food issues, and some attempts to promote local food through planning mechanisms have been criticised in practice.

### 2.4.1 Local Food Policy

Examples of planners and local governments engaging with and enacting local food policy can be found globally. Mendes (2008) discusses that recent decades have seen a rise of food systems being a concern of urban governments and thus a rise in local-level food policy. The author highlights that:

> Urban food policies can be understood as decisions that affect the ways that people in cities produce, obtain, consume, and dispose of their food. Food decisions affect whether opportunities to grow food in the city are supported; whether a city’s most vulnerable populations have access to nutritious and affordable food; whether neighbourhoods have grocery stores or farmers’ markets within walking distance; or whether strategies exist to divert food from landfill (Mendez, 2008:943).

Sadler, Gilliland and Arku (2014) also discuss that there is a large body of research that supports the creation of policies to deal with issues in the food environment and food systems planning. The authors argue that the food system needs to be addressed by policy makers for a number of reasons due to the importance and prevalence of food in our everyday lives. The authors further propose that that policy intervention is particularly necessary as “researchers have insinuated planners and policy makers as key players in improving population health because long-term solutions to obesity are found more often in planning measures that support health-promoting environments than by individual-level interventions by the medical field” (Sadler, Gillian and Arku, 2014:3). Sumner (2012) discusses several different examples of food policy including local food purchasing policies, greenbelt policies, fair trade policies, and food access policies. However, despite the importance of local food policy being recognised, food and agriculture issues are often siloed and addressed without consideration for wider impacts on food system issues or the public’s health. Furthermore, as food concerns have traditionally been challenges addressed by higher levels of government, capacity of local governments to tackle these issues has been highlighted as a significant challenge (Mendes, 2008).
However, an example of how food systems issues have been translated into planning policy can be found in research undertaken by Wegener, Hanning and Raine (2012), who analysed the Waterloo Region Official Plan in Canada. The plan was the first of its nature in Canada to promote the regional food system of Waterloo, achieved through planning actions that aimed to facilitate access to healthy, local food (Wegener, Hanning & Raine, 2012). The policy integrated environmental, economic and health concerns and gained traction through its alignment with health priorities which had a largely similar agenda regarding the built environment (Wegener, Hanning & Raine, 2012). This alignment with other regional priorities was cited by the authors as crucial to the successful implementation of the policy (Wegener, Hanning & Raine, 2012). This integration was demonstrated through, for example, the policy’s link to an urban rural boundary in the form of a “Countryside Line” (Wegener, Hanning & Raine, 2012). This boundary protected against environmental concerns, such as rural encroachment and also aimed to create positive social and economic outcomes through protecting the business interests of farmers, and ensuring the city can produce food (Wegener, Hanning & Raine, 2012). The idea of strategic collaboration being needed for the success of food system policy is reiterated by several other authors. Levkoe (2011) for example outlines that this has been a major criticism of local governments who often “silo” food issues, addressing them in isolation.

While successful policy examples can be found globally, research surrounding policy mobility emphasizes the complexity with simple transfer of ‘best practice’ examples from one location to another (Clarke, 2012; McCann, 2011). Clarke (2012) outlines that policies do not materialise in one location as a complete replica from another, but rather they appear as “policies-in-transformation”. McCann (2011:109) outlines urban policy mobilities as being “socially produced and circulated forms of knowledge...that develop in, are conditioned by, travel through, connect, and shape various spatial scales, networks, policy communities, and institutional contexts”. Furthermore, Blay-Palmer (2010) discuss that policy is a preliminary starting point, with this needing to be reinforced by processes, knowledge and leadership in order for the desired outcomes to be implemented. Thus, while ‘best-practice’ examples of food policy can be found in the current literature it is important that ideas of policy mobility are carefully considered and that this policy has appropriate support in different contexts in order for it to be successful.

2.4.2 Food Policy councils

A key way in which local governments have engaged with food issues is through food policy councils (FPCs). Scherb et al. (2012) outline that FPCs have materialised as a
popular way to coordinate the diverse range of stakeholders who are concerned and engage with food system issues. Specifically, FPCs enable partnerships between stakeholders, examine current policies, regulations and other ordinances related to food; and support or create programmes that address food system issues (Scherb et al., 2012). Sadler Arku and Gillilan (2014) discuss that FPCs have been purported by urban planning practitioners and academics to enhance collaboration between institutions and disciplines and furthermore promote local food policy advocacy and citizen activism (Campbell, 2004; Clancy, 2004; Pothukuchi, 2004). FPCs often comprise of similar stakeholders as AFNs, however the role of these actors in FPCs is focused on local food system advocacy to local governments and municipalities (Campbell, 2004). Harper et al. (2009) highlight that FPCs often take on four different functions. Generally, this includes allowing a forum to discuss food issues, fostering coordination between different stakeholders in the food system, evaluating and influencing policy and creating or supporting programs and services that address local needs (Harper et al., 2009). It is argued that through awareness raising and collaboration, FPCs can create broader national or state-level change, making local food policy a mainstream issue (Sadler, Arku & Gilliland, 2014).

However, it is evident that the ways in which FPCs engage with food policy, and the success these organisations have had is being questioned by current research. Research undertaken by Scherb et al. (2012) analysed a wide range of FPCs in the United States to provide a national-level analysis of the ways in which FPCs engage with policy issues. The authors established that most FPCs do engage with policy, however they had varying motivations and means for doing so. Furthermore, there were varying definitions of policy among the different councils examined. In the author’s analysis however, the FPCs were working, through numerous means to achieve policy change at various levels regarding various issues (Scherb et al., 2012). However, the activities of the FPCs were often indirect including problem identification or education (Scherb et al., 2012). Limitations with FPCs have also been recently discussed by research undertaken by Coplen and Cuneo (2015) who investigated the dissolution of the Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council. Common barriers for FPCs outlined by the authors are budget, resource and time related with members often being volunteers (Coplen & Cuneo, 2015). In analysing the Portland case study, several main factors were associated with the failure of the FPC. This included a lack of autonomy, authority and influence, absence of strategic planning, communication breakdown and fractionalization, training and capacity building, and friction between working with policy versus programs (Coplen & Cuneo, 2015). Coplen and Cuneo (2015) also outline that it is important for FPCs to agree upon a shared vision and define the
council’s role and purpose, with these revisited to ensure the group remains effective. These key issues link back to the key theme that stakeholders and actors involved with food systems issues are extremely diverse, with differing motivations for their involvement. Thus, for FPCs to remain effective, it is important that they are clear in their strategic direction and overarching goals in order to create effective policy change and hold enough influence to do so.

2.5 The New Zealand Context

This section will now provide a brief overview of research undertaken in the New Zealand context in which this study is situated. Firstly, an overview of the power of local governments in New Zealand will be given. Research undertaken regarding local food policy and also planning and urban agriculture will then be briefly discussed. A full overview of the contexts in question will be discussed later in Chapter 4.

2.5.1 Local Government in New Zealand

Local government in the New Zealand context is managed under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). The purpose of the Act, which was amended in 2012, is “1. To enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of communities; and 2. To meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses” (Local Government New Zealand, 2015a). Local Government New Zealand (2015) outlines that “councils can differ widely in relation to the activities they undertake, as long as they have consulted their communities in making the decisions. As a result, there is considerable diversity in the range of activities that councils provide, reflecting the different circumstances that cities, towns and communities find themselves in”. Asquith (2012:76) discusses that internationally, local governments in New Zealand are in an “enviable position”, having the power of general competence, they are financially independent and also often employ highly-skilled strategic managers. The current form of local government in New Zealand is a result of neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and also more recent reforms in 2002 and 2012. Reforms of the 1980s aimed to produce a minimal role for the state, with local government intervention perceived as a last resort when no other actor could provide a service or activity (Asquith, 2012). Reforms in 2002 however provided local government with the power of general competence, but did not change earlier systems and structures (Asquith, 2012). Thus, local governments in New
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Zealand had much broader responsibilities, but could lack the means in which to achieve this (Asquith, 2012).

However, the purpose of the Act was reformed substantially in 2012, with local authorities generally opposing the amendment (Sheard & McDonald, 2013). In 2002, the purpose of the Act encompassed four ‘well-beings’, with local government responsible for social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of communities (Department of Internal Affairs, 2012). The purpose, however was viewed as ‘unrealistic’ by central government, and replaced with a focus on local authorities delivering core services such as “good quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a “cost-effective” way (Department of Internal Affairs, 2012). Thus, these reforms caused some concern for local governments, particularly as it was unclear around what ‘local infrastructure’ or ‘local public services’ meant and thus uncertainties around the role for local authorities (Sheard & McDonald, 2013). Despite these uncertainties, local authorities are currently responsible for a wide range of local services including roads, water reticulation, sewerage and refuse collection, libraries, parks, recreation services, local regulations, community and economic development and town planning (Local Government New Zealand, 2015). Asquith (2012) outlines that there has been a shift from ‘managerialist’ ethos of the 1980s, where public sector entities were viewed as ‘quasi-businesses’, to local authorities undertaking activities with partners from both the private and non-governmental sectors of the economy. Thus, research suggests that while local governments in New Zealand have the power to influence a wide array of issues, they may lack the means to do so. Furthermore, after the reforms of 2012, the purpose local government in New Zealand is much narrower in scope than the previously.

2.5.2 Food Policy and Food Systems Planning Research

Research has been undertaken in the New Zealand context that has broadly evaluated the current food system and also explored the potential for food systems planning. Acres (2011) evaluated the potential for food systems planning, establishing that there was little attention paid to food systems planning in the country. Furthermore, the author also highlights that while New Zealand produces copiousness amounts of food around 92% of this is for the export. Moreover, many of the large-scale production and distribution systems in New Zealand are dependent on situations that will not endure into the future, including fossil fuel dependence and stability in global financial markets (Acres, 2010). Thus, the New Zealand food system is vulnerable to shocks. Despite action being viewed as necessary, continued government support for the multi-billion dollar export sector was
perceived as leading to little progress or support for change from the current system. The author also found there was little response regarding planners’ attitudes towards further integrating food systems planning, with buy-in from council viewed as difficult. It was also highlighted that the political, social, environmental and economic contexts within councils vary across New Zealand, making it difficult to prescribe a consistent approach to implementing food systems planning. Gower (2015) also examined barriers and enabling factors for local councils in New Zealand to develop food and nutrition policy. The author found that this is determined by a complex combination of external, national, local and international influences. Furthermore, strong political support, collaboration/partnerships and credible champions were important for councils to address food environment issues through the councils’ long-term plans and food and nutrition policy (Gower, 2015). Research has also been undertaken examining the opportunities for planning to support and enhance urban food production in New Zealand. Star (2009) for example, highlighted that there was council support for urban food production in the New Zealand locations researched, including Dunedin. A key element of this was viewed to be local council staff. However, despite this, council structures and procedures were viewed as a barrier, especially for community groups with little experience of how these worked (Star, 2009).

2.6 Conclusion

The current research undertaken on AFNs has highlighted that these initiatives are extremely diverse and context-specific in nature, often encompassing a number of actors who hold varying motivations and goals. Diversity in definitions around the term ‘AFN’ highlight the necessity for understanding these movements in context, in order to understand how they have materialised in place. Thus, this research will enable an understanding of the specific processes giving rise to the form of AFNs in two New Zealand localities, while learning from the foundation of research that highlights common barriers and critiques of AFNs. As McClintock (2013) argues, this research will acknowledge the contradictions and critiques of these initiatives in order to provide a better understanding of how they may be creating change in their localities. This chapter also highlighted that while planners have traditionally engaged little with the food system, it is evident that pressure for increased engagement is growing globally. Furthermore, local governments are becoming more involved with dealing with food system issues in numerous ways. The links between sustainability and food systems were also highlighted, with an understanding of the food system having the ability to translate the complex concept into meaningful policy and action. However, there are also clear difficulties with
implementing sustainability-related policy due to the ‘fuzzy’ nature of the concept. Furthermore, local food policy is a relatively new idea, with food traditionally dealt with at higher levels of government. Thus, there clearly challenges for local urban governments engaging with a policy area that has not traditionally been considered in their scope, including in New Zealand. While studies in the New Zealand context have been undertaken regarding local food policy, the potential for food systems planning and the potential for planning to better enhance urban agriculture, it is evident that there has been a lack of research undertaking in place-based food networks and their engagement with local governments. Furthermore, it is evident that practical work on these issues is also limited. This research thus aims to fill this gap, supported by the international debates reviewed in this chapter, through providing an in-depth study of the form of two local food networks in New Zealand and the form of engagement the local governments have undertaken. Chapter 3 which follows will discuss the theoretical influences for this research and will outline in detail the methodology that was undertaken to address the research aim and questions.
3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the methodology that was employed to address the aims and objectives of this research (depicted below in Table 1). The general research approach will first be discussed, including the reasoning behind the qualitative case study research design and the theoretical influences that have informed the selection of this methodological approach. The research design has been influenced by a participatory approach and also the concept of phronetic social science as discussed by Flyvbjerg (2001). This chapter will provide justification for the chosen methodology and will then discuss in detail how primary and secondary data was collected and consequently analysed. Ethics B approval was obtained for this research from the University of Otago (reference number D15/188), with a copy of both the participant information sheet and consent form provided in Appendix A. A discussion of ethical concerns, limitations and the importance of the researcher’s positionality will be provided in sections 3.4 and 3.5.
3.2 Research Approach

The following section will provide a discussion of the theoretical foundations for the selected methodology. A qualitative case study approach was adopted due to the interpretative nature of the research, allowing for the opinions and experiences of those with knowledge on the key research themes to be gathered and analysed. Justification of this approach including theoretical influences and the specific methodology chosen will also be outlined.

Table 1: Research aims and questions that were undertaken in this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>To explore and compare local food networks in Christchurch and Dunedin in order to investigate how local councils could support and engage with food issues more effectively.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 1</td>
<td>What form have local food networks taken in Dunedin and Christchurch and how has the particular context shaped the actors involved, their motivations and the purpose or focus of the network?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 2</td>
<td>What involvement have local governments in Dunedin and Christchurch had with food system issues and what potential is there for governance mechanisms to address food issues more effectively in these localities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 3</td>
<td>How are goals, opportunities, challenges or barriers being addressed by the networks and the councils in the two localities?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1 Theoretical Influences

“Phronetic social science is ultimately about producing knowledge that can challenge power not in theory but in ways that inform real efforts to produce change” (Schram, 2012:20).

The research approach adopted for this study has been informed by the concept of phronetic social science discussed by Flyvbjerg (2001). The author argues that utilizing approaches employed traditionally in the natural sciences, which are often generalizable and predictive, are inappropriate for studying human interactions (Flyvbjerg, Landman & Schram, 2012). Rather, phronetic social science is argued for which is “dedicated to enhancing a socially relevant form of knowledge, that is phronesis (practical wisdom on how to address and act on social problems in a particular context)” (Flyvbjerg, Landman and Schram, 2012:1). The author does not directly endorse a particular research method, but rather highlights the production of research that can result in an increased
understanding for the actors involved in specific contexts, thus inducing change (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Furthermore, the development of phronesis is advocated for over “questioning the ghost of an abstract knowledge of law-like processes” (Flyvbjerg, Landman and Schram, 2012:2). Thus, context-specific research including case studies are highlighted as providing social actors with the opportunity to comprehend the complexities of social relations, including policy and change most effectively in particular places (Schram, 2012). These ideas also link to the theory of poststructuralism, which emphasizes that social and cultural systems are dynamic, with meaning and action placed within a context of broad relations (Murdoch, 2005). Poststructural approaches criticise theories that have endeavoured to find universal explanations or metanarratives, and rather place emphasis on the multiplicity of social life, knowledge and different social experiences (Panelli, 2003).

Schram (2012) further develops Flyvbjerg’s ideas and suggests major reasons for the development of phronetic social science over more traditional methods. The author argues that human interaction is dynamic and due to this, social inquiry is most effective when general laws of action are not sought. Rather, research should be related to questions of what should be done. These ideas are particularly relevant for research regarding sustainability and AFNs, with these initiatives being inherently normative with competing values, views and approaches of what ‘should’ be done. The author also emphasizes that social inquiry is best practiced when traditional conceptions of objectivity and truth are replaced with a contextual definition that is pluralistic and culture-bound (Schram, 2012). Dialogical social inquiry is also advocated for, as when undertaken in a public way, this can challenge power and support social change (Schram, 2012).

Thus, Schram (2012) outlines that phronetic social science is focused on the production of research that is relevant to decisions about what can and should be done. Furthermore, phronetic social science is engaged and designed to empower change. The author further discusses that the approach shares features in common with action and participatory research. However, phronetic social science places less prominence on collaboration in research but rather highlights the production of knowledge that improves the ability of those people to make informed decisions about relevant issues (Schram, 2012). These concepts also link to Friedmann’s (1987) discussion about radical practice in planning and ‘transformative theory’. The author argues that planning should be normative, innovative, political, transactive and based on social learning (Friedmann, 1987, 1993). Furthermore, the author also argues that planning should “operate in real time by linking knowledge and action into a tightly looped process of strategic change” (Friedmann, 1993:484). Thus, the
theoretical influences for this study advocated for research that acknowledges the importance of cultural and social systems, the dynamic nature of human interaction, and the importance of research that has the potential to create change for the actors involved. Thus, informed by these theories and concepts regarding phronetic social science, post-structuralism and Friedmann’s (1987,1993) writings, a qualitative case study approach with participatory elements was employed to address the overarching research aim and questions.

3.2.2 Case Study Approach

“Social science has not succeeded in producing general, context-independent theory and, thus, has in the final instance nothing else to offer than concrete, context-dependent knowledge” (Flyvbjerg, 2006:223).

A case study approach was adopted for the research, comparing and contrasting the two localities of Dunedin and Christchurch. Two local food networks were chosen to analyse in the research, ‘Our Food Network’ (OFN) in Dunedin and ‘Edible Canterbury’ (EC) in Christchurch. Both networks have been established since 2013 with similar objectives. Furthermore, practical reasons also influenced this choice, as Christchurch is the closest urban centre to where the researcher lives in Dunedin, this was viewed as practical in relation to both cost and time constraints. These two cases were also selected as it is anticipated that contrasting results will be achieved due to the vastly different contexts presented. This will allow for a more robust understanding of the materialization and form of different AFNs in New Zealand (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, both councils are at similar stages in beginning to consider food at a policy level. Thus, an embedded case study was employed, as the ‘sub units’ of the local council and the ways in which these organisations currently engage with food issues were addressed in this research through exploring the two chosen groups themselves (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) also outlines that case studies need to be of a manageable size. The two locations were determined by the researcher to be an appropriate size and scope for the research, allowing an in depth critical comparison of the two cases.

As previously noted, Schram (2012) outlines that case studies are a tool which can provide context-specific research giving insight to social actors on the complexities of social relations, including policy and change. Though often critiqued as not being capable of generalizing information and being subjective in nature, case studies are capable of
producing context-dependent knowledge which has been argued to be more valuable than predictive theories which are hard to relate to social issues and interactions (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 stressed the context-specific nature of AFNs. Thus, the value of this approach to explore the key themes of this research was highlighted. Yin (2009:18) outlines that a case study “investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Particularly in the case of AFNs, phenomenon and context are not always distinguishable, with the two interrelated in a complex way. Furthermore, investigating sustainable community initiatives, such as AFNs, in a geographic location in detail allows for both the initiative itself to be explored, along with the social space in which it is located (Franklin, 2013). This is reflected in the research questions chosen which explore both the social spaces of the two localities, and also the form of the networks in order to best analyse the context specific processes, issues and opportunities occurring in both.

It is also anticipated that the research will create connections and allow for social learning between the two networks in question through the knowledge produced. Social learning in environmental management is considered as collective action and reflection that occurs among different individuals or groups as they work to improve the management of human and environmental interrelations (Keen, Brown & Dyball, 2005). Thus, the research will allow for those involved with local food in the two localities to share experiences and potentially provide for the creation of links between different AFNs in New Zealand that currently do not exist.

### 3.2.3 Qualitative Research

A qualitative approach to addressing the research aims and objectives was selected, informed by both the phronetic social science approach and also literature surrounding sustainability research. As previously noted, the research is associated with the concept of sustainability, which lacks conceptual clarity, as do AFNs. Although it is widely acknowledged that sustainable development is positive, the definition of sustainability differs between different disciplines and issues. Sustainability involves conflicts over values and uncertainties about outcomes, with definitions changing depending on different political and ideological perspectives (Hassanein, 2003). It is evident that these conflicts and uncertainties also are present within AFNs. As highlighted in the Chapter 2, AFNs operate at multiple scales and can be both radical and neoliberal, encompassing different and contradictory processes (McClintock, 2013). Thus, a qualitative approach was selected
in order to explore and analyse these complex themes in more depth in order to provide a robust understanding.

Franklin and Blyton (2013) outline some issues associated with current approaches to researching sustainability, with the measurement of the concept often neglecting important social and cultural aspects. Measuring these aspects requires alternative modes of social inquiry that are different to mainstream quantifiable methods. Studies on environmental and sustainability opinions for example often utilise quantitative survey or poll methods over in-depth participatory engagement with participants (Franklin, 2013). Qualitative methodology is conversely diverse and pluralistic, offering the researcher a deeper understanding of actor’s motivations for social action and the way they attribute meaning to their lives (Sarantakos, 1998). Thus, due to the complex nature of the key themes being investigated including the concept of sustainability and AFNs, qualitative methods were selected to best explore in depth the opinions on these issues from those who are directly engaged with local food networks and food projects. It is anticipated that due to the contextual and complex themes of the research this would be difficult to achieve with quantitative methods. Furthermore, qualitative methods would best allow for the development of ‘phronesis’, allowing the potential for social change through enabling the social actors involved the opportunity to comprehend the complexities of social relations, including policy and change more effectively

3.2.4 Participatory Approach

A participatory approach was also incorporated into the research, both intentionally and unintentionally. As the researcher has been involved with OFN in Dunedin since late 2013, the research has an inherent participatory element. However, informed by literature on Participatory Action Research (PAR) aspects of the research were intentionally designed to incorporate participation from key informants. Kesby, Kindon & Pain (2005) outline that participatory approaches are concerned with working with people, in comparison to working ‘on’ them. Like phronetic social science, participatory approaches have the intention of increasing people’s ability to create positive change in their lives, in comparison to simply describing and analysing social realities from a distanced perspective (Kesby, Kindon & Pain, 2005). Thus, participatory research places emphasis on a research relationship that is more mutual in nature (Franklin, Newton & McEntee, 2011). Action orientated research, can also lead to social action and learning through improvements to the knowledge and understanding of those involved (Mackenzie et al., 2012). In the wider context of environmental management, Keen, Brown and Dyball (2005:9) discuss that
social learning “is a process of iterative reflection that occurs when we share our experiences, ideas and environments with others”. Furthermore, they stress that social and environmental sustainability depend on the capacity of people to learn together and respond to changing circumstances (Keen, Brown & Dyball, 2005). Thus, this element of the research was considered important in the context of both the wider concepts of phronetic social science and environmental management.

Furthermore, participatory approaches also benefit the researcher as Keen, Brown & Dyball (2005) discusses, when participants are involved in the data analysis results are anticipated to be more robust and reliable. Aspects of participatory methods employed in the research included that the core group of OFN were asked their opinions on the research aims and objectives before interviewing commenced. While these were not changed, the feedback indicated that key informants felt positively about the topic. This was important for the researcher, as it was desired that this research would be of value to the group. Furthermore, initial analysis of the research results were presented back to key stakeholders from each group in question who were able to then provide input into the researcher’s initial interpretation. Especially in the Christchurch context, where the researcher is regarded an ‘outsider’, this enabled the results to be made more credible. However, it is clear that there is an imbalance between the two cases, with the researcher being able to gain more in-depth information from the Dunedin context in which they had prior involvement. This limitation will be discussed in Section 3.4 below.

3.3 Research Design

This research utilized a variety of qualitative methods informed by the above theories and approaches to address the aims and objectives outlined in section 3.1. A literature review was undertaken prior to primary data collection that shaped the research design and provided the foundation and justification for this study. Document and secondary analysis was also undertaken prior to primary data collection. Current policy of both local governments was researched to assess the current engagement at a strategic level that these local authorities had with food issues. However, this research did not include examining specific planning provisions in the district plans, as the primary aim this research was to investigate the food networks and how the councils were currently engaging with food issues. This research was also supplemented by a previous study undertaken by OFN, in the form of a member survey. The survey explored the opinions of those on the OFN mailing
list regarding motivations and opportunities for local food in Dunedin\(^1\) (a copy of this survey is provided in Appendix B). The member survey received 109 responses and will be used in this research to further explore the key themes that were raised in interviews in Dunedin.

Primary data collection included interviews, and analyses of the researcher’s personal experience in OFN meetings and ‘Food Forums’ in Dunedin. Participants for interviews included members from both of the AFNs in question, the councils in the two localities and also others involved with local food issues e.g. those involvement with farmers markets or community gardening (Table 2 below provide a list of the key informants and their roles). The following section will describe in detail the specific methods employed and the justification for the selection of these. Figure 1 below depicts the research process that was employed visually.

Figure 1: Depiction of the research process employed in this study

3.3.1 Interviews

Interviews were selected as the primary research method for a number of reasons. As previously outlined, the research involves complex, contextual themes and issues. Semi-structured interviews were selected as the primary method for data collection as they take a conversational form, with each interview changing in relation to the interests, experiences

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\(^1\) The researcher had involvement with the analysis of this survey in 2013, carried out as part of a ‘Summer Scholarship’ in the Department of Geography at the University of Otago. These results have been used in this research with permission of the OFN core group.
and opinions of the interviewees (Valentine, 2005). The advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they allow a more wide-ranging discussion than a questionnaire. Interviews allow a thorough exploration of the issues in question as the researcher can ask questions relating to the same theme in different ways (Valentine, 2005). Semi-structured interviews also allow for respondents to raise questions or issues the interviewer may not have anticipated (Valentine, 2005). Thus, the results generated are rich, detailed and multi-layered, allowing for the production of more robust data than a questionnaire (Valentine, 2005). This method was viewed as appropriate for addressing the research aim and questions as it allowed for the complex issues to be explored in-depth. Table 2 outlines the key informants who were interviewed in the research and their role in either local food initiatives or the councils. In total, 21 key informants were interviewed in the research, 9 from Christchurch and 12 from Dunedin. One week was spent in Christchurch undertaking interviews, with further phone interviews carried out after this time. Interviews were conducted both in person and over the phone in the Dunedin context also over a two-week period, with most ranging from half an hour to an hour in length. All interviews were recorded and consequently transcribed in order for the results to be analysed.

Table 2: List of key informants interviewed in both contexts for this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Informant (Christchurch)</th>
<th>Role/Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1(c) Council Staff Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(c) Member of Edible Canterbury – involvement with group from its inception</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(c) Member of Edible Canterbury – involvement with group from its inception and involvement with food box scheme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(c) Councillor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(c) Canterbury District Health Board member and involvement with Edible Canterbury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6(c) Involved with Agropolis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7(c) Small-scale organic producer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(c) Community Gardens Association member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9(c) Manager of a Farmers Market in Christchurch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Informant (Dunedin)</td>
<td>Role/Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(d)</td>
<td>Core group member OFN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(d)</td>
<td>Core group member OFN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(d)</td>
<td>Core group member OFN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(d)</td>
<td>Core group member OFN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(d)</td>
<td>Council staff member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6(d)</td>
<td>Community member involved with community orchards and gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7(d)</td>
<td>Community member involved with community gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(d)</td>
<td>Community member involved with urban agriculture project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9(d)</td>
<td>Otago Farmers Market board member and local producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10(d)</td>
<td>Foodshare employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11(d)</td>
<td>Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12(d)</td>
<td>Core group member OFN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.2 Secondary Sources

As previously noted, the main secondary source to be utilised in this research was a survey undertaken by OFN in Dunedin in 2013-2014. OFN currently has an email list of around 300 members to which regular updates on local food events or issues in the city are sent. A survey was circulated to the members in 2013 that had 109 responses from members of OFN. The survey asked what local food activities members were involved with, what motivated them to be involved with local food, and also what role they thought the network could play. This survey will be used as a secondary source in the results section, with permission of the OFN core group, to expand on and reinforce key themes of the qualitative interviews. The researcher had direct involvement with the analysis of these survey results, which was undertaken as part of a ‘Summer Student Scholarship’ in the Geography Department at the University of Otago.
3.3.3 Data Analysis

As the data was primarily qualitative in nature, thematic analysis was undertaken to examine the results. Findings were processed according to commonalities, relationships and differences between the different cases in question, and also against academic literature (Gibson, 2009). The results were initially analysed and then preliminary findings were reported back to both of the food networks who were asked for comment. As previously noted, this participatory approach to research can ensure that the likely result is more ‘credible’ accounts, and more robust results. These perspectives on the initial findings were thus incorporated into the secondary analysis of the data. Three responses were provided from key informants, one from Dunedin and two from Christchurch, providing credibility for the results.

3.4 Limitations and Positionality

The research has several limitations, most of which relate to the researcher’s positionality, having previous involvement with OFN in Dunedin. Browne Bakshi & Law (2010:586) describe positionality as “how research is created through the interactions and relationships between researchers and those being researched”. A reflexive account of these relationships is important for examining issues such as exploitation and unequal power relations (Browne, Bakshi & Law, 2010). Furthermore, knowledge is produced in specific contexts by different people and for different reasons, which influences how research is formed (Browne, Bakshi & Law, 2010). Thus, ‘contextualisation’ of this knowledge can be achieved through open reflection of both the research process and the relationship of the researcher to the participants. This is a particularly important consideration for this study given the prior involvement the researcher had with one of the groups, and the main method for data collection being semi-structured interviews.

It is evident that the researcher’s positionality was different in the two locations where research was conducted. In the Christchurch context, the researcher was considered an ‘outsider’ whereas in Dunedin the researcher is involved with the group. Thus, this could have impacted on the results obtained, with a potential difference due to this in the two locations. Participants in the Dunedin context may have been more open in interviews for example than those in Christchurch. Furthermore, another clear limitation of the study is that a richer data set was available to the researcher on the Dunedin context than that of Christchurch. The researcher’s previous personal experiences in the OFN group including core group meetings and ‘Food Forums’ were used to inform the research. The researcher
was also involved with the member survey which was also utilised as a secondary source. However, attempts were made to ensure that the data obtained in both locations was comparable in nature. More in-depth interviews were undertaken in the Christchurch context to ensure that the researcher had a comprehensive understanding of the context and group, and preliminary findings were communicated back to both groups. Particularly for the Christchurch context, key informants confirmed that they felt the analysis of the results reflected the views they had portrayed in interviews. However, it is clear that the researcher’s positionality in the Dunedin context acted also as an advantage for this research, allowing a more comprehensive understanding of the context, how and why certain things had been undertaken. Attempts were made to mirror this understanding in the Christchurch context, as noted above.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

As previously noted, Category B (Ethical Approval at Departmental Level of a Proposal Involving Human Participants) ethical approval was obtained before field research began (reference number D15/188). This was to ensure that the research design would maintain anonymity and confidentiality of key informants involved. Ethical considerations were particularly important for the research, which used semi-structured interviews as the primary means of data collection. Due to this, it could not be accurately anticipated what topics or themes were going to be discussed in each separate interview. To ensure any potential ethical issues were avoided, participants were provided with an information sheet (provided in Appendix A), which clearly stated that participants could withdraw from the research at any time prior, during or after the interview without any kind of disadvantage. No participant received any kind of personal advantage or retribution for their participation. A consent form (provided in Appendix A) was also signed by each of the participants before the interview.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive justification and explanation of the methodology chosen in this research. The key theoretical influences were outlined that led to the selection of a qualitative case study to address the key research aims and questions. Primary methods for the study included semi-structured interviews with 21 key informants and the researcher’s reflections on personal experiences in OFN Dunedin. Secondary data included a review of the relevant literature and a survey previously undertaken by OFN. Several limitations were identified, mostly relating to the researcher’s positionality as
having previous involvement with the OFN group. Attempts that were made to address any issues relating to this were also outlined as well as how ethical concerns were addressed. The following chapter provides an overview of the two contexts studied in the research in order to interpret the results that are discussed in Chapter 5 and 6.
4 Food Policy Context

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a contextual overview of the two cities where the research was undertaken. Background to both the local food networks and food policy in the two localities will be discussed. As previously noted, Christchurch and Dunedin were chosen as cases to compare in this research for a number of reasons. Both have relatively well-established local food networks and both local governments have recently, or are beginning to, consider food as a possible policy avenue. However, the two are also vastly different in nature, particularly due to the series of earthquakes that have had an immense impact on the city of Christchurch. This research will focus specifically on the cities of Dunedin and Christchurch, which are governed by city councils, in comparison to the wider regional contexts that are governed by separate regional councils. Figure 2 below shows the location of both of the cities researched in the South Island of New Zealand, including city and regional boundaries. This chapter will lead into the results of this research that follow in Chapters 5 and 6, allowing for the key findings to be better understood through providing background and context to the two cases.
Figure 2: Map showing the location of the two cities where the research was undertaken (Local Government New Zealand, 2015b)
4.2 Local Level Food Policy in New Zealand

Chapter 2 discussed previous research that had been undertaken in the New Zealand context and also gave an overview of the relevant legislation for both planning and local government in New Zealand. A brief overview of the two Acts which are most relevant for this research will be given in the section that follows, including the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). This overview will be useful in order to explore the scope that the two councils in question have for engaging with food issues. As previously noted, the purpose of local government in New Zealand was changed when the Act was amended in 2012. The purpose is shown in full in Figure 3 below.

10 Purpose of local government

- (1) The purpose of local government is—
  - (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
  - (b) to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.

- (2) In this Act, good-quality, in relation to local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions, means infrastructure, services, and performance that are—
  - (a) efficient; and
  - (b) effective; and
  - (c) appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances.


Figure 3: Purpose of local government in New Zealand under the Local Government Act 2002

Thus, as highlighted in Chapter 2, local government in New Zealand has relatively wide-ranging powers, however sometimes lack resource or capacity with political, social, environmental and economic contexts highly variable across the country. Furthermore, the scope of the LGA has been narrowed considerably in 2012 from the ‘four well-beings’ that used to guide local councils to delivering on core services in a cost-effective way. Another mechanism under which local governments could engage with food issues is the Resource Management Act 1991, the primary environmental and planning statute in the country. The
purpose of the Act is to “promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources”. Sustainable management encompasses “managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and their communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being and for their health and safety” while physical and natural resources are preserved for future generations as the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems are safeguarded. This Act mandates LAs to have a district plan in place at all time which regulates land-use. Thus these two statues clearly allow scope for LAs to engage with food issues, however, research by Star (2009) and Acres (2011) demonstrated planners and local councils have had little policy engagement with food issues.

4.3 Christchurch Contextual Overview

Christchurch is New Zealand’s second most populous urban centre located in the Canterbury Region of the country’s South Island, (see Figure 4 below for a map showing the boundaries of the city and surrounding districts). At the 2013 census, there was a population of 436,056 living in the greater Christchurch area (Statistics New Zealand, 2013b). Currently, the city is one in recovery, having been devastated by a series of earthquakes that commenced in September 2010. A 6.3 magnitude aftershock in February 2011 caused the most extensive damage, claiming 185 lives and causing major destruction to the city centre and eastern suburbs of the city. The aftershocks are ongoing, with thousands recorded that are continuing to cause damage. Following the earthquakes, substantial areas of the city that were impacted the most severely were ‘red-zoned’, where access to the public was restricted (Wesener, 2015). Due to the damage in the city centre large-scale demolitions are on-going. By February 2015, 1240 buildings have been demolished and 292 new constructions have begun in Christchurch’s city centre (Wesener, 2015).
In addition to physical impacts on the built environment of the city, the earthquakes have also had significant economic and social effects. The total cost of the rebuild for the city has been estimated at $40 billion, being ten percent of New Zealand Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and viewed as a ‘very large shock’ for the country’s economy (New Zealand Parliament, 2011; The New Zealand Treasury, 2014). Furthermore, in 2011 following the devastating February 6.3 magnitude earthquake, the population decreased by 2.4 percent (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). However, the city is expected to grow in the future with the medium projection of an annual growth rate of 0.6 percent between 2011 and 2031 (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). The Central Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) largely responsible for the rebuild has estimated that as of September 2015, the earthquake recovery construction is 41 percent complete (Future Christchurch Greater Canterbury, 2015). Canterbury’s economy is also growing, with real gross domestic product (GDP) increasing by 3.1 percent for the year ended March 2015 (Future Christchurch Greater Canterbury, 2015). However, in regard to social recovery, according to CERA as of March 2015, on in five (19%) of residents continue to feel stressed most or all of the time. Living in a damaged environment and/or surrounded by construction work
was viewed as the most common stressor. It is evident that socially, the earthquakes have had significant impacts on the people of the city, including a substantial proportion of the population that have, and continue to live, in substandard accommodation.

Despite these negative impacts, the earthquakes have provided the city with a substantial opportunity for innovation and creativity as it rebuilds. Some community-level examples of this include a variety of ‘transitional’ temporary projects throughout Christchurch that have aimed to improve and activate public areas. Examples of these projects include gap filler projects, road painting, planters, pop up ‘parklets’ and transitional streetscapes. Research has highlighted the positive impact that temporary land uses have had for disaster recovery in the city, particularly relating to the building of social capital (Parr, 2013). Wesner (2015) also made links between temporary urbanism and urban sustainability. Furthermore, as previously noted, the built environment of the central city has been dramatically changed with large-scale demolition and reconstruction in progress. This significant reconstruction clearly allows for an opportunity to reimagine the city. Food is one example of this potential and has already been demonstrated within the city. One prominent example is ‘Agropolis’, an urban farm in the centre city that was enabled post-earthquakes by Life in Vacant Spaces (LIVS), an organisation that connects landowners with groups who wish to use empty spaces during reconstruction. Thus, while the city has clearly been impacted both economically and socially, the rebuild also provides opportunities to be innovative and do things differently, with food being an example of this.

However, despite these opportunities, CERA has been viewed as negatively impacting sustainable urban development (Wesener, 2015). For example, early public consultation was undertaken by the CCC through an award-winning ‘Share an Idea’ process that received more than 100,000 ideas from the Christchurch public and was initially translated into a draft plan for the rebuilding of the city centre (Wesener, 2015). However, this was taken over by CERA in a “100-day, ad hoc, non-public planning process” which resulted in the current Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (Wesener, 2015:5). This plan includes widespread government-led land acquisitions and large-scale ‘anchor projects’. Swaffield (2013:16) outlines “these changes reflect a shift away from sustainable urban approaches, as suggested by the ‘Share an Idea’ process to “market-led corporate development projects”. Thus, it is evident that while there is immense opportunity provided by the Christchurch context, rebuild efforts and process by the central government have been criticized as hampering sustainable urban development.
4.3.1 Edible Canterbury

Edible Canterbury was chosen as the case study from Christchurch to explore in this research. The group was first established in 2013 under the name of the ‘Food Resilience Network’. The group currently has over 20 organisations involved including, for example, Soil and Health Canterbury, local councils, the Canterbury District Health Board and Ngai Tahu (the local Maori iwi or tribe). The network has more recently taken on the brand name of ‘Edible Canterbury’ with a charter and a number of signatories who “support the vision of a more food resilient region” (Edible Canterbury, 2015a). The group is described as “an umbrella that encompasses everything from organisations working at higher strategic and political level, to neighbourhood groups working out how to plan fruit trees in their street” (Edible Canterbury, 2015d). It is outlined as being involved with agencies focused on “social, cultural, ecological issues, social enterprise, public health, local government and many others” (Edible Canterbury, 2015d).

The Food Resilience Network also developed an ‘Action Plan’, which has been adopted by Edible Canterbury and details the different work areas the group is, or intends to be involved with (see Appendix C for a copy of this). This includes cultivating relationships, growing understanding and skills, celebrating local food, propagating and supporting edible gardens, strengthening the local food economy and growing supportive policies (Food Resilience Network, 2014). Key activities have included encouraging organisations to sign the Edible Canterbury Charter, working with the CCC on food policy and hosting events such as an ‘Edible Expo’ and a ‘School’s Gardening Hui’ to promote Edible Canterbury and food resilience in the city. Thus, the network is relatively well established and is undertaking various activities relating to education, awareness raising and policy development, with a relatively large number of organisations involved including health institutions, universities and local councils. The formation of the network, its key activities, goals and aims will be discussed in more depth in the section that follows and in Chapter 5.

4.3.2 Christchurch Policy Context

As noted previously, the current context of Christchurch as a city in recovery has presented a unique situation for New Zealand whereby the central government has been granted special powers in order to enable an “effective and co-ordinated recovery” (CERA, 2015a). The central government has vested special powers in the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery and the newly created Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), which has been coordinating the recovery effort since March 2011. It is argued
that urban planning approaches after the earthquakes have been characterised by two opposing processes, a bottom up dynamic with an emphasis on place and community, and a top-down process led by central government concerned with economic recovery and rationalisation (Swaffield, 2013). While the Resource Management Act (1991) and the Local Government Act (2002) generally provide local and regional councils with wide ranging powers in regard to land use, natural resource management and decision-making, CERA has conversely transferred many of these powers back to the central government level. CERA has responsibility for the recovery strategy, policy planning, coordination and planning of infrastructure and also economic recovery for example. Specifically, this includes several recovery plans for the city that are unique policies to the context. This is therefore an important contextual aspect of the city of Christchurch to understand in order to interpret the results of this research. Due to the heavy central government influence, this could impact on whether food is considered an important policy issue at this stage in the city’s recovery.

**Christchurch City Council District Plan 1995**

Despite this context, under the Resource Management Act (1991) the Christchurch City Council (CCC) is still required to have an operative district plan in place that regulates land use for the district. However, the two operative district plans (Banks Peninsula District Plan and Christchurch City Plan) in Christchurch are currently being reviewed under a simplified timeframe different to the normal planning process prescribed under the RMA. Through an Order in Council made in 2014, the Council must complete the replacement plan by March 2016, a relatively narrow time. Thus, while this research is not explicitly examining district plan provisions, this context is still important to understand as there is potential opportunity for food to be considered as an issue under the new district plan. However, there are clearly constraints with this given the short time frame the CCC has to achieve this.

**Christchurch City Council Food Resilience Policy 2014**

Unlike many other New Zealand contexts, the CCC has a council policy specific for food resilience. In 2014 the CCC adopted a Food Resilience Policy for the city, which has been created in conjunction with the Food Resilience Network (FRN) (now Edible Canterbury). Prior to this, the Council also had a Community Gardens Policy in place since 2003 that provides clarity about the relationship between the CCC and the Christchurch Community Gardens Association. The policy formally recognises the services community gardens
provide to the city of Christchurch and communities surrounding the gardens (Christchurch City Council, 2003).

The 2014 Food Resilience Policy is, however, broader in nature than this community gardens policy, with the vision to make Christchurch “the best edible garden city in the world” (Christchurch City Council, 2014) The Council defines resilience based on the World Health Organisation 1996 World Food Summit definition of food security, emphasizing access to healthy food from a sustainable local food production and distribution system that is able to withstand shocks. The policy encompasses ‘outcomes’ from all three aspects of sustainability including social, economic and environmental. Social goals include those of health and wellbeing; close knit and self-reliant communities, and education. Economic goals include creating a thriving local economy, resilient and sustainable food system and stewardship of public places. Environmentally, the policy aims to celebrate the garden city heritage and grow a beautiful and bio-diverse garden city. Priorities to achieve the vision of the policy include the implementation of a Food Resilience Action Plan for the city, making Council land available for food production, protecting local soils, increasing nutritional quality of food in Council facilities, advocating, and encouraging the availability, affordability and uptake of healthy food and supporting community education.

4.4 Dunedin Contextual Overview

Dunedin is the second-largest city in the South Island, being the principal city of the Otago Region with a population of 120,249 (see Figure 5 below for the boundary of the city) (Statistics New Zealand, 2013a). Despite the relatively modest urban population, Dunedin is one of the largest city councils in the country by area, being responsible for an area of 3,340km2 (Dunedin City Council, 2012). Included in this is 300km of coastline and an abundance of productive rural land, with around 95% of the total area of Dunedin City zoned rural (Dunedin City Council, 2012). However, Dunedin’s growth has been relatively stagnant since the 1920s, and unlike other urban areas in New Zealand, its economic base is declining, and the population is only projected to increase by 7,400 (6%) by 2031 (Dunedin City Council, 2012). This is much slower growth in comparison to Christchurch, where, as previously noted, the population is projected to increase 0.6% per year until 2031.
4.4.1 Our Food Network

‘Our Food Network’ (OFN) was chosen as the case study in question for the Dunedin context. The network is largely a grass roots organisation, which was formed in 2013 after community ‘food forums’ were held in 2012 and 2013. The events were attended by a broad range of key stakeholders interested in local food in the Dunedin context including home and community gardeners, small and medium scale commercial growers, food distributors, academics, welfare agencies and council representatives. The network was created after it was recognised that there was interest and energy around local food in Dunedin and “…it was evident that there is a place for some sort of agency to convert that considerable energy into a powerful combined force for change. Our Food Network was set up to provide that agency” (Our Food Network, 2013). The network has a set of guiding principles and objectives, which incorporate social, environmental and economic elements. This includes links to communication, advocacy and awareness raising, food security, support of food producers, economic development, education and research (a copy of this is provided in Appendix D) (Our Food Network, 2013).

To date, the network has largely played an advocacy and awareness function, with a recent move to undertake more ‘tangible’ projects. The network currently has a mailing list of
around 300 members to which regular updates on local food events or issues in the city are sent. A core group of seven members meet regularly to discuss key issues or events. The group has also organised a subsequent ‘food forum’ for those interested in local food in Dunedin where potential project areas were identified. These areas included seed saving, land share, food identification and labelling and communication and education. The group is currently seeking funding to employ a part-time person to implement some of these projects such as creating a website to provide information on the group and raise awareness of local food in Dunedin. These activities, the formation of the network and its interaction with key stakeholders will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 that follows.

4.4.2 Dunedin Food Policy

Unlike the unique context of Christchurch with heavy central government influence, the Dunedin City Council (DCC), as a local authority, has relatively wide-ranging powers and abilities to meet the purpose of the Local Government Act 2002, introduced in Chapter 2. Like Christchurch, the DCC’s mandatory district plan is currently undergoing review, with the city developing a ‘second generation’ plan for the city that has been released for consultation in September 2015. The Council is also in the process of completing a non-statutory strategic framework to aid in decision-making and highlight key priorities for investment, effort and development. The key strategies are shown below in Figure 6 with five in place including the 3 Waters Strategic Direction Statement, the Economic Development Strategy, the Social Wellbeing Strategy, the 30 year Integrated Transport Strategy and the Spatial Plan. Dunedin is only one of two New Zealand cities that have a spatial plan. This plan “sets the strategic direction for Dunedin’s growth and development for the next 30+ years” including principles, strategic directions, policies and actions relating to how the city may develop in the future (Dunedin City Council, 2012). Food is specifically raised as an issue in the Spatial Plan, which advocates for the protection of rural land in order to retain food producing and productive purposes. Urban food production is also advocated for, with policies encouraging urban food production, local food processing, distribution and markets (Dunedin City Council, 2012:19). However, unlike the district plan, the spatial plan and strategic framework are non-statutory documents. Furthermore, unlike in the Christchurch context, the city does not have a specific policy related to food or food resilience, but has undertaken work in 2014 looking into the council’s current role with food which will be detailed in the section that follows below.
4.4.3 Food Resilience Project

While the DCC does not have a dedicated policy for local food or food resilience, work has been undertaken to scope how the Council could be better engage with food issues as an
organisation. In December 2013, the Council identified food resilience as a strategic opportunity and recognised that the role of the Council in improving food resilience contributes to its strategic objectives (Dunedin City Council, 2015a). In 2014, the Council commissioned a report that outlined resourcing and budget requirements that would enable “A more coordinated internal approach to food-related issues and opportunities; and engagement with city stakeholders, exploring options and mechanisms to address the challenges, risks and opportunities in this area.” (Dunedin City Council, 2015a:1). This report identified four areas where the Council could take further action and provide leadership and direction on food resilience facilitation, collaboration, advocacy and education. The resolution of the report was that the Council would fund a half time position to further this food resilience work, with the staff member being employed in the Economic Development Unit. At the time of this research the Council had still yet to employ this staff member that would be dedicated to working on food resilience. However, in interviews key informants discussed what the Council was hoping to achieve and this future direction will be outlined in more detail in Chapter 6 that follows.

4.5 Conclusion

Dunedin and Christchurch are two vastly different contexts, primarily due to Christchurch being a city in recovery. As the literature highlighted in Chapter 2, it is evident that these contextual differences will play an important role in understanding the formation and activities of the different networks. The contextual overview provided in this chapter gives a basis to understand and discuss in detail the findings of the primary research of this study, which will be provided in Chapters 5 and 6 that follow.
5 Christchurch Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the key empirical findings in Christchurch. The Dunedin results will then be outlined in Chapter 6 that follows. The key findings will be presented in relation to each of the research questions. Firstly, the form of the two different networks will be outlined including the actors involved, their motivations and overarching goals. Key contextual opportunities and barriers will also be discussed and the councils’ current engagement with food issues expanded on from Chapter 4. The key themes of both contexts will be synthesized and analysed in relation to the literature in Chapter 7 that follows.

5.1 Local Food Network Form – Edible Canterbury

As previously discussed, Edible Canterbury was the local food network chosen to examine in the Christchurch context. Edible Canterbury is the ‘outward facing’ brand name for the ‘Food Resilience Network’ which was created in 2013 after the series of earthquakes that hit the city. The network was formed as a result of a hui (meeting or social gathering) held at the University of Canterbury co-hosted by the Soil and Health Canterbury branch and also the Rangiora Earthquake Express, a group established to supply food, water and essential items to areas most affected by the February 22nd earthquake in 2011. Key informant 2(c) discussed that the initial hui brought together around 40 people from different agencies and community organisations that had an interest in food. Specifically, the key informant highlighted this included an interest food forests. Following this, a steering group was created along with a draft charter and the group adopted the name of the Food Resilience Network.

Currently, the group has taken on the brand of Edible Canterbury that encompasses a charter with over 22 signatories from a wide range of sectors including the Christchurch
City Council, universities and the Canterbury District Health Board (see Appendix E for the charter). Key informant 2(c) outlined that after the group’s initial formation, the concept of food resilience was viewed as:

...quite esoteric, the idea of food resilience isn’t something that’s really well understood properly in the community, we didn’t know for sure but suspected so we came up with this other name, Edible Canterbury, which is more like the outward facing name...

The key informant also discussed how the network currently has three main groups of members: the food resilience members, people who have signed up to the email newsletter and the signatories of the Edible Canterbury charter. Further to this, Edible Canterbury also has recently (September 2015) formed “sub-regions” in New Brighton, Sumner and North Canterbury. These sub-regions are described as being contextually different, comprised of groups from the different communities who are working towards creating more food resilient areas. More broadly, Edible Canterbury’s focus is currently food resilience for the Canterbury Region. The group has one paid part-time coordinator through the Soil and Health Canterbury organisation and also receives funding from The Canterbury Community Trust. The sub-section that follows will first detail the formation of the group, including key drivers and motivating factors. The key activities of the network will be identified to provide a basis for comparison with the Dunedin network in Chapter 7. This research will use ‘Edible Canterbury’ as a term to encompass all of the groups that have been detailed in this section, with distinctions being made between them where appropriate.

5.1.1 Formation of Network and Local Food Influences in Christchurch

Impacts of the Earthquakes on the Network Formation

As previously noted, the original Food Resilience Network was developed following a hui (titled Spring Equinox 2013 Feeding our Futures Hui) held in 2013 after the major earthquakes. Key informant 2(c) outlined that the core idea of this initial hui was food accessibility, which was closely linked to the idea of food justice. Many key informants highlighted that the earthquakes had emphasized the importance of these concepts. The major natural disaster was viewed in general as a significant motivating and contributing factor to the formation of the network and the energy behind local food currently present in the city. Specifically, the earthquakes were viewed as emphasizing the importance of food security and self-sufficiency, and also contributing to innovation and energy from community groups in general. These key ideas will be explained below, with Table 3 firstly
providing quotes from key informants that demonstrate how the earthquakes had emphasized the importance of food security and self-sufficiency for the people of the city.

Table 3: Table showing key quotes from informants highlighting the importance of food resilience and security post-earthquakes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Informant</th>
<th>How the Earthquakes Have Emphasized Concepts of Food Resilience and Security for People in Christchurch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6(c)</td>
<td>“The earthquakes acted as a prompt for people to realise the importance of food and all that, accessibility, so that’s been quite crucial.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(c)</td>
<td>“The way in which community gardens like this bring people together is always important but which we’ve probably appreciated that importance of perhaps more given the earthquake and how important it was for people to sustain themselves and look after their neighbours for a period of time in a given emergency.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(c)</td>
<td>“See Christchurch has had a really big motivation, because after the earthquakes, the road fell down by Kaikoura, so everything had to be trucked in by the Lewis Pass, so it made everyone really aware that our food lines are very stretched…it became very obviously clear that we needed local food”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(c)</td>
<td>“…straight away after the earthquakes we were flying helicopters with food into the east part of Christchurch to keep it alive …so part of that reaction to have a greener city and have a more food resilient city was the knowledge that a lot of our supermarkets are all just in time…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(c)</td>
<td>“…an understanding that it’s important to be able to eat food when there’s a crisis, you want to be able to eat and we have first-hand experience of what it’s like for supermarkets to be closed for a few days…something has gone into the collective consciousness”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3, the concepts of food resilience and security were important concerns post-earthquakes. Key informants emphasized this when discussing how communities relied on food being helicoptered to them after the disaster. Key informant 1(c) outlined how the earthquakes had highlighted the need to have food in a crisis situation and led to the acknowledgement that supermarkets are “just in time”. This was further emphasized by key informant 2(c) who discussed that the city’s experience of supermarket closures emphasized the need to have access to food in a disaster. In regard to the initial formation of the Food Resilience Network itself, key informants described that food justice was also closely related to these ideas of food resilience and security. Food justice was discussed as being a concern of the initial hui that consequently led to the formation of the group. Key informant 2(c) for example stated “it wasn’t named as such, but I think we were talking about food justice and obviously we’ve got the earthquake context which was a huge driver for this”. While food resilience and justice are two distinct concepts, the relationship between the two in the Christchurch context was highlighted previously in section 4.3.2,
which described the Council’s food resilience policy that was written in conjunction with the Food Resilience Network. The definition given on food resilience emphasizes access by all people to food in order to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle, based on a sustainable local production and a distribution system capable of withstanding both natural and human-induced shocks. Therefore, while key informants largely emphasized the recognition of the importance of food resilience and security after the earthquakes, these ideas were also linked to the concept of food justice. Thus, Table 3 highlights how the earthquakes emphasized the need for being more food resilient, particularly after a disaster, with other key informants describing that this and food justice were key concerns of the network at its inception. The concept of food resilience was also linked by key informant 1(c) to community development in different parts of the city. This key informant highlighted:

...so things are just bubbling to the surface, people are realising that actually they can take control of the city. They’re citizens, community gardens and soil gardens and the rest of it, the food resilience theme mobilises people to take action and to care for themselves.

Key informants also discussed that the earthquakes had provided motivation not only for local food initiatives but innovative community initiatives in general. It was highlighted that communities had pulled together and were undertaking more innovative and creative local level initiatives. Table 4 below highlights these ideas as discussed by key informants in interviews.
Table 4: Key informants’ opinions on how the earthquakes have encouraged innovation and energy for community initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Informant</th>
<th>Key informant’s opinions on how the earthquakes have encouraged innovation and energy for community-led initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4(c)</td>
<td>“Intriguingly, the earthquakes have thrown up incredible innovation, although there are huge issues around insurance and that sort of thing, and a lot of people are just exhausted and tired by them there is also equally a massive surge of innovation…you’ve got groups doing things that they probably thought they couldn’t do or hadn’t even thought to contemplate and suddenly, they’ve gone and done extraordinary things…and they’ve inspired other groups to do things. So there is incredibly this kind of just do it type conscious…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(c)</td>
<td>“…I would not discount this just to the effect of the earthquakes but we can’t deny the fact that the earthquakes have had an impact on the whole of the city’s willingness to think differently. So we’ve gone through something awful, that’s pulled us together as a community, in a way, in a good way, and it’s allowed us to think differently…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(c)</td>
<td>“I think it’s not just food, it’s kind of shaken, literally shaken people out of a false sense of security and involved in that is essentially at a neighbourhood scale we kind of realised we depend on each other in a big way for our basic human needs…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(c)</td>
<td>“I think that there’s been quite a cultural shift, as well, a willingness to experiment more and understand…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(c)</td>
<td>“Absolutely [the earthquakes have provided opportunity for local food] it’s shaken us out of our comfort zone, made us think outside the square.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, while many key informants highlighted that although the crisis of the earthquakes had illustrated to people of the city the fragility of the food system and the need to be more food resilient, it wasn’t just local food movements that had been gaining momentum. Rather, the earthquake context had instead provided opportunities for innovation and led to more energy around community-led initiatives in general. Table 4 highlights that key informants felt the earthquakes had resulted in community groups undertaking more innovative activities, with more of a willingness to think differently and experiment than previously.

**Importance of Collaboration for the Formation of Edible Canterbury**

Despite the impact of the earthquakes emphasizing the need to be more food resilient, it was stressed by key informants that activity and energy around local food had been present for some time, with political support from as far back as the 1990s in the city. It was often acknowledged that the most important factor for the formation and success of Edible
Canterbury itself was collaboration. Table 5 below emphasizes this idea, with several key informants describing its importance:

Table 5 Key informant’s views on the importance of collaboration as a result of the earthquakes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key informant</th>
<th>Importance of Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2(c)</td>
<td>“One of the other opportunities that the earthquake has opened up has been around collaboration, a willingness to collaborate, so take collective organisations like Edible Canterbury, wasn’t something that we could do pre-earthquake, we wanted to, but there wasn’t the kind of institutional imperative to make it happen.” “…a lot of these concepts about a local food system and what not have been circulating in Christchurch for a long time, it’s just been about how to leverage resources from the big agencies and get everybody together around the same table and just do it. And that’s what’s different now and that is a result of the earthquakes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(c)</td>
<td>“Absolutely a positive process [the formation of Edible Canterbury], I mean you’re bringing together some very big government organisations to work together to pull, It’s not just only about, its food, its health, its local land and a huge amount of expertise that’s in the unis that’s all been pulled in. It’s an incredibly powerful organisation really. That’s collaboration, it’s a win-win situation really.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(c)</td>
<td>“…bring people to collaborate instead of having ten different organisations all doing the same thing…so that has been the main reason I think why we’re sitting here now, actually is because we agreed to work together…I think the earthquakes have helped, but the biggest thing has been collaboration…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(c)</td>
<td>“Last year the Council did really well. They had meetings with members of the Council, Soil and Health, Canterbury District Health Board, Canterbury Community Gardens Association…that was a really good process, really good community engagement…” “…the Food Resilience Network is helping to pull everyone together again. We see it as, in order to achieve anything if we’re all going in the same direction then we may as well go together.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the collaboration of key stakeholders in the food system was viewed as extremely positive and a key factor in the formation and success of Edible Canterbury. While some key informants were sceptical about whether this was a direct result of the earthquakes, others were convinced that getting big stakeholders around the same table and leveraging resources from larger agencies simply wouldn’t have happened prior to the earthquakes. This was particularly highlighted by key informant 2(c) who was involved with Edible Canterbury and the Food Resilience Network from its inception. This key informant discussed that the collaboration enabled by the earthquakes was more important for the success of Edible Canterbury than political support that had existed previously. Table 5 also highlights that other key informants viewed Edible Canterbury as an extremely
powerful organisation due to its ability to create connections between different stakeholders. Key informant 2(c) also highlighted:

...in Christchurch we tried to do that [implement bigger city food projects] for years, easily 10 years maybe longer, and [faced] major bureaucratic hurdles to do that. But then post-earthquake it seemed more things could be possible and there was a much more community understanding about the value of these things.

The collaborative nature of Edible Canterbury was also viewed as a positive feature by key council staff. Key informant 1(c) described how they believed that councils don’t favour working with lots of different organisations and they hoped Edible Canterbury would provide one ‘voice’ for the Council to go to on local food issues or opportunities. Thus, collaboration was viewed as extremely important and positive, and was often attributed to the earthquake context. Key informant 1(c) also further emphasized the importance of collaboration from the Council’s viewpoint outlining:

...we needed to throw people together to collaborate. That’s the key glue that holds us all together. We created the Food Resilience Network...cause this whole thing runs on champions, it seems to over and over again, you might have these grandiose ideas but actually there’s a handful of people that are making it happen behind the scenes, it’s just a handful of people that are doing something to make a difference, but you’ve got a whole lot of other people who are interested and wanting to take part in these, bring them all together in a room, support champions, educate champions, mobilise them a bit more, give them a bit more, you know energy in terms of knowledge, skills, resources, even mandate, just to authenticate you know their roles and activities...

Thus, it was highlighted by key informants that the collaborative nature of Edible Canterbury was powerful and enabled ‘community champions’ to better achieve their goals. This was particularly highlighted by key informant 2(c) who indicated collaboration enabled the group to leverage resources from big key stakeholders.

Another result of the earthquakes emphasized by key informant 1(c) was the important role that green space plays after a disaster, outlining:
...after the disaster people gravitate to things green, it’s one of the biggest comments we had from our share an idea campaign that the most commonly used word was green, a greener city, a greener central city, greener streets, greener buildings, greener homes...and it’s natural that you want to make the most of an opportunity like this and to make it a more sustainable city, but green is also represented in a sense that it’s part of our resilience, so we’ve just gone through an earthquake, most people felt safe running into a green site near them, might have been you know an open space, a local park...there was safety away from buildings...we gravitate towards those sanctuaries.

Not only was green space viewed as important in the Christchurch context due to the earthquakes, but key informants also discussed the history of Christchurch as a ‘Garden City’. Key informant 1(c) outlined “…we are very proud of our garden city heritage, we have a very motivated environmentally aware community”. The idea of re-evaluating what being a ‘Garden City’ means was also outlined, for example by key informant 3(c), with the popularity of the idea of an ‘Edible Garden City’ (Figure 7 below). Thus, it is evident that green space was viewed as important in the Christchurch context, as a result of the earthquakes and also due to the historical identity of the city as a Garden City. Key informants linked these ideas to food as they discussed the desire to create more sustainable spaces, and also the movement to create an ‘Edible Garden City’.

![Figure 7: Photo taken from Edible Canterbury's facebook page showing the desire to create an 'edible' garden city (Edible Canterbury, 2015b)](image)
Further to this, the earthquakes have also provided directly tangible resourcing opportunities for local food initiatives. Examples of this include ‘Agropolis’, an inner city urban farm (see Figure 8 below) and also ‘Garden City 2.0’ a social enterprise food box delivery business, both part of Edible Canterbury. In the case of Agropolis, the project started in 2013 through the Festival of Transitional Architecture and currently leases a city centre site through Life in Vacant Spaces free of charge. Life in Vacant Spaces is an independent trust established after the earthquakes that acts as an umbrella organisation working on behalf of the transitional movement in the city. This movement includes organisations such as Gap Filler, Festival of Transitional Architecture and Greening the Rubble (Life in Vacant Spaces, 2015). The organisation manages privately owned property for landowners and finds short and medium-term uses for vacant sites and buildings. Thus, the earthquakes enabled the development of the urban farm not only through simply the availability of land in the centre city that was not present before, but also through the transitional project movement.

Similarly, key informant 3(c) outlined that Garden City 2.0, a food box delivery service, had scaled up its operation to include a shop open twice a week. The shop was also made possible through Life in Vacant Spaces and had secured a highly desirable location through this. Thus, local food initiatives in the city had been made possible by, and were able to scale up through the Live in Vacant Spaces initiative post-earthquakes. A Council key informant viewed the model of the Life in Vacant Spaces as extremely positive. Key informant 1(c) for example highlighted that the use of private land needed a formal arrangement. Life in Vacant Spaces was viewed as a demonstration of a successful model for this, through providing both insurance cover and licence to operate for community groups wanting to use private land.
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Figure 8: Photo of 'Agropolis' urban farm initiative in Christchurch's city centre (source: researcher's personal photo)

Figure 9: Photo of 'Argopolis' urban farm initiative in Christchurch's city centre (source: researcher's personal photo)
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Thus, key informants highlighted that the earthquakes had provided a greater understanding of issues with the current food system. In particular, this included the need to be more resilient, which was discussed by key informants as being highlighted through experiencing first-hand the effects of a crisis. Furthermore, the themes of creativity and innovation were also emphasized. Some of these themes have been demonstrated through local food initiatives such as Agropolis and Garden City 2.0 made possible through the Life in Vacant Spaces Trust, a direct result of the earthquakes. However, it was also stated that there had been interest and energy around local food for some time in the Christchurch context. For example, key informants outlined that the Council had facilitated the development of over 20 community gardens in the 1990s, with political support for the issue also present. Key informants also made links to the city’s heritage as a ‘Garden City’ and the importance of this context. Most importantly, however, the collaboration from the earthquakes was viewed as crucial for the formation of the network itself. This includes interaction and involvement with big agencies such as the Central Government in the form of CERA, and also the CCC, with the ability to get big ‘key players’ around one table viewed as immensely important to leverage resources. The importance of these stakeholders and the key activities of the network will be discussed in the section that follows.

5.1.2 Key Activities and Interaction with Stakeholders

This section will detail the key activities of Edible Canterbury and the interaction the group has with different stakeholders. Each section below will describe one of the group’s key activity areas as discussed by key informants. These areas include, policy creation, earthquake recovery-related projects and educational initiatives. The interaction the network has with different stakeholders will be highlighted through exploring each of these key activity areas.

Policy Creation

One early activity of the network in 2014 was the development of a Food Resilience Policy in conjunction with the Christchurch City Council. The creation of this policy was undertaken by the Food Resilience Network prior to the creation of the Edible Canterbury ‘brand’. As outlined previously, this is a non-statutory higher-level council policy described as one of Council’s ‘tactical external’ policies. Both parties spoke positively of the process and emphasized its collaborative nature. Key informant 1(c) highlighted the idea of ‘co-creation’ for the policy stating the council’s intention was to start “…bottom-up, who wants to set up a community garden, who wants to work with us on this topic, who
Chapter Five: Christchurch Results

wants to join us in the movement of localising food”. Edible Canterbury members highlighted the role that both political support, and a key staff ‘champion’ played in the creation and enactment of the policy. A recent change in local government was viewed as a key facilitating factor. Key informant 2(c) for example stated “We had a big change in council, like a revolution in council, and this new council is much more community focused…” Key informant 3(c) further highlighted this enabling mindset of the council outlining “…the council have kind of flipped it around and said well we’re just a part of it, don’t consider us as anyone special at this table we’re all equals and the council is an authentic partner in this process which is amazing”.

The success of the policy was also often attributed to a ‘champion’ staff member within council who was seen as a key collaborator and positive force. While some key informants acknowledged that there was a power imbalance between NGOs and the city council, this council staff member was viewed as appropriately mitigating any potential issues arising from this, described as being “very open to being a genuine collaborator” (Key Informant 3(c)). Key informant 3(c) highlighted that one way in which this staff member had ensured negative implications from a power imbalance between the two stakeholders were avoided was through the process of writing the Food Resilience Policy. The key informant described how after handing the draft policy to the staff member “…I was nervous about it coming back looking like a bureaucratic hatchet job…and it wasn’t, it was totally a step forward, it carried all the same principles…”. Key informant 8(c) also highlighted the positive nature of the process the council undertook prior to this policy, describing how “Last year the Council did really well. They had meetings with members of the Council, Soil and Health, Canterbury District Health Board, Canterbury Community Gardens Association…that was a really good process, really good community engagement”. Key informant 2(c) also highlighted the importance of a staff champion when outlining:

...the city council have been very proactive, when I say the city council I mean the councillors and other elected members...and certain key staff. I wouldn’t say the council staff as a whole has gotten behind us, but at least we’ve got key players supporting

Thus, key informants described the relationship with the Council as extremely collaborative in nature, particularly relating to the development of the Food Resilience Policy where a key staff “champion” had ensured the work between the council and The Food Resilience Network was genuinely collaborative.
Key informants recognised the important role that the policy played, however they also acknowledged it had limitations. Key informant 3(c) for example described how:

...It’s just principles that guide work and that work is actively collaborative...I think it’s a great start, it’s a formal mandate and recognition of what food resilience, food and the direction that is going on in Christchurch

Key informant 2(c) also described issues with policy, highlighting:

...the problem is that it’s very easy to write policy, it’s quite hard to get it through the policy process but even when it’s become policy, formally adopted and everything it’s easy to forget about policy and it’s easy not to fund policy

Despite this, it was highlighted by key informants that the Council is currently very active in the local food area. This was often linked to the key staff member discussed above. Key informant 2(c) for example highlighted “They [the Council] have to back it up [the policy] by the things they’re doing...that’s the council taking a leadership role and practically implementing some of the policy in the plan. It’s great”. This was specifically linked to the staff member coordinating key players for projects, which was viewed as the Council following through and implementing the policy. This included identifying three key sites in the city where food gardens can be planted. Another key informant highlighted this supportive and active relationship between Edible Canterbury and the CCC. This was viewed as shifting from policy related work to more ‘on the ground’ initiatives. Key informant 3(c) for example discussed “…the fact that the focus isn’t on the policy rather the focus is actually on the work just shows how sort of active and alive that relationship is with council, and that support goes right the way up to the mayor”.

Key informants also discussed the meaning of ‘resilience’ in relation to both the network and the policy. While it was highlighted that the network had begun with an interest in growing food, for example fruit trees, it was also stressed that the network has a broader focus than simply food production. Key informant 2(c) for example outlined that Edible Canterbury “… is about developing a whole economy around local food, and it’s very layered”. This idea of food resilience as a broader concept encompassing more than just enabling people to grow food was also highlighted by council staff. It was emphasized that the desire was to expand on the Council’s previous community gardens guideline that had
been written several years prior by the same staff member. Key informant 1(c) for example discussed this outlining:

...we could of re-written the community gardens policy but that still just looks at community gardens which are wonderful, but actually, if we’re really looking at food resilience we need to think about where the food’s grown commercially, how the food is delivered, do we have a green grocer in every corner, or do we have fast food takeaways at every corner. You know, why can’t we think about this city as a whole and look at its supply chains for food... so food resilience involves a lot more breadth than a community gardens policy would have done... my interest was to be as all-encompassing as we could.

Thus, both the network and policy have adopted the broader resilience theme, which evidently has been greatly influenced by the context of the earthquakes. In regard to the Council’s motivation for the Food Resilience Policy, council staff emphasized the important role that food played for trying to achieve sustainability and also community outcomes related to the Local Government Act 2002 describing that:

...there aren’t many things that we do as a council that meet all or nearly most of those community outcomes. Food resilience, community gardens, that whole topic meets so many of those community outcomes, it’s extraordinary and it really is in terms of a sustainability sort of perspective one of the most outstanding sort of programmes that councils can actually work on...

It is evident that the creation of the policy was an extremely collaborative process and viewed as positive by both the Council and members of Edible Canterbury. The successful enactment of the policy and interaction of the Council with the issue of food was often linked to strong political support due to a recent change in council and also a staff ‘champion’ who had been working on the issue for many years. This staff member, in their role as a ‘Sustainability Advisor’ for the Council had the ability to push the food issue, which was viewed as a cross-sectoral means of advancing a range of sustainability issues and community outcomes under the Local Government Act. Thus, key informants highlighted the positive relationship the network had with council and the collaborative process that was undertaken to write the Council’s Food Resilience Policy.
Earthquake Recovery Related Projects

Further to this policy development, Edible Canterbury is currently involved with three main project areas, two of which are directly related to earthquake recovery. The earthquake context has provided several unique opportunities for the network that would not likely have been possible prior to the disaster. Firstly, the network is involved with an expression of interest to CERA regarding the use of an inner city piece of land. Key informant 2(c) outlined how CERA had indicated to the group that they wished to use the site as a community garden, inviting comment from Edible Canterbury and participating in running a workshop with them. This was viewed as extremely positive and key informant 2(c) outlined that Edible Canterbury had the desire to put in a collective proposal for a food resilience hub on the site. There was a vision “to develop a nodal food system so that there are these mini-hubs distributed around the city”. Thus, key informants highlighted that there was a desire from the network to develop a physical presence in the city. The specific site in question is part of the ‘Avon River Precinct’ in the ‘North Frame’ of the city’s ‘Blueprint Plan’, developed by the Christchurch Central Development Unit comprised of CERA, CCC and Ngai Tahu. CERA sought expressions of interest from community groups who wished to be considered to “establish a new destination in the North Frame that links to the heritage of the land as a productive source of mahinga kai, adds to the food resilience network in Canterbury and provides a cultural hub for healthy and sustainable food production”. In September 2015 Edible Canterbury outlined that 25 groups were involved with piecing together a proposal, with CERA currently evaluating these. The various groups involved are depicted in Figure 10 below.
Chapter Five: Christchurch Results

Figure 10 Diagram depicting the various groups, involved with the submission to CERA to create a community garden in the central city (Edible Canterbury, 2015c).

The second key area that the group is currently working on is the ‘Residential Red Zone’. The zone encompasses 5000 properties in the Christchurch City Council boundary and 100 properties in the adjacent Waimakariri District Council that are unsafe to be built on for a considerable period of time and have largely been brought by the Crown (Tokin and Taylor, 2011). Much of the area is now vacant, with widespread demolitions having been carried out. Key informant 2(c) discussed how there was desire to use some of the area as a “distributed food hub” in order to support large scale food production in the area. On the 2nd of August 2015, Edible Canterbury held a ‘design journey workshop’ on the topic of Growing Food in the Residential Red Zone, which was attended by around 100 people.

Key informant 2(c) also discussed how the network was involved with delivering one of the central government recovery strategies, the Natural Environmental Recovery Programme. The strategy encompasses 17 projects, one of which is ‘Community Gardens, Urban Food Production and Urban Forestry’ (Environment Canterbury Regional Council, 2015). The key informant outlined that Edible Canterbury was one of the primary mechanisms for being able to deliver on the project and stressed the “huge opportunity”
and “leverage to be had from being written into government strategy”. Another key informant also highlighted the opportunity that gaining a centre city site from CERA would provide as a demonstration to spread knowledge and awareness on food resilience. An example of how this had already been possible post-earthquake for local food is the urban farm Agropolis, as previously noted. Key informant 6(c) highlighted the educational opportunity of being in the centre city, which allowed for awareness to be raised and the reconnection of urban dwellers with food. There was a clear desire to obtain a permanent site where Agropolis could continue to function long-term. Thus, these opportunities, particularly through potential access to a central city and valuable piece of land, would have been difficult without the context of the earthquakes. It is also evident that central government mandate and support has provided the group with several opportunities.

**Education, Advocacy and Awareness**

Aside from these recovery related projects, the network views the education sector as a prominent part of their current activities. Key informant 2(c) discussed how Edible Canterbury had undertaken a survey with schools in Canterbury to assess the state on school gardening in Canterbury. This survey found 70% of the schools that responded had no external help for gardening activities, and a large proportion of them struggled to maintain their gardens. Subsequently, a hui was held and attended by around ten schools where it was discussed how best schools could be supported. Engaging with schools and young people is an area of focus for Edible Canterbury. The hui has been followed up by a workshop aimed at teachers and principals who want to further develop their school gardening visions. It included sharing information on engaging the community, practical gardening advice, funding and resourcing and traditional Maori gardening. Edible Canterbury has also held other huis and events not related specifically to gardening in schools. This has included an ‘Edible Canterbury Expo’ in late 2014 to launch their Action Plan that was attended by 1000 people and also an ‘Edible Canterbury Hui’ in March 2015 attended by around 100 people. This hui emphasized the desire for a physical ‘Food Resilience Hub’.
A key advocacy related activity that Edible Canterbury undertakes, as previously noted, is the Edible Canterbury Charter. The charter contains a broad range of stakeholders including the Christchurch City Council, community boards, Canterbury Community Gardens Association and the Canterbury District Health Board. Key informant 2(c) discussed this charter as a “statement of core visions and principles for the Edible Canterbury Network”, with the first signatory being a representative of the CCC. The first half of the charter is provided in Figure 11 below.

The second half of the charter contains 8 values and principles; accessibility, mahinga kai, cultural appropriateness, ecological sustainability, social enterprise and local economic development, food education, community empowerment and collaboration. Key informant 2(c) highlighted that the charter was “…quite a formal thing so organisations really have to be fully mandated to do that [sign charter]”. Thus, this activity represents the group undertaking an advocacy or awareness function through the promotion of food resilience in the city.
Further to this, another key stakeholder in the Christchurch context was the health sector. In New Zealand, District Health Boards are responsible for “providing or funding the provision of health services in their district” (Ministry of Health, 2015). These District Health Boards are appointed by the Minister of Health and are controlled by central, not local government. In the Christchurch context, key informants discussed the role that the Canterbury District Health Board had played in the network, being a charter signatory and having staff members also involved with the development of the Food Resilience Policy. The close relationship the council has with the CDHB was outlined as unique in the New Zealand context by key informant 1(c).

Summary

...there’s heaps of other ideas but I think where we’re at is trying to get the base structure in place, like actually I think we already have the base infrastructure, we’ve got 27 community gardens, we’ve got you know lots of school gardens. There’s a lot of community food production already happening but now we want to do the next thing, so how do we develop on that, and that’s about developing this distributive hub that connects everything up...it’s not just about production, the big picture is around vocational training, it’s around being able to make a permanent living of growing food. It’s about developing a local food culture that really values food from our region... (Key informant 2(c))

Edible Canterbury and the Food Resilience Network have been involved in a range of different activities since their inception in 2013. The group has a very close working relationship with the CCC, most often attributed by key informants to both recent political support and also a staff ‘champion’ who had avidly supported and facilitated the group. Further to this, the network has also worked with central government organisations, both through CERA and also the CDHB. In regard to key activities, many of these were recovery related, including being a key player for implementing some of the central government recovery national environment recovery program. It is evident that the network is in a very active state and has created some direct change through the recent collaboration with the CCC on their Food Resilience Policy.

5.2 Key Barriers and Challenges in the Christchurch Context

While the current Council and key staff members were viewed as enabling and facilitating local food initiatives, Central Government, in the form of CERA, was often portrayed as
‘disabling’ by key informants. There are clearly opportunities for the network that have come from central government mandate in the Christchurch context. As discussed previously, this has included potential opportunities to create a physical ‘food hub’ in the city centre and also being a key player in implementing the Natural Environmental Recovery Programme. However, several key informants viewed CERA as ‘disabling’. Key informant 3(c) for example indicated they felt they were “just sitting and waiting really patiently until we can get rid of this government and get on with working together and doing the real rebuild and recovery”. The “bureaucratic hold up” of CERA was also highlighted by key informant 2(c) who described their disappointment in CERA’s approach to pubic land, with consultation on the residential red zone used as an example of this slow process. It was viewed that CERA had taken too long to consult the public on this area, with the public essentially being shut out of the process. Key informant 6(c) also discussed how due to CERA managing or setting aside a large proportion of the land in the central city, this made it difficult for their organisation to find a permanent centre city site for their urban farm. Thus, although CERA had presented Edible Canterbury with a potential opportunity for a community garden in the centre city, other key informants outlined that working outside of CERA would be difficult due to their large presence in the central city.

Key informant 1(c) also described how central government was creating some barriers for councils to engage with sustainability issues through changes to the Local Government Act. This key informant described how changes to this legislation in 2012 to focus on ‘council outcomes’ of ‘roads, rates and rubbish’ in comparison to ‘community outcomes’ that are most commonly ‘healthy, wealthy and wise’. The key informant outlined:

> …that change has taken pressure away from things that are sustainable to more focus on your core services, deliver on services and you’re going to have a good city. I don’t buy that for a second. Half of what the council provides people don’t even notice, that makes a city function, but it doesn’t make a city a place

However, the key informant also outlined that this new focus didn’t necessarily restrict the councils, but simply took pressure away from them trying to enact sustainability and focused them on regulatory services. Support from within the Council was also viewed as a key challenge to gaining backing for the local food movement. Key informant 1(c) described:
...councils are incredibly slow to change, especially big ones, it’s like walking in thick treacle, you know with a really strong wind blowing and you’re waist deep in mud. ...I’ve got a lot more social diffusion to do yet with council...

Funding and resourcing were also viewed as barriers for local food and the network in particular. Key informant 2(c) described how potential funding from the Council had just been withdrawn. This emphasized the value of a staff ‘champion’ within Council supporting local food to fight for other funding opportunities. Key informant 3(c) also linked this resource challenge that the Council has to the current situation with CERA stating:

The council is broke and it’s having its arm twisted in all kinds of directions by central government to build ridiculous things like a covered stadium, stuff that’s just out of scale, out of proportion, out of touch completely with what we actually need here, and that we’re saying loud and clear that we don’t want

Further to this, key informant 6(c) also described the challenge of gaining funding for projects where councils or funders want to see success and deliverables, expressing frustration with this and the desire to have the importance of experimentation recognised. This same key informant highlighted “…I think one of the really hard things is that I feel Council does really support us values wise, but they don’t have the money to support us and that’s what we need the most”.

Attitudes around local food were also viewed as a challenge. In relation to the residential red zone, key informant 8(c) outlined how CERA were not open to the idea of using wild plantings, but instead spent thousands keeping the area mowed. This idea was also expressed by Council staff who believed the biggest challenge for the council engaging with food issues or local food was “hearts and minds”. This idea illustrates the value of having a staff ‘champion’ to push ideas. Key informant 1(c) outlined the importance of “…A champion within the council that has a strong vision and not willing to let go because often you get knocked time and time again and often it’s hearts and minds…number one thing”. Thus, Christchurch had some unique challenges caused by the earthquake context, however other challenges such as resourcing, awareness or attitudes were also identified by key informants as challenges.
5.3 Future Council Involvement with Food Issues

When asked if key informants saw value in a formal Food Policy Council for the city, many felt that this role was already being fulfilled by Edible Canterbury. Other suggestions on how Council could better support local food largely focused on advocacy or awareness raising. For example, this included following through on what was put forth in the Food Resilience Policy and encouraging the sale of healthy food on Council premises. Key informant 5(c) outlined “…we are trying to get to a place where our public spaces aren’t major purveyors of sugar and fat”. Further to this, key informant 9(c) outlined how they felt local food, such as farmers markets could tie into council events in order to educate and raise awareness more. Key informant 1(c) also highlighted the importance of leadership from the Council outlining:

*We have a role of enabling people to do what they want, helping them to do what they want, we also have a role in terms of providing leadership, those two things are really important and we often don’t do the other, which is the leadership we can provide with our own budgets and activities…we have these huge summer time events and it’s just full of junk food which is fine because that’s what people want, chips and a sausage wrapped in batter, but there’s an opportunity to do something different and so the leadership that we can show…it’s really important

Other key informants also described how these ideas also linked into building social capital and the role that the Council could play with this through being facilitative of these types of community initiatives. Key informant 3(c) for example outlined that there was a need to rebuild not just physical but also social infrastructure post-earthquakes and that council needed to be facilitative of this. Key informant 5(c) also highlighted that the Council could make more land available with “many different restrictions around using land which I guess the average person could say were quite difficult to understand”. Key informant 7(c) also expressed concern with the need to protect good growing land, which was often deep stable soils sought after for housing.
5.4 Christchurch Summary

It’s just the network is in such an active, vibrant state, so well supported and functioning at a high level. I think that all of that is a reflection of how much is going on and how much energy and interest in these kinds of grass roots local food initiatives (Key informant 3(c))

In summary, it is evident that Edible Canterbury is currently an extremely active network that has much support and interaction with important institutions such as the CCC and the Canterbury District Health Board. Key activities have included policy development, education and advocacy, and recovery-related initiatives connected to CERA. The network has worked extremely collaboratively with the council, largely attributed to a key staff “champion” who enabled the relationship to be genuinely collaborative in nature. Several unique opportunities linked to the earthquake context were outlined. While the history of Christchurch as a ‘garden city’ is long, and key informants outlined that there has been energy building around local food for some time, it is evident that the earthquakes have facilitated collaboration between key stakeholders that may not have been possible prior to these events. Central government support of local food has also been viewed as a positive, however CERA was also outlined as contributing to bureaucratic hold ups and being ‘disabling’ in nature. Thus, it is evident that there are some tensions present in the Christchurch context between different stakeholders. Edible Canterbury was seeking change in the current food system, motivated by key concerns such as food justice and resilience. However, it is evident that CERA is rather motivated by rebuilding and recovery of the city. Thus, Edible Canterbury was using opportunities presented by CERA to scale up their impact and create change in the food system in the Christchurch context. Edible Canterbury was beginning to become to be involved with ‘on the ground’ activities, such as attempting to establish a food hub in the central city, and also the residential red zone, opportunities which would not have been present without the earthquakes. The successful enactment of food policy in Council was viewed as a result of political support and a key staff ‘champion’ that was willing to collaborate on the issue
6 Dunedin Results

This section will now outline the Dunedin results, to provide a basis for making comparisons and links to the Christchurch results in Chapter 7 that follows. ‘Our Food Network’ (OFN), a network established in 2013 in Dunedin, was chosen as the second case study in this research. As outlined in Chapter 3, this section will draw on qualitative interviews and also a quantitative member survey as a secondary source undertaken by the network in 2013. The researcher will also reflect on their own involvement in the Dunedin group, drawing on personal experiences at meetings and ‘Food Forums’ to expand on key findings.

6.1 Network Formation and Motivating Factors

As outlined in Chapter 4, ‘Our Food Network’ was formed in 2013 after two ‘Local Food Forums’ were held in Dunedin in November 2012 and August 2013. Key informants interviewed outlined that the motivation behind the network was to raise the profile of the benefits of local food, and also to raise awareness and increase support for alternatives from the predominant food system for the community. Key informants discussed the political nature of the network, with its links to activism and the desire to highlight localism as an alternative to the current globalised, industrial food system. While the network does correspond with the Council on certain issues, it is evident that the DCC has not been as much of a collaborative partner in the network in comparison with the Christchurch context. Key informants emphasized the desire to maintain ownership and control over the network and the importance of this, clearly linking to the motivation behind the network being an activist and political cause. This idea was further reinforced when key informant 3(d) described how ‘local’ had not be circumscribed in the objectives of the group due to the difficulties defining this, because “what the drivers are, are that political power, alternative food system, it’s an alternative food system compared with the current food system it’s an ideological thing that’s driving it.”. Thus, key informants
highlighted that defining ‘local’ was difficult, with the network rather emphasizing change in the food system, with the broad concept of ‘localisation’ used as a means to achieve this. Table 6 below highlights key informants’ views expressed in interviews relating to OFN’s role as advocating for an alternative food system.

Table 6: Key informants who viewed the purpose of OFN to be raising awareness of alternatives to the current food system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key informant</th>
<th>Key informant’s views that the purpose of OFN was to raise awareness and advocate for alternatives to the current food system</th>
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| 1(d)          | “Advocacy and information sharing is a big part of it. Spreading awareness and community awareness, so that people can choose whether it’s [local food] something they can value or not”
|               | “Local food and food security, working in a cooperative way with other agencies on food resilience projects. And also still providing the forum and education. And it may well be that through the network they can run their own projects.” |
| 2(d)          | “It’s really around raising awareness of local food…getting people to think outside the square about where to buy their food, and where their food comes from. It’s really for me about raising awareness, and having that ability to advocate and be political. Like you need a collective voice or body to do that…one voice is a way to actually be political and hopefully make things happen in a way.”
|               | “Formation of the food network – it probably was politics and power control of the food system…I think the food network has been much more about localisation which isn’t necessarily driven by health concerns.” |
| 3(d)          | “…it’s a political voice for whatever turns out to be whatever is the food network. So the local side of it and the production side of it as well. But just connecting the dots, getting everyone together and maybe an advocacy for that” |
| 4(d)          | “I think that by and large it’s got a strong sustainable agriculture come organic focus, even though the network hasn’t been set up to exclude anyone at all, it’s had no major engagement with any of the major players in the food system locally at the moment” |
| 5(d)          | “…social justice and I think support for small growers and wanting to, also an activism I guess in wanting to change the current system, really wanting to try and change that as much as possible, raise people’s awareness of an alternative, but I think for a lot of people it’s social, it’s about looking after your community and having good food available, but in doing so it also means it’s growing local support, local growers” “I think its primary purpose is to raise the profile of the benefits and the alternative options of local food into the community and in doing so support and raise awareness and increase support for alternatives from the predominant food system” |
Thus, key informants often highlighted that the purpose of the network was to play an advocacy or awareness function to encourage alternatives to the current food system. The idea of providing a space where people with interest in local food could share information and ideas was also highlighted. While some key informants emphasized the issues with defining ‘local’, Table 6 demonstrates that the local scale was largely viewed a positive alternative to the current system. Other ‘alternative’ key themes raised included the network’s focus on sustainable agriculture and organics, social justice and small-grower support. Its ‘alternative’ nature was particularly emphasized by key informant 4(d) when they highlighted the lack of engagement the network has had with any “major players” in the food system. Thus, Table 6 highlights that key informants largely viewed the purpose of the network as being to raise awareness and advocate for an alternative, localised food system. It was viewed as being political and activist in nature due to this emphasis on advocating for doing things differently to how the mainstream currently operates.

Key informants also discussed the purpose of the network as being the provision of a space where people can connect and share ideas on local food. Key informant 4(c) for example highlighted that:

> The purpose is first of all to identify and connect as many people as possible who believe for one reason or another that local food is an important thing. So it is actually providing a space where all those types of people can basically know one another, we can build, at the moment we are coming up to 350 people on the email list, I would like to think in a couple of years we are well into 500-1000. I think even that in itself, providing ways for those people to constantly be informed about things that are going on, that in itself is reason enough for a food network to exist.

Table 6 also highlights this idea of connecting people and the power that can come from this. For example, key informant 2(d) discussed they felt a collective voice could allow for the group to be political and “hopefully make things happen in a way”. Thus, the purpose of the network and motivation behind it was largely to connect people around local food, with this being viewed as allowing for awareness to be raised in the wider community. Furthermore, this was viewed as enabling the members to be more political through the “collective voice” of the network.
The member survey also reinforced some of these key ideas shown in Table 6. The survey highlighted the importance of both social justice and community resilience to those involved with local food initiatives in Dunedin. These ideas reinforce the key themes addressed by key informants in interviews who highlighted that OFN was political and a form of activism linked to ‘alternative’ ideas about the food system, including social justice. When asked what were the motivating factors for becoming involved with local food initiatives, food security, social justice (including access to quality or healthy food) and self-sufficiency were the most commonly cited reasons\(^2\) (shown in Figure 12 below).

Figure 12: Graph showing the top 3 values contributing to member’s interest in local food initiatives in Dunedin

However, from Figure 12 is it is still clear that members are interested in local food for a wide range of factors, with climate change and food miles, food quality and local economic development also viewed as important. The importance of social issues and values in the

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\(^2\) 109 responses were received and respondents were asked to choose the top three values, thus the totals equal more than 100%
Dunedin context was also reinforced in the member survey by the interaction of the largest majority of the organisations people were involved with were social services/organisations including food banks, Women’s Refuge and the Salvation Army (shown in Figure 13 below).

Figure 13: Graph showing the types of organisations local food initiatives in Dunedin work with on a regular basis

This theme was also emphasized through the important role that FoodShare, a food rescue organisation plays in the city’s food system. FoodShare was founded in 2012 and now collects and distributes food equivalent to more than 30,000 meals each month. Key informant 10(d) described how the organisation collects food ‘waste’ from a range of different businesses and organisations including local supermarkets, cafes, catering suppliers, the Otago Farmers Market and universities. This is then distributed to various social organisations including food banks and churches. While the organisation distributes food that is not strictly ‘local’ in nature, it is clear that it plays an important role in Dunedin’s local food system through providing an outlet for food that would otherwise be wasted. Key informants highlighted the importance of FoodShare, which works with the
Otago Farmer’s Market held in the city every Saturday. Key informant 9(d), who is a vendor at the market described how they felt comfortable bringing a large amount of produce to the market with the knowledge that any left over will be given to FoodShare, whereas prior to the food rescue service operating they would bring less as it would have to be thrown away if it did not sell. This provides one example of the link that local food in Dunedin has to social justice and access issues. The member survey also links to these ideas of social justice when respondents were asked what the key motivating factors are for their direct involvement, rather than interest, with local food initiatives in Dunedin, with Figure 14 showing this below.

![Figure 14: Graph showing the key motivating factors for member’s involvement with local food initiatives in Dunedin](image)

Thus, Figure 14 demonstrates that the highest percentage of respondents highlighted resilience, whether it be at a regional, community or local level, as the key motivating
factor for their involvement with local food initiatives in Dunedin. Many qualitative responses given for this question highlighted the desire to support and empower their own communities in becoming more resilient. Thus, this links into the concept of social justice as respondents highlighted the desire to empower others in their communities to improve their access to food.

### 6.1.1 Key Activities and Interaction with Stakeholders

**Advocacy/Awareness Function**

The advocacy and awareness raising purpose key informants highlighted is reflected in the group’s key activities. After its creation, the network has held subsequent ‘Food Forums’ with the wider community, which raised awareness on local food and enabled a platform for ideas on future projects to be shared. The most recent Food Forum in November 2014 explored specific project areas where tangible progress could be made. This desire to create more tangible action is reflected by the network’s recent key activities. The network is in the process of applying for funding from various agencies to employ a part-time person to assist with different projects. Four key projects have been identified including seed saving, land share (both rural and urban), food identification and labelling, and communication and education. The network hopes to employ a person to facilitate the development of a website, collating local food resources/information, developing promotional material for OFN, developing land share/resource share resources, establishing a local food directory and developing a local food identification project. Thus, it appears that in relation to Edible Canterbury, OFN is more nascent and in an earlier stage in regard to accessing funding and resources.

The idea that the network primarily serves an advocacy purpose was also portrayed in the member survey. Respondents were asked what role a local food network would best support their interests, or those of the organisations/initiatives they were currently involved with. The largest response rate (38.9%) indicated this to be an education or awareness function, followed by coordination of food activities. Figure 15 below depicts these responses.
This also relates to what survey respondents indicated were the most common challenges to limit what they were currently doing in local food initiatives in Dunedin. While the most prominent challenges from respondents included time, energy and financial challenges, second to this was the understanding/knowledge of others and wider society, with 19% of respondents outlining this as a challenge. Respondents for example outlined ‘LFS [local food systems] are only considered important by the minority’ and ‘lack of awareness generally that this is an issue’. These ideas were also mirrored by key informants in interviews. When asked what they viewed the current and future role of the network to be many key informants indicated they wanted it to play an increasing education and awareness role. Key informant 1(d) for example stated they wanted the network in the future to be “just a place to push community advocacy, education, provision of tools and resources”. The same key informant also outlined that this education could include knowledge of council processes stating:

...empowerment of people, if people got excited and said how do we do that then the food network could work with council - know the loopholes and regulations etc. that would be really powerful, to take out all the tedious bureaucracy that a lot of community groups face and then turn around and walk the other way because they can’t be bothered, because they don’t have the energy or capacity, so working with community groups I think continues to raise the profile of the value of local food.
The member survey also highlighted the numerous different local food initiatives that people in Dunedin are currently involved with, including a range of formal organisations such as community gardens and orchards, organic and permaculture organisations and the Otago Farmers Market. Informally, people were most commonly involved with home gardening or buying local food. When asked the aims and objectives of the current local food initiatives that respondents were involved with, providing awareness and education was the most commonly cited aim (23%) with aims relating to community resilience/self-sufficiency being the second most cited (15%). This is shown in Figure 16 below.

![Bar chart showing formal local food initiatives](image)

**Figure 16** Graph showing the formal local food initiatives members are involved with

**Dunedin City Council Role**

A stark difference to the Christchurch context was the level of involvement that the network has with the Dunedin City Council, and the perspectives that the members of the network had towards this. Key informant 5(d), for example stated:
...I think people want to retain ownership as a grassroots community-led initiative and not for it to be a council initiative...personally I’m quite weary of the council’s bureaucracy, because I deal with it all the time and it can be quite restrictive, so I think to retain a degree of individualism, makes a lot of sense, it allows greater momentum and greater flexibility and opportunity I think. But you need the council there as the key support.

Key informant 4(d) reinforced this view stating:

_Council have been very very useful to us... But I think the view generally, the food network, even though we could work in quite a lot with the Council I think we want to keep absolutely separate, I see it as an informed citizens group. And I think to be that you always have to have at least an arms-length separation from local government and the rest of it._

Key informant 1(d) also felt that working with Council in the future could be positive, but stressed the need for this to be undertaken in a collaborative way stating:

_Connections are really important, there’s so many connections that the Council is a key part of. Doesn’t mean to say that I think they should be totally driving everything. One of the things with the Council so far, there has not been a long term role and commitment, if we worked in partnership to develop a website for example and six months down the track they don’t have a person anymore and we’re left holding the baby, but I think once the council has shown a long-term commitment, it’s not really about who controls who if we all work collaboratively._

Thus, it was evident that key informants felt it was important for the group to maintain ownership of the network as a grass roots organisation, and if there was to be more work undertaken with the Council it was viewed that there would need to be both commitment and a genuine level of collaboration. Other key informants reinforced this idea, particularly when asked their opinions on a governance arrangement such as a Food Policy Council for the city. Key informant 5(d) for example outlined they would “...really want to make sure that they [the Council] didn’t get too dominant in that process but they had like one seat around that table, and their position was one more of supporting and enabling.”
Chapter Six: Dunedin Results

Key informants 2(d) and 3(d) also highlighted that they would be weary of a food policy council not creating enough on the ground action, with key informant 2(d) outlining:

*It’s probably a good idea, but for me personally, I always like to think about what’s happening on the ground and I think things grow from that. And you do need something top down, yeah but I do get worried about time and energy going round a table for bureaucratic things like that. The thing about a food policy council is that it’s about policy, it’s not really about [doing things], but I guess you’ve got to have those regulatory layers in there before things can happen, because things do have to be loosened up a bit, it’s not the same as actually doing it.*

Key informants were also weary of the Council undertaking activities that were viewed as tokenism. Key informant 2(d) for example stated:

*...it’s how it actually affects things. It needs to be real things, not token things too, I think there’s always the risk of tokenism, you know oh well lets buy 10 things from someone locally, as opposed to really looking at it. Tokenism isn’t going to solve and get us to where we need to be.*

Other key informants also outlined how they viewed the Spatial Plan as an immense positive, with the need for local food outlined in this document. However, it was discussed that they were sceptical about how these ideas were to be achieved in reality. Key informants were therefore weary about Council’s ‘tokenism’ and lack of real on the ground action for local food. Thus, as this section has highlighted, it was important for key informants that members retained ownership of the network, with some weary of bureaucracy ‘taking over’. Unlike the Christchurch context, OFN did not have as close of a working relationship with the Council or other institutions such as the District Health Board.

6.2 Council Involvement with Local Food

Unlike the Christchurch context with a specific food resilience policy, the Dunedin City Council has not enacted a policy relating to local food or food resilience. However, as explained in Chapter 4, in 2015 the Council produced a report, entitled “Food Resilience”, recommending the employment of a staff member for a fixed-term to work on food related
issues (Dunedin City Council, 2015a). Like Christchurch, the DCC was exploring food through a ‘resilience’ lens. Key informant 11(d) outlined that the council was motivated to look at food as an issue after it was identified as a topic related to sustainability and resilience by a council forum as an area the Council needed to work on. The key informant outlined resilience to mean:

...our stability as a city in all ways, so whether that be environmental or social or economic, or even cultural, ensuring that we have a strong base and that we’re resilient to different shocks or different changes that might threaten something as fundamental as food in the city.

The Council’s report explored how a more co-ordinated approach to food could be enabled, and also investigated options and mechanisms to address the challenges, risks and opportunities for food-related issues. Key informant 5(d) discussed the main foci for this food resilience report. This included economics, as it was viewed as necessary to “sell” it to some Councillors. Climate change adaptation was also viewed as a main focus of the Council’s research into food resilience, with the need to reform the current model of the food system, which was viewed as “essentially anti-resilience”. Social issues, including access to food and avoiding food deserts were also included in the research, despite being initially considered as outside of the scope of the project. Key recommendations made after this initial research were outlined by the key informant as being largely related to the council exploring more options, with a lack of knowledge evident. Four main themes of recommendations included facilitation, collaboration, advocacy and education. Barriers identified included that there was currently no set procedure for allowing community gardens, with the existing system not viewed as friendly towards this. It was also identified that strong leadership was needed, however it was acknowledged that in other countries local governments have a lot more control over their food systems due to the influence they can have on schools and hospitals in their localities. Thus, key informant 5(d) stated, “The most we can do is be a good corporate citizen”.

Food resilience was viewed as being aligned with the strategic framework that Dunedin currently has and was perceived as is in line with the Council’s role under the LGA. However, it was discussed that while there are things in the Council happening around food, this is scattered throughout different departments and lacks co-ordination. This idea

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3 Funding was allocated in the 2015 annual plan, but as of October 2015 the position has yet to be filled.
was emphasized by key informant 11(d) when they outlined that the Council currently interfaces with food in a variety of different ways in different departments and with numerous stakeholders. The need for a coordinated approach to food resilience was viewed as appropriate under the LGA, which requires councils to deliver services that are cost effective and efficient. The key informant stated “…if we don’t have a coordinated approach it’s hard to know whether or not we are doing that effectively and efficiently. In my view it’s essential that we coordinate our approach”. As previously noted, this coordination had included the employment of a specific staff member to investigate the significant gaps, and also opportunities addressing food-related issues could provide the Council. Key informant 11(d) outlined that this report confirmed Council interfaced with food in a variety of ways including:

...everything from our regulatory arm which goes out and certifies local food premises through to our economic development unit which is wanting to work on city branding and marketing and currently funds events which have a food component...

The key informant highlighted that:

...we’re doing it all over the place...people when we took it back to council thought we don’t have a role in food and this is just not true! Pretty much every department has some kind of line which it interacts with food related activity.

Thus, the Council acknowledged that as an organisation they interact with food in a variety of ways in different departments, with a need to co-ordinate the current approach to food. This lack of co-ordination was also emphasized as it was recognised that the Council is just one player in the food system, with key informant 11(d) also explaining:

...while we certainly have a role, in fact we play multiple roles, they are all quite disjointed, it’s not that we have one significant role, we have a range of small roles and we need to interface with a whole load of other people in order to make change happen, so that’s probably one of the biggest challenges.

Council key informants also described the desire for a food policy council in the future to address some of these identified issues. However, staff were sceptical about the value of a policy council comprised of advocates and not necessarily people with policy experience.
Rather, it was outlined that the desire was to create a steering or governance group with people based on expertise, rather than the organisation they represent. Key informant 11(d) outlined the desire to have representatives from each sector, rather than organisations, undertaking a two phase approach where:

...the first phase is about collaboration of stakeholders, getting them all to sign on the dotted line around an approach and then the second phase is pulling together more of a Food Policy Council steering group to implement projects and things based on the outcomes of that charter.

As with other key informants, however, Council also acknowledged the potential difficulties with implementing a FPC, with key informant 11(d) also outlining that:

I know there are concerns from staff about whether or not that is a manageable level of bureaucracy to implement in a city of Dunedin’s size, and I can understand that to a degree, I don’t think you want to put a whole lot of paperwork and process and stuff around something that doesn’t need to be.

The same key informant also outlined that politically it had been challenging to “get to the point where people are acknowledging food is an issue and we need to be making conscious decisions about it”. Furthermore, it was also acknowledged that food has not traditionally been considered a priority, with this making it difficult to gain financial support, particularly when the Council is in debt. This difficulty is emphasized by the funding for hiring a staff member who is focused on food issues going through on a narrow 6-5 Council vote. Further to this, the key informant also highlighted the difficulties with not having a staff champion to push the issue, with the person hired to produce the Food Resilience report having a policy background not “hired on a basis of a deep understanding of the food system”. Additionally, while the key informant highlighted that the Council would be hiring a person specifically to work on the issues outlined in the report, this position will only be temporary, being funded on a part-time basis for a year. As noted earlier, this lack of long-term commitment was highlighted as an issue by OFN members for example by key informant 1(d).

Despite key informants recognising growing political support for the issue and community initiatives in general, it was outlined that Council policy was still catching up and not reflective of this political mandate. Key informants highlighted bureaucratic difficulties and issues with ‘red tape’, viewed as particularly difficult for community groups to deal with.
Key informant 6(d) for example who had involvement with community orchard planting on Council reserves highlighted that they were going through correct processes to obtain consent for plantings, in comparison to ‘guerrilla gardening’ due to their political will and drive to change the system. This key informant, and also key informant 7(d), described how they felt their knowledge of council operations and the personal or political drive they had were important factors to get through the process. Both of these key informants indicated they felt that without these factors it would be easy for others to give up on projects. Key informant 6(d), for example, who had been involved with planting orchard trees on Council land such as parks described how:

We thought about it right from the beginning, you can do guerrilla planting on berms and things like that, but we actually wanted to shift the city council’s thinking about edible planting. She could have sneakily done it, but because we’re trying to shift the council’s thinking in a way we’re doing it the hard way because we want it, each time, to become easier

Thus, the key informant’s political drive was an important factor for getting through the regulatory process with a willingness to do this in order to create future change. When asked if a person without this drive would give up on the process the key informant outlined that having the drive and confidence to deal with bureaucratic processes were important, and without these factors it would be very difficult. Furthermore, when asked about the process in general, the key informant outlined “I think it has become easier, and I think they [the Council] are sometimes stymied by their process and I hope like anything that they’re reworking those. Needs to be revised so there’s more flexibility there.”.

Key informant 7(d), who had involvement with setting up a community food project on Council land also highlighted this idea outlining that in their experience:

I guess the staff here have been given a mandate by council to roll out the red carpet when it comes to community projects, community initiated things, but it’s all very well, telling council staff that they need to be accommodating yet they still have to fit in with all these policies that haven’t been changed.

Thus, it is evident that political support for local food in Dunedin is growing, however, key informants emphasized how difficult the current planning process was to navigate, with political drive and also previous understanding of the process or ‘bureaucracy’ important.
As noted by Council key informants, co-ordination is also needed between different departments, with many arms of Council interfacing with food. This co-ordination was also raised by other key informants who described how they had to work with multiple departments of Council when obtaining consents for projects.

In regard to the Council’s future role, this was often viewed as serving an educative, awareness or leadership role. Key informant 8(d) for example outlined:

*I think what Council needs to do is A, take it seriously and allow for facilitation of others to do what they need to do, remove red tape and allow people to do what they need to do. And support from the perspective of being a champion, if they start saying food is an issue...I don’t think there’s a lot they need to do themselves because I think community’s the best people to do it. But I think Council kind of needs to set the stage and also help by getting out of the way in many cases.*

This key informant highlighted an idea expressed in both contexts, where many key informants felt that local food needed to come from the bottom up, rather than being top-down enforced on communities.

Furthermore, as previously noted, while it was viewed by some key informants that a FPC was not capable of resulting in ‘on the ground’ action, key informants did show support for the governance arrangement in theory. Key informant 1(d) outlined “I think the food resilience and food policy is just great...A multi-agency group I think is really important and they’re obviously taking a lead on that which is great”.

Thus, while many key informants felt there was political support from the Council, particularly in relation to community initiatives in general, many key informants felt the policy and regulatory process was still acting as a barrier. Knowledge of the system, confidence with bureaucracy and political or personal drive were seen as key factors for getting through Council processes to start community gardens or orchards. It was also acknowledged that the Council’s current approach to food was uncoordinated in nature.

### 6.3 Opportunities and Barriers/Challenges for Local Food in the Dunedin Context

In relation to key opportunities and barriers for local food in Dunedin, the Otago Farmers Market provides an example of the issue of scale. The market held in Dunedin every Saturday was often highlighted by key informants as a hugely successful example of local
food in the city. However, when key informants were asked about the potential to ‘scale-up’ the market, it was often viewed that the location by the railway was important for the atmosphere of the market and it would not be possible to make the market larger in its current location. Further to this, it was also outlined that scaling up the market may negatively impact on other values that key informants considered important such as social interaction between producers and consumers. Key informant 1(d) for example described how “…it’s a lot more than just buying local and healthy food. You talk to the vendors, certain vendors see the same people every week, and that’s really important. I think if you get too big you lose that”.

It was outlined by several key informants that they felt there was opportunity for more distribution and retail of local food in Dunedin. An example of an ‘alternative’, but not local, food initiative that had recently started in the city and had gained huge popularity was a fruit and vegetable box weekly pick-up scheme set up by All Saints Church where produce was purchased straight from wholesalers. This scheme had started earlier in 2015 and currently has 6 distribution centres where fresh fruit and vegetable boxes could be collected from in the city, with over 300 signed up to the scheme. Key informants outlined the initiative was a demonstration of the demand for cheaper, healthier food in the Dunedin context. Key informant 1(d) for example discussed that they felt “I think there is real opportunity for co-op development but I don’t exactly know what. Talking about different economic models…I think that’s where there’s huge potential”. Other key informants outlined the desire for more access to local food mid-week, with the Saturday farmers market being the predominant source of this in the city. The farmer’s market was often used as an example by key informants to demonstrate how demand for local food was growing. However, demand for local food and awareness were also often viewed as challenges (as already noted in regard to member survey results). It was viewed by several key informants that there was a lack of awareness around the value of local food. Linked to this, it was also highlighted that the modest population of Dunedin was a challenge for small-scale producers who want to make a living from production. Key informant 3(d) for example highlighted that local food was not being valued due to this lack of understanding discussing:

I think the farmer’s market is a shining light for that (proof of demand), but I think that’s also found its limit as well. And I think again, the climate and the people doing it, there’s only a limited number of people who have the skills and the willingness to do it. And it comes down to the
value of [local food] and people understanding and being prepared to pay for it.

Another key informant 12(d) also emphasized the issue with local food being more expensive due to challenges for producers describing how:

One of the biggest [challenges] is the lack of availability of it [local food], and the lack of skilled growers who have access to land. I don’t think access to land is an issue per se but there is a problem with people investing a lot of time and energy and resource into land if they don’t own it – security and tenure, I think the fundamental issue is that it’s typically more expensive to produce because it’s at small scale and the majority of people want cheap food because that’s what they can afford, food in this country is not actually cheap compared to other West contexts. It’s the scale system working as it provides cheap food. Particularly in Dunedin, not a very affluent place as a whole. I think little bit stuck in that any local food system is going to be small scale and probably going to be pricey, until we can sort of increase that scale.

Linked to this was the fact that many local food initiatives are run on grant funding or volunteer work. Key informant 4(d) for example stated:

I still think the issue for local food is how do you turn that into an effective mechanism to access local food…I think we still have a long way to go to get that to actually work as an alternative economy. Often run on grant money or volunteer work and I have no problem with either of those things but I think if local food is really ever going to be anything of significance in our lives it has to be a proper economy.

Furthermore, another key challenge for local food production in the Dunedin context was the lack of processing plants, with market “geared for export”. However, as noted previously, the city of Dunedin is unique in that its boundaries cover an extremely large area. This was cited as a key opportunity for local food in the Dunedin context by key informant 11(d) who emphasized the desire to enhance the connections between the rural and urban environment in the city. Despite this, however, it was often viewed by key informants that Dunedin was lacking local production and infrastructure to do this.
6.4 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the key results in the Dunedin context, including the form of OFN, the DCC’s engagement with local food issues and key contextual opportunities and barriers. Key informants viewed OFN as political and a form of activism highlighting alternatives to the mainstream food system and playing an advocacy role for this. The group was moving to create more tangible progress, seeking funding to employ a part-time person to advance key project areas. However, to date the group had largely played an advocacy role for local food and was in a more nascent stage than Edible Canterbury. Resilience and social justice were key concerns for those involved with local food in the Dunedin context, highlighted by both key informants and also in the member survey. Unlike in Christchurch, the group does not work as collaboratively with the Council and key informants largely agreed that this distance was important, with the desire to maintain ownership of the network. This distance can also be linked to the a lack of a staff ‘champion’ to push the issue and collaborate with the group like in the Christchurch context, however they had recently undertaken scoping work into future action the Council could take. It was viewed that a Food Policy Council could be desirable, however, many key informants had concerns with this allowing “bureaucracy” to take over. Despite the acknowledgement of political support for local food, key informants also highlighted that policy had not caught up and presented a large barrier for community groups.

These key findings will be compared and discussed in more detail in Chapter 7 that follows. Links will be made to academic research in order to shed light on, and explain the major differences and similarities between the two contexts.
7 Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will expand on the results outlined in the previous two chapters. Links between the results of this research and literature on local food networks will be made, with an analytical interpretation to expand the key primary findings. This chapter will be structured according to each of the research questions, providing a comparative discussion of each of the cases studied. Firstly, the form of the networks will be directly compared, including the role of the local councils, motivating factors, key goals and activities, and the local councils’ current engagement with food issues. The different opportunities and challenges of the contexts will then be analysed. The results have revealed large contextual differences between the two networks, in line with what was discussed in academic research reviewed in Chapter 2. This research will be used to provide insights into the differences and similarities between the two networks. The research will be concluded and recommendations based on this analysis made in Chapter 8 that follows.
7.2 Research Question 1: What form have local food networks taken in Dunedin and Christchurch and how has the particular context shaped the actors involved, their motivations and the purpose or focus of the network?

Section 2.2.2 highlighted the diversity of meanings and different forms of AFNs in the research, and emphasized the importance of context for these networks (Dansero & Puttilli, 2013; Forssell & Lankoski, 2015; Jarosz, 2008; Tregear, 2011). Chapter 5 and 6 revealed that despite both networks studied fulfilling higher-level strategic or advocacy roles, there were some notable differences between the two, particularly relating to their interaction with different stakeholders and also their key activities. Thus, the key findings of this research demonstrate Jarosz’s (2008:231) ideas that diversity and contingency of AFNs “arises from a particular constellation of ecological, political, economic and socio-cultural processes rooted in place”. The author furthermore argues that “AFNs emerge from processes-in-place that constitute and sustain them” (Jarosz, 2008:232). This section will highlight these ideas, through discussing the key differences between the two networks and reasons why these context-dependent variations have materialised. Firstly, the role that the councils have played in the two networks will be discussed, with this being the major difference between the two cases. The key aims, motivating factors, and activities of the networks will then be compared and contrasted, and insights into the reasons behind why differences have emerged due to different socio-cultural, economic and political processes in the two different contexts.

7.2.1 Local Government Role

One significant difference between the two cases identified in Chapter 5 and 6 was the relationship and role the respective local councils played in the networks. In the Christchurch context, it was evident that the Council played a much more significant role in the network than in Dunedin. Campbell (2013:129) outlines that literature relating to community food systems often questions whether local food initiatives should employ an ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ change strategy, either “emphasizing reform at the margins or more fundamental systemic change”. Insider strategies are viewed as undertaking action within mainstream institutions, often implementing incremental change that may require compromising of objectives to achieve short-term goals. Conversely, ‘outsider’ strategies pursue deeper, structural change with values preserved in their ‘purest’ form, even though short-term goals may be sacrificed (Campbell, Carlisle-Cummins & Feenstra, 2013). It is evident that the two networks researched are examples along different ends of this
spectrum. Chapter 6 demonstrated how OFN was employing more of an ‘outsider’ strategy to change than that of Edible Canterbury. In the Dunedin context, the promotion of an alternative system was often emphasized by key informants and it was frequently stressed that distance from the local council was important, with key informants outlining the flexibility and opportunity that comes from this. Many key informants expressed that they were weary of the restrictive nature of bureaucracy and therefore felt that working outside of this political system provided more opportunity than having to make potential sacrifices when working in a closer way with Council. It was also viewed that there was risk with working more closely with Council due to their commitment to the food resilience issue thus far being only temporary in nature. A further perceived risk was that working more closely with Council would not create direct ‘on the ground’ action, or that this would happen slowly. While key informants viewed the Council’s involvement with food issues as largely positive, key informants also indicated some disappointment that more ‘traction’ wasn’t made with the part time staff member who had been employed to produce the report on the Council’s engagement with food-related issues. Thus, it was perceived that distance from Council was important to avoid being restricted by ‘bureaucracy’, with an example of this being the perceived slow pace of the work Council had undertaken to date.

A key example of the desire to maintain control over the group and its projects was shown through the network’s aspiration to create a website for local food in Dunedin, providing information to the public about local food and the group in the city. Despite the Council offering resources towards this, it was discussed in meetings, and also by key informants, that it was important the group maintain ownership over a potential website. It was viewed by key informants that a genuine commitment to resourcing and collaboration would need to be undertaken for them to be comfortable with a closer working relationship. Key informant 1(d) for example highlighted how due to the lack of long-term commitment from the Council there were worries regarding the network having to take over the resourcing commitment if the Council could no longer do this. As the network currently does not have formal funding and is run solely by volunteers, it was viewed that it would be difficult to keep a project going if the Council withdrew support. Thus, practically, OFN members had concerns regarding resourcing of projects due to a lack of commitment from the Council. Further to this, it was also perceived that keeping the group’s projects separate to Council was important to avoid bureaucratic ‘restrictions’. It is evident that there was a perceived power imbalance between the community-led initiative and the Council. For example, several key informants were sceptical of the implementation of a Food Policy Council for the city and outlined the risk of Council being too dominant of a voice in this situation.
Research has demonstrated that in other contexts a lack of genuine engagement between Council staff and members of Food Policy councils can play a role in their breakdown and thus this power imbalance is a genuine concern (Coplen and Cuneo, 2015). A lack of authority caused by ‘pseudo’ engagement can cause frustration with those involved, with a need for efforts to “resolve the dissonance between local government agendas and practices of citizen engagement” (Coplen and Cuneo, 2015:15). Given that the food system encompasses such a broad array of stakeholders, as discussed in Chapter 2, this concern is also emphasized, as the Council is just one player in the food system, a challenge highlighted by key informant 11(d). Furthermore, key informants were also concerned with the Council simply implementing tokenistic measures to engage with food issues. Thus, it is evident that key informants from OFN portrayed attitudes that were not reflective of them believing there would be a genuinely collaborative relationship that would enable effective work on food issues. Thus, OFN was reluctant to sacrifice their core values around encouraging the development of an alternative food system, as it was perceived that this may occur when creating a joint project such as a website with the local council. These attitudes appear to be more reflective of Campbell’s (2013) ‘outsider’ strategy of reform, with members of OFN not willing to sacrifice core values of the network when presented with short-term gains.

In contrast to OFN, Edible Canterbury has adopted more of an ‘insider’ strategy to change. Chapter 5 highlighted the connections the network has with major institutions such the Canterbury District Health Board, to an extent central government, and especially the CCC. This aligns with what Campbell (2013) argues to be the most effective approach to change for local food movements, being a middle ground between insider and outsider strategies. The author outlines “The challenge is to foster a democratic debate that weighs the need to get things done against the competing goal of staying true to core values” (Campbell, 2013:129-130). Food policy councils are argued as providing an effective bridge between “inside groups within city bureaucracies and citizen’s organisations doing community organising outside government”. While Edible Canterbury does not identify itself as a formal FPC, research reviewed in Chapter 2 highlighted the wide variety of activities and forms that these organisations take on, working with councils through numerous means to achieve policy change at various levels, regarding various issues (Scherb et al., 2012). Harper et al. (2009) outline that FPCs generally have four functions: serving as forums for discussion on food issues, fostering coordination between sectors in the food system, evaluating and influencing policy and launching or supporting programs and services that address local needs. Several key informants viewed Edible Canterbury in its current form
as fulfilling the function of a FPC and there wasn’t a perceived need for a formalised governance mechanism such as this at this stage in time for the city. It would appear that Edible Canterbury is undertaking the function of a FPC in its current form, largely due to the group’s involvement with food policy creation in collaboration with Council staff, but also the other three functions outlined by Harper et al. (2009). The collaborative approach adopted by CCC was often praised by key informants who viewed this as genuine, with the policy adopted by Council carrying through the same principles members of the group desired. Thus, it appears that Edible Canterbury is playing the bridging role that Campbell (2013) described of food policy councils, through linking grassroots initiatives with institutions such as the Council on policy and other earthquake recovery work. While Edible Canterbury is not formally a CCC group, it is clearly being recognised by the local council and other institutions. Harper et al. (2009) discusses the importance of this, outlining that many local level FPCs are entirely independent of government, however, it is important that these groups gain ‘buy-in’ from the institutions they are attempting to impact. It is clear that in the Christchurch context, one particular staff ‘champion’ had bought into the mandate of the group, allowing for highly collaborative work to be undertaken. The importance of this key staff member will be discussed in detail in Section 7.4.2 that follows.

As highlighted in Chapter 5 it is evident that the earthquakes had a large impact on the formation and the activities of the group. The apparent ‘insider’ strategy used by the group can be somewhat attributed to this context. Many key informants emphasized the importance of collaboration that the earthquake context had enabled, with this allowing the group to leverage resources they felt they would not have had access to before. In particular, the group had benefitted from central government mandate and Council support. Research has demonstrated how an unpredictable event can drastically change an actor’s incentives to cooperate (Bedore, 2014). This was viewed as especially important in the Christchurch context by key informants, with many highlighting that energy and support around local food had been present for some time, however, it was collaboration by key stakeholders after the earthquakes that had seen the positive work around food resilience and Edible Canterbury happen. Further to this, many key informants also highlighted the innovation and creativity that had emerged through community groups post-earthquakes. Key informant 2(c) highlighted that the earthquake context had broken down “major bureaucratic hurdles” that had stopped large food initiatives happening prior to the disaster. Furthermore, this same key informant discussed the institutional imperative to make Edible Canterbury possible after the earthquakes. The presence of Central Government power and
influence within the city appeared to provide in part some of this imperative, this included support for community gardens and local food production being written into CERA’s Natural Environmental Recovery Programme as a project, with Edible Canterbury seen as one of the main mechanisms to support this work. The collaboration had also been supported by a recent significant change in the local council, with a much more politically supportive Council in power. Thus, a combination of factors including the natural disaster and the Central Government influence this brought, along with a change in local government to one which was viewed as more ‘community-focused’ by key informants had enabled collaboration of key stakeholders in the food system, which was viewed as difficult prior to the earthquakes. This collaboration, in particular with the CCC thus largely resulted in the insider strategy of the group. However, while Campbell (2013) discusses that ‘insider’ strategies often result in groups having to sacrifice core values to create incremental change, in the Christchurch context due to the presence of a collaborative champion staff member this was not viewed as the case, with key informants highlighting the authentic collaboration with the Council.

Thus, it can be viewed that the earthquake context influenced the formation of the group for a number of factors and was a catalyst for action. Research demonstrates that while disasters can disrupt initiatives working towards sustainability, they also “force cities to adapt to change and re-consider existing frameworks” (Wesner, 2015:3-4). Furthermore, it is also evident that disasters can “provide opportunities for activating community potentials and achieving desirable community goals which otherwise might not get realised” (Wesner, 2015:4). In relation to policy, sudden ‘focusing events’ such as natural disasters, provide potential for policy issues to be elevated to a level where it is taken seriously in a short period of time (Birkland, 2006). It appears that this is the case in Christchurch, with key informants discussing how the earthquakes had highlighted issues around food resilience and security, resulting in the initial hui after the earthquakes which brought together over 40 interested parties. From this catalyst meeting, the Food Resilience Network formed and was enabled to undertake the collaborative formation of the CCC’s Food Resilience Policy, which formalised these concerns. Other factors, especially that of political and staff support from the Council were also viewed as extremely important, with these being discussed in section 7.4 that follows. Thus, it is evident that the Christchurch context is in line with research undertaken in other contexts, where an unexpected event has facilitated and encouraged collaboration between different stakeholders, namely the grassroots local food initiatives and large institutions such as the CCC and the Canterbury District Health Board, and has also seemingly encouraged the uptake of a food resilience policy.
In summary, a key difference between the form of the local food networks studied in this research related to the different connections and perceptions the groups had towards local government. This section has demonstrated how the two groups had taken distinctly different approaches to creating change in their cities’ food systems. OFN had employed much more of an ‘outsider’ strategy to change than that of Edible Canterbury, with the Dunedin group viewing distance from Council as a positive due to the flexibility it allowed them by not being restricted by ‘bureaucracy’. Furthermore, key informants were also weary of the Council becoming too dominant if a FPC was to be implemented for the city. Conversely, Edible Canterbury had a close working relationship with the CCC. It was argued the group in its current form was carrying out the function of a food policy council as described in the literature in Chapter 2. Edible Canterbury appeared to be playing a bridging role between grass roots initiatives and the CCC. This was viewed as genuinely collaborative in nature due to a staff ‘champion’ who had worked closely with the group, breaking down any negative implications from power imbalances between the two groups. Furthermore, the earthquake context was also viewed as an important catalyst for action and, most importantly, collaboration.

7.2.2 Key Motivating Factors and Goals of the Networks

Further to the role that the councils played in the networks, there were also differences between the key motivating factors and goals of the networks. The sections that follow will detail these differences and also similarities of the key goals and motivating factors for the networks with a focus on resilience, localism, and social justice.

7.2.2.1 Resilience, Localism and Social Justice

Chapters 5 and 6 revealed that both of the networks studied were greatly influenced by the concepts of resilience, localism and social justice. Resilience was a key concept for both of the networks. The concept of resilience has been transferred from natural or physical sciences into the social sciences and public policy “as the identification of global threats such as economic crisis, climate change and international terrorism has focused attention on the responsive capacities of places and social systems” (MacKinnon and Driscoll Derickson, 2012:253). The concept has used by different forms of anti-capitalist activism (MacKinnon & Derickson, 2013). In both of the contexts, resilience was an important concept for the grass-roots local food initiatives. In Christchurch, the local food movement was particularly tied to this idea, mainly in relation to the disaster recovery context. Chapter 5 highlighted how the formation of the network was linked to resilience and also
food justice, with the need to be food resilient highlighted in Christchurch after communities experienced supermarket closures and some suburbs relied on food being helicoptered to them. Key informants also highlighted that the group’s broader focus on more than simply growing local food, with Edible Canterbury viewed by Key Informant 2(c) as about “…developing a whole economy around local food, and it’s very layered”. However, resilience was also linked to the individual-level when key informants highlighted that the group had been heavily influenced by concerns around food justice and access after the earthquakes. The earthquake context and links to resilience had also influenced the key activities of the group. Key informants outlined that Edible Canterbury was attempting to create a more physical presence in the city, with the desire to create a “food resilience hub”. Thus, these concerns around food resilience and food justice had spurred the motivation to have direct influence on food distribution in the city.

In the Dunedin context, the local food movement was also closely tied to the concept of resilience. While key informants from OFN itself didn’t directly emphasize this idea in relation to the purpose of the group it was implied through the emphasis on raising awareness around alternatives to the current food system. The member survey also highlighted the importance that resilience plays for individuals. These concepts of resilience and self-sufficiency link to the idea of defensive localism, which was highlighted in research reviewed in Chapter 2. The concept proposes that some communities engage in alternative food activities in order to defend themselves against a perceived outside threat, in comparison with contributing to more ecological models of food production (Tregear, 2011). Defensive localism is viewed as narrow, self-referential and exclusive (Morgan & Sonnino, 2010). When analysing what influenced people’s interest in local food in Dunedin through the member survey (Figure 14) food security and social justice (48.5%) was the most commonly cited value, with self-sufficiency (40.9%) being the second. Further to this, community/regional resilience or self-sufficiency was the most prominent key motivating factor (23%) for peoples’ involvement with local food initiatives in Dunedin. The prominence of these factors could suggest a level of inward facing defensive localism in the Dunedin context, with people interested in local food primarily to protect themselves and their communities. However, climate change and food miles were the third most commonly cited (34.8%) values to contribute to member’s interest in local food in Dunedin. This would suggest that members were interested in local food for larger global ecological reasons outside of simply building their own resilience and protecting their communities. Furthermore, many key informants also acknowledged that due to population size and climate of Dunedin, which were key challenges for local producers, it was
unreasonable to believe that the city could be self-sufficient, with the need to import other products in order to provide people with diversity that they desired recognised. Further to this, key informants also highlighted the difficulties with defining local and the fluidity with this. These aspects would indicate a more ‘cosmopolitan’ form of localism in Dunedin, viewed in the literature as “capacious, multi-cultural and inclusive” (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010:212). Thus, as Jarosz (2008) discusses, local food in Dunedin was influenced by the local context and also larger global issues and movements. The influence of larger global processes was also highlighted by key informant 2(c) and 3(c), who discussed that the group had been motivated in part by the global localisation movement. When asked about the purpose of the group, key informants often discussed the importance of raising awareness of an alternative system and the desire to take control back of the food system (Table 6).

Links to social justice were also evident in the Dunedin context. Members of local food initiatives in Dunedin indicated that they worked with social services or organisations most commonly. This social link was highlighted in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Forsell and Lankosi (2015) outline that a key feature of AFNs is short supply chains, with an emphasis on the relationship between producer and consumer, thus reembedding the food system. Other key features often include the redistribution of value through the network, localness, quality and trust (Forsell & Lankoski, 2015). This strong social aspect to many AFNs has linked the movements to the social economy, which demonstrates responses to social needs through groups of citizens acting collaboratively and in democratic ways to achieve common goals (Beckie, Kennedy & Wittman, 2012). The prominent role that FoodShare played in the Dunedin context, a food rescue organisation which had links to the Farmers Market is one example that emphasizes links that local food has to the social economy in the city. In both context, resilience and social justice was a key concern for the groups and thus, as in international examples the local food movement has clear ties to the social economy in New Zealand.

However, while resilience was an important concept in both contexts, there are clear differences between the motivating factors for the two networks studied in this research. In the Christchurch context, the idea of resilience was closely linked to the earthquake context and the concept of food justice, with key informants describing the influence of people not having access to food in a crisis. In the Dunedin context, the key motivating factors and goals of the network were different in a number of ways. While resilience was also an important concept, particularly emphasized through the member survey, key informants
often highlighted motivating factors for the network as being related to re-gaining control over the food system, as influenced by global localisation movements. Though resilience and localism are both a related concept, the latter was viewed as more important by members of the OFN core group who were interviewed. Localisation was important in the Dunedin context, however it was acknowledged that this was difficult to define and there were limitations with a local food system in the Dunedin context due to its size and population. Thus, key informants often highlighted the key goal and motivation of the food network was to regain control over the food system, with ‘alternative’ features such as organic, sustainable and re-socialising food viewed as a means in which to do this. Thus, OFN’s desire to create structural change and re-gain control over the food system also influenced their key activities. The network was playing more of an advocacy role than that of Edible Canterbury, with key informants largely viewing the network as serving this awareness and education function.

7.2.3 Network Form Summary

It is evident from this research that there were significant difference in the strategies used by the two networks to create change, particularly this was related to the context of each city, influenced by different social, political and economic processes. Jarosz (2008:232) highlights this idea discussing:

*Thus, ‘things’ like AFNs are constituted out of multiple, contradictory processes and relations, which they internalize in place and through time. These processes are not inherently specific to any particular scale, but emerge instead out of particular material and spatial development that incorporate the historical, political, economics and social dimensions of globalization, regional development and local change.*

In Christchurch, more of an ‘insider’ strategy had been employed which was heavily enabled by the earthquake recovery context and the genuine collaboration that the CCC had participated in, particularly due to one key staff ‘champion’. In relation to the literature, Edible Canterbury could be viewed as undertaking the function of a Food Policy Council, this was an idea that was reinforced by key informants who didn’t perceive that there was a need for a formal mechanism like this in the city. Thus, the social process of recovery in Christchurch had directly influenced the formation of the network. Political processes, such as a recent change in local government were also viewed as influential factors for creating the ‘insider’ change strategy of the group. Conversely, OFN was viewed as undertaking a
more ‘outsider’ strategy to change. Key informants highlighted that the purpose of the group was to advocate for alternatives to the current food system and perceived distance from Council as important. The core values that the group were promoting were not sacrificed for short-term gains such as a website. Local food in both of the contexts was also closely linked to the idea of resilience and social justice. It was argued that this did not represent defensive localism but rather key informants discussed ideas relating to more ‘cosmopolitan’ ideas of localism. In this context, the group was influenced by larger political movements and processes of localisation. It is also evident that the focus on food justice and resilience that the two groups have are symptomatic of larger political processes of neoliberalism and globalisation that are driving inequalities in the food system. Thus, in both of the contexts researched food alternatives were not only focused on food itself, but used food as a means of addressing broader social concerns.

7.3 Research Question 2: What involvement have local governments in Dunedin and Christchurch had with food systems issues and what potential is there for governance mechanisms to address food issues more effectively in these localities?

The results outlined in Chapters 5 and 6 highlighted some notable differences between the two local councils’ current engagement with food issues. The CCC have enacted a specific food resilience policy to guide the Council on the issue, with Chapter 5 revealing that the process had been extremely collaborative in nature between the Food Resilience Network and the CCC. In contrast, Dunedin does not have a specific food related policy, however had provided funding for a report to conduct research into how the Council could better address food issues as an organisation and had the intention of hiring a part-time staff member to work on the issue. These differences will be expanded and explained in the sections that follow. Key themes that were important for understanding why the differences between the two contexts had materialised will be explained to identify what enabled the positive process in the Christchurch context. The different councils’ perceptions and motivations for their involvement with food issues will first be explained. The important role of a ‘staff champion’ will then be discussed in detail, which was a key difference between the two contexts. The potential for governance mechanisms such as Food Policy councils will then be discussed in-depth and key informants views incorporated to analyse if there is potential for the councils to better engage with food issues.
7.3.1 Current Council Involvement and Perceptions

In both of the contexts, Council staff and decision-makers held the perception that addressing and engaging with food-related issues was within the scope of local government in New Zealand. While it was acknowledged by key informants that recent changes to the LGA in 2012 had taken emphasis away from dealing with sustainability-related issues, due to the new focus on ‘roads, rates and rubbish’, it was highlighted by key informants, for example key informant 1(c), that they believed addressing food issues was still within this scope. The key informant further explained they believed addressing food resilience was a topic that met all or most of the Council’s community outcomes related to the purpose of the LGA. They described how “…it’s extraordinary and it [food resilience/community gardening] really is in terms of a sustainability sort of perspective one of the most outstanding sort of programmes that councils can work on…”. In the Dunedin context, key informants also highlighted that food resilience was in line with the Council’s strategic framework and the purpose of local government under the LGA. Key informant 11(d) for example discussed that co-ordination on the issue would allow for the Council to effectively and efficiently deliver cost-effective services. The lack of coordination was acknowledged by key informant 11(d) as being a key challenge for local governments in relation to food, describing how the DCC currently interfaces with food in a number of ways and departments. Further to this, the key informant also highlighted that the fact that the Council is simply one player in the food system is a key challenge. Another key challenge raised by key informant 5(d) was the lack of authority LAs have over hospitals and schools, which are under Central Government control. In other contexts, for example the United Kingdom and Europe, these have been key avenues to support and facilitate local food. Thus, key informants highlighted the complexity for local governments attempting to engage with local food or food issues. Key informant 5(d) described due to this apparent lack of power “The most we can do is be a good corporate citizen”. Thus, while it was acknowledged by key informants that recent changes to the purpose of local government under LGA had the potential to restrict, or not promote councils to address sustainability-related issues due to the focus on ‘roads, rates and rubbish’, both councils viewed it as appropriate to address food-related issues under this legislation. However, there were key barriers for councils’, including the lack of control LAs have over hospitals and schools, the fact that councils are just one small player in a much larger and complex food system, and current un-coordinated approaches to local food with many different departments interfacing with local food in a number of ways.
A similarity between the two contexts highlighted in Chapter 5 and 6 was that both of the councils were addressing food systems issues through the ‘resilience’ lens. In the Dunedin context this was linked to climate change, with the need to create a more resilient food system due to this challenge. Key informant 5(d) explained that social concerns were not a key focus of the Council’s food resilience project to begin with, but rather these issues were considered as the project evolved. In comparison to this, resilience in the Christchurch context was clearly linked to the earthquake recovery context and had a stronger social focus. This was demonstrated through the Council’s Food Resilience Policy which had a strong focus on food access and food justice, as discussed in Chapter 4. However, when asked what had motivated the local councils to become involved with food issues, key informants from both contexts highlighted that it was a mix of social, economic, health and environmental factors, with it being hard to pinpoint one factor that had directly motivated the involvement. Thus, the councils reinforced the holistic value of addressing and engaging with food issues.

It is also important to note that both councils in the cases analysed were addressing food issues largely under the Local Government Act 2002, not the Resource Management Act 1991. While planners were not specifically interviewed in this research, as it sought to primarily investigate the local food networks and the ways in which councils were currently addressing food systems issues, key informants who were council staff or decision-makers gave insight into the way planning was currently engaging with food issues in the two cities. In Christchurch, key informant 1(c) for example explained that they felt they were at the early stages of getting other departments to “pick up” the food issue, including planners. Planning was viewed as the “mechanics of rules and regulations” and it was outlined, “there’s a long way to go for them to pick it up”. The key informant rather explained that they were attempting to primarily get other departments on board such as the social housing, and also parks units. Key informant 4(c) also held the opinion that the current planning rules did not act as a barrier to community gardens or orchards. However, other key informants not associated with Council, for example key informant 5(c) discussed how they felt there were a lot of restrictions around growing food in parks.

In the Dunedin context, key informants also highlighted that they felt planners were not currently engaging well with food issues. Key informant 11(d) for example discussed how they felt this was occurring as there was not a staff member within planning in the Council championing these issues. The key informant also felt there was more room for the Council’s Second Generation Plan to consider food issues. The key informant highlighted
“I think it was something that was flagged up through the Spatial Plan and people are calling for regulatory leadership on this stuff and it would be good I think to see future planning documents reflecting that community aspiration”. Thus, it would appear that the main mechanism councils are currently using to engage with food issues or food resilience is the LGA through higher-level strategic policy in comparison with specific planning mechanisms such as zoning or rules. While this research did not undertake a specific analysis of planning provisions and suggest room for improvement of these, it is still important to note that key informants perceived that food issues are not a key concern for planners currently under the RMA in the two locations.

7.3.2 Staff Champion Importance

One important difference between the two contexts was the role of a staff champion in the Christchurch City Council that Dunedin lacked. Research on food policy development or food policy councils has emphasized the importance of both political and staff support (Coplen & Cuneo, 2015; Harper et al., 2009). In the Christchurch context, as discussed in Chapter 5, both of these elements were perceived as extremely important by key informants. In particular, the staff member championing the issue within Council was viewed as fundamental and extremely positive. The staff member was described as a “genuine collaborator” and capable of effectively dealing with any issues arising from power imbalances between the NGOs involved with Edible Canterbury and the Council. A key example of this collaboration was the creation of the Food Resilience Policy, which was drafted by members of Edible Canterbury and passed onto council who enacted the policy. Key informant 3(c) outlined how this carried all the same principles and was viewed as a “step forward”. Key informants also discussed that many of them had been working with this staff member on sustainability issues for years, thus providing continuity and trust between these different stakeholders. The Council was praised heavily for their collaborative attitude towards the food issue, however key informants could not pinpoint whether this was associated with the staff member’s personality or their unique role as a “sustainability advisor” in Council. It is evident that members of Edible Canterbury, and also other key informants who were involved with community gardening, had developed a trusting relationship with the Council staff member that had enabled a collaborative relationship. This element of trust has been viewed in the literature as important, with a lack of trust of government acting as a barrier for effective engagement in food policy (Scherb et al., 2012). Furthermore, in the literature, a lack of staff or political champions are viewed as factors that impede enactment of food policy or inhibit food policy councils
(Scherb et al., 2012). Furthermore, research undertaken in recovery contexts has also highlighted the importance of key staff members (Ulmer, Rathert & Rose, 2012). Ulmer, Rathert and Rose (2012) for example highlighted that after hurricane Katrina in New Orleans key staff turnovers for a food Policy Advisory Committee caused significant delays for the group’s work. Furthermore, the authors also outlined that in the recovery context, there were multiple priorities vying for attention of government officials, with state government officials expecting recovery funds to be spent on ‘bricks and mortar’ infrastructure. It is evident that in the Christchurch context, issues such as this were largely avoided due to Edible Canterbury’s close working relationship with a key staff member. The staff member remained a consistent person the group had worked with, with some key informants highlighting that they had worked with the same staff member for years on local food issues. Thus, as with other literature, the importance of a staff champion and political support were two factors that were viewed as incredibly important by key informants in this research for enacting the Food Resilience Policy.

Key informants also highlighted the genuine nature of the collaboration that Edible Canterbury had with the council, particularly relating to the creation of the Food Resilience Policy. Literature on FPCs has highlighted the need to foster good communication and ‘genuine’ citizen engagement in the policy process, in order for these groups to become successful (Coplen and Cuneo, 2015). Research into FPCs that have been dissolved has highlighted that it is important that FPCs don’t become groups of ‘pseudo’ engagement and rather share power and achieve a public partnership (Coplen and Cuneo, 2015). It is evident that in the Christchurch context, key informants highlighted that they felt they had been meaningful contributors to Council’s work and had served as ‘co-producers’ of policy. Collaborative planning theory has highlighted the need for the goals of different actors to be ‘interdependent’, where the ability to achieve goals is dependent on the actions of others (Gallent, 2012). The interdependent relationship between the two key stakeholders of Edible Canterbury and the CCC was demonstrated in Chapter 5, as a Council key informant talked positively of working with one key group on food resilience, while Edible Canterbury benefitted by getting their ideas and aspirations into a formal Council policy. Thus, it is evident that Edible Canterbury had a relationship with the CCC that contained authentic dialogue and communication, ensuring negative implications from power imbalances between the two stakeholders were avoided.

In contrast to Christchurch, key informants in Dunedin indicated that the Council lacked a staff champion. While staff had been employed to work on the issue, key informants
highlighted that this person did not have specific knowledge about food issues or the Dunedin food system but was rather hired due to their experience in policy work more broadly. A city councillor who had championed the food resilience project highlighted that the lack of a staff champion was a key challenge. It is evident that in the Christchurch context, having a key staff member who was resourced to undertake work, and work collaboratively with Edible Canterbury was important to gain traction on the issue. The DCC, unlike Christchurch, lacked a funded staff member, such as the ‘Sustainability Advisor’ role in Christchurch that key informants highlighted was a challenge. Furthermore, the commitment that the DCC has made thus far to the food resilience issue is temporary in nature, with funding only allocated to employ a staff member for a year. Thus, unlike in Christchurch where a trusting relationship with a key staff member had been built through on-going work and a relationship that was interdependent in nature, the Dunedin context lacked a key staff member to work with and Council’s commitment had been only temporary in nature which had discouraged members of the network to collaborate more with the Council, for example on projects such as a website.

7.3.3 Future Council Role

A key challenge for Council identified in Dunedin was the need for more co-ordination in relation to Council’s activities that interface with food. Harper et al. (2009) outline that Food Policy councils can foster collaboration between different government agencies that influence the food system. It was outlined by Council key informants that a formal governance arrangement such as a food policy council or a steering group was desirable in order to co-ordinate the Council’s activities. However, as previously noted, many key informants raised concerns about a Food Policy Council, including that it could let bureaucracy and the Council’s voice become to dominant. For the Council to get sufficient community ‘buy-in’ if they were to implement a food policy council in the future it would need to enable genuine collaboration and co-production of policy and knowledge. These are clearly real concerns, as shown in other research where a lack of meaningful collaboration has resulted in the dissolution of food policy councils (Coplen and Cuneo, 2015). As previously discussed, collaborative planning theory emphasizes the need for interdependence between stakeholders for successful and genuine collaboration (Gallent, 2012). Thus, a genuine resourcing commitment and authentic collaborative relationship would be needed between the Council and other stakeholders involved with the food system, including OFN to build trust and enable interdependence, achieving both parties’ goals. Conversely, when key informants in Christchurch were asked whether they viewed
there was potential for a formal governance mechanism such as a food policy council in the future, they often held the perception that Edible Canterbury was currently fulfilling this function, as discussed in section 7.2.1.

The results of this research have also raised questions relating to what role a local government should play in relation to food issues. Key informants in both contexts highlighted that they believed local food, such as community gardens are not something that can be top-down enforced on communities, holding the view that it was important for communities take pride and ownership in it. Key informant 3(c) for example discussed that they felt that the benefits of local food was something they believed people had to come to themselves. Thus, it was discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 that key informants from both contexts felt local governments should be playing a leadership, awareness and advocacy role. Also included in this, particularly in the Dunedin context was the need to remove ‘red tape’, from the planning process. This was viewed as an issue particularly when attempting to plant community orchards or gardens on Council land, which was viewed as difficult and timely, and not reflective of the political mandate the Council had given to support community initiatives. Interestingly, for the Dunedin context, Chapter 6 also highlighted that the member survey showed people wanted OFN to also play an awareness and advocacy role also. Research reviewed in Chapter 2 highlighted that a common critique of AFNs are that they fill gaps left by neoliberal market cutback and consequently perpetuate a culture of individualised responsibility (McClintock, 2013). Thus, this idea was demonstrated as key informants and the member survey both indicated the network should be playing the same perceived role of the local government. However, it was evident, especially in the Dunedin context, that key informants felt the network should be a grass-roots community initiative in order to retain control, which had the potential to be lost if Council became heavily involved.

### 7.3.4 Council Role Conclusion

Both contexts studied revealed that key informants felt engaging with food issues was within the remit of local government in New Zealand under the LGA. However, this research has demonstrated the importance of staff and political champions to gain traction on the issue, as key informants also highlighted that recent changes to the LGA didn’t promote or encourage engagement with sustainability issues such as food. Both councils had engaged with food through a ‘resilience’ lens, however this was approached from a climate change viewpoint in the Dunedin context, whereas the concept had a stronger social focus in Christchurch, understandably linked to the earthquakes. Key barriers for
councils engaging with food issues included that the Council is just one player in a larger food system and furthermore, the lack of authority LAs have in New Zealand over schools and hospitals. Section 7.4.2 highlighted the importance of having a staff champion for community groups to work with, with the key staff member in the Christchurch context ensuring that their work with Edible Canterbury was collaborative in nature, resulting in a trusting and interdependent relationship. In contrast, this was absent in the Dunedin context, with the staff member employed to work on the “Food Resilience” report not having prior relationships with community groups, and only being employed for a limited time period. This lack of commitment by the Council had resulted in a relationship between OFN and the DCC that was not as collaborative or trusting in nature. It is evident that for a food policy council to be successful in the future in the Dunedin context, the Council needs to ensure this is undertaken in a genuinely collaborative manner.

7.4 Research Question 3: How are goals, opportunities, challenges or barriers being addressed by the networks and the councils in the two locations?

The previous sections have discussed the key differences for both the different networks and contexts. This section will expand on these ideas and discuss in more detail the key opportunities and challenges exposed in the different contexts.

7.4.1 The Challenge of Scale

As highlighted in Chapter 2, a key challenge for AFNs relates to how these initiatives can best scale ‘up’ and ‘out’ the impact they are having in order to create structural change without sacrificing core values. Despite the apparently more ‘cosmopolitan’ and open aspects to local food in Dunedin, when asked about the potential to scale up local food initiatives such as the Farmers Market, key informants often felt this would negatively impact on key values of the alternative food initiative. The current location of the Farmer’s Market was viewed as an important contributor to the character of the market. Further to this, key informants felt that if the market became too large important values such as social contact between vendors and customers could be lost. This difficulty with ‘scaling up’ was a key theme addressed in the literature. Whittman, Beckie and Hergesheimer (2012) for example highlighted that scaling up has been viewed as risking ‘conventionalisation’, with participants in their research viewing scaling up as a potential threat to the values of authenticity and inclusion, education and economic advantages offered through farmers markets. These ideas were reflected in the Dunedin context, where key informants were
weary of the impacts scaling up AFNs in Dunedin such as the farmers market may have. Key values in the literature that AFNs are argued to provide were also highlighted in both contexts by key informants in relation to the benefits of shortening of the supply chain and re-fostering relationships between consumers and producers through face-to-face contact. It could be argued that these key aspects of the Dunedin context do represent to an extent ‘defensive localism’, a common critique of AFNs. Other non-local but ‘alternative’ food initiatives in the city had demonstrated scaling up of their impacts relatively quickly. For example, the All Saints Church vegetable box delivery scheme, and FoodShare were two examples that had gained scale in a short time frame, with the All Saints beginning earlier in 2015, but attracting over 300 customers to date. Thus, this highlights the challenge with scaling up ‘local’ food initiatives in Dunedin where key challenges such as climate, and population restricted the amount that could be produced locally in the city. OFN itself was attempting to address this challenge through finding a middle-ground between these initiatives focused on food security and justice, but re-enforcing aspects of the current system by being focused on cheap food thus supporting industrialisation of the food system, and creating structural change in the food system itself. Through initiatives such as seed saving, food identification and awareness raising and education, OFN was attempting to scale-up the impact of the local food movement in Dunedin and provide a middle space between these different types of ‘alternative’ initiatives.

In the Christchurch context, scaling up was not viewed by key informants as negative and a risk for core values of local food, but rather several key informants viewed it as a positive. Key informant 3(c) for example discussed how they felt breaking into the mainstream was important and viewed scaling up as an opportunity. This is clearly in contrast to some key informants in Dunedin who viewed scaling up, for example of the farmers market, as a potential threat to key values such as social interaction that the AFN was viewed as fostering. Key informants discussed how the recovery context had provided opportunity for specific initiatives to scale up. For example, as previously explained, Garden City 2.0 had enabled to scale up their operations from a food box delivery social enterprise to operating a store at specified times of the week through Life in Vacant Spaces, a trust which connected initiatives with vacant land or building spaces in the city. This example links to ideas by Johnston and Baker (2005), who argues for ‘third sector’ models of food provisioning that have an entrepreneurial dimension, but are also supported by state funds. As with defensive localism, AFS have been criticised in the literature for ‘fetishisation’ of local food for the most well-resourced consumers (Connelly, Markey & Roseland, 2011). Johnston and Baker (2005:314) for example highlight that “…Community Food System
programs must demonstrate an ability to channel food to a larger segment of marginalised populations, or risk being stigmatised as a luxury channel of food distribution that only a small percentage of the population is lucky enough to access or afford”. Thus, the authors argue that third sector initiatives that have state support are enabled to address this challenge. It is evident that in the Christchurch context, the earthquakes have enabled initiatives such as this that may not have been possible otherwise.

7.4.2 Resourcing Challenges and Opportunities

Another key difference relating to challenges and opportunities for the networks were the resources available to them. In Christchurch, as previously noted, the earthquake opportunity was discussed as providing the group with opportunity to leverage resources from bigger agencies that was not viewed as possible before. The group received funding for a part-time staff member from Soil and Health Canterbury and other funding from the Canterbury Community Trust. In comparison, OFN did not receive any formal funding, with the group viewing this as crucial in order to gain traction on some of the project areas they had identified. Thus, although in Christchurch CERA was often viewed as ‘disabling’ it is clear that the group was provided with significant resourcing opportunities and support due to their presence in the city. With both food networks formed around the same time, it would appear that the funding and mandate received from bigger agencies such as Central Government and also the CCC had enabled the group to undertake a wider array of projects much quicker than OFN.

7.5 Discussion Conclusion

This research sought to reveal the form of local food networks in the New Zealand context. Further to this, it intended to highlight opportunities and challenges in the two contexts chosen, and also examine how the local councils were currently engaging with food issues. The research has highlighted, like in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, that context is extremely important for understanding local food initiatives, with immense differences between the two networks analysed. The networks were employing different ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ strategies in their respective localities, influenced by different social, political and economic processes. In the Christchurch context, more of an insider change strategy had been utilised, heavily influenced by the context of the earthquakes and the presence of a staff ‘champion’ who was viewed as a genuine collaborator. In contrast, the Dunedin network had employed more an ‘outsider’ strategy to change, with key informants emphasizing the importance of collaboration if a formal arrangement like a food policy
council were to be implemented. Key informants in the Dunedin context rather viewed it was important to maintain ownership over the network and distance from the Council due to a lack of long-term commitment on the topic. It was also argued that in both contexts, the focus on food justice and resilience that the two groups have are symptomatic of larger political processes of neoliberalism and globalisation that are driving inequalities in the food system. Thus, in both of the contexts researched the groups were not only focused on food itself, but used food as a means of addressing broader social concerns.

Both of the local governments researched viewed that engaging with food issues is within the mandate of local government in New Zealand. However, in both contexts it was evident that either a political or staff champion had pushed the issue to be considered. Furthermore, while planners were not interviewed in this research it was revealed that food issues are being addressed under the LGA in comparison with the RMA, with key informants discussing how they felt there was much more scope for planners to engage with food issues. Several barriers or challenges for the engagement of councils with food issues were identified. For example, it was identified that local governments are just one stakeholder in a diverse food system, and that Council’s approaches to food are currently un-coordinated. In the Dunedin context, a food policy council was being considered to provide better co-ordination for food issues. However, key informants highlighted that they were sceptical over the Council becoming too dominant of a voice in this situation. Thus, the Christchurch example highlighted that a genuine, meaningful and interdependent relationship between local food initiatives and councils can result in positive outcome, such as collaborative food policy implementation.
8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This research has developed an understanding of the form of two local food networks in the New Zealand context, and also provided insights into how two local councils in New Zealand are currently engaging with food issues. As with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, the research highlighted the context-dependent nature of the local food initiatives, with context playing a large role in both of the networks’ forms and key activities. This chapter will first provide a synthesis of the results of this research, starting with the form of the local food networks, and then the local council engagement with food issues. The implications and significance of this research, including recommendations for policy makers and the councils, will then be highlighted and areas for future research recommended.

8.2 Synthesis of Results

8.2.1 Local Food Network Form

The results of this research demonstrated how the two local food networks had taken different forms, which were highly context-dependent and a result of various social, economic and political processes of both local and global natures. In the Christchurch context, Edible Canterbury was viewed by many of the key informants as facilitated by the earthquake context that had enabled collaboration between key stakeholders in the food system. The earthquakes were viewed as highlighting issues of food resilience, security and justice. These concerns were demonstrated through the key activities of the network, which was working towards creating a physical presence in the central city of a ‘food resilience hub’. Thus, these earthquake concerns had motivated the group to attempt to directly influence food distribution in the city. The collaborative nature of the group had resulted in the network employing more of an ‘insider’ change strategy. Chapter 5 and 7 highlighted
that the earthquakes were viewed by key informants as enabling larger key agencies to “get around the same table”, which was perceived as difficult prior to the earthquakes. This collaboration was viewed as enabling the group to leverage resources from these key agencies, with a close, genuinely collaborative working relationship with the CCC, for example, on policy development. Other key activity areas included earthquake-recovery related initiatives and education, awareness and advocacy work. It was argued that Edible Canterbury had thus undertaken work in line with what food policy councils are viewed as involved with in the literature.

In comparison to this, in Dunedin, OFN did not work as collaboratively with the DCC, with the group employing more of an ‘outsider’ change strategy. Key informants emphasized the purpose of the group being to advocate for an alternative to the current system, with localisation often viewed as this positive ‘alternative’. Resilience was also an important concept in the context, and it was evident key informants wanted more control over the food system. Due to its more political and activism-related focus, OFN had taken on more of an awareness and advocacy function and did not work as collaboratively with the Council. Key factors to explain this included that there was less trust with the Council than in the Christchurch context, with no consistent staff champion in Council the group could work with, and the Council’s commitment to food resilience thus far being temporary in nature. The group was hoping to move to taking on more practical projects by seeking funding to employ a part-time person. These activities were concerned with scaling up the impact of the group and attempting, in different ways, to enable structural change in the food system. OFN was viewed as trying to ‘fill space’ between AFNs in the city that were not strictly local in nature, but had scaled up quickly, such as FoodShare and the All Saints Food Box Scheme, and strictly local AFNs that viewed scaling up as a threat to key ‘alternative’ values, such as the Otago Farmers Market. Resourcing was also viewed a key difference between the two groups that had been formed at a similar time, with Edible Canterbury provided more opportunities to advance their goals quicker than OFN, particularly due to the earthquake context. The lack of a paid person to undertake work, both within the group itself and within the Council was viewed as a key challenge in the Dunedin context. Despite these differences, however, the focus on food justice and resilience that the two groups have were argued to be symptomatic of larger political processes of neoliberalism and globalisation that are driving inequalities in the food system. Thus, in both of the contexts researched the groups were not only focused on food itself, but used food as a means of addressing broader social concerns.
8.2.2 Local Council Engagement with Food Issues

The results demonstrated that key informants from the two local councils researched considered engaging with food issues inside the scope of local government within New Zealand. However, it was acknowledged that changes to the LGA in 2012 meant that councils were not particularly encouraged by the legislation to address sustainability issues, such as food. In both contexts, either the presence of a staff or political champion had resulted in the issue being considered by Council. In the Dunedin context, the lack of a staff champion was viewed as a negative by key informants, as unlike in the Christchurch context there was not a funded and dedicated staff member to advance the issue. It was also viewed by key informants in both contexts that there was room for the councils to play more of a leadership, advocacy and awareness role in relation to food, and furthermore ensure that policies reflect the political mandate given to support food initiatives. Other key barriers for councils engaging with food systems issues included the current un-coordinated approaches, with many different Council departments interfacing with food issues. Furthermore, the complex nature of the food system, with councils only being one stakeholder in the wider system was also viewed as a barrier. Conversely, political support and staff champions were viewed as enabling factors for councils engaging with food issues and enacting food policy. In both contexts, councils were engaging with food issues primarily under the Local Government Act 2002. While planners were not specifically interviewed as this research sought to examine councils’ current engagement, key informants indicated that planners operating under the Resource Management 1991 were engaging very little with food resilience issues, such as through the district plan review processes occurring in both cities. Key informants also highlighted that in both contexts, current processes for community groups to implement food projects such as orchards and community gardens, particularly on council land was cumbersome and difficult, with political will and confidence in dealing with ‘bureaucracy’ viewed as important factors for getting through the process. Thus, the two cases demonstrated that food is an issue that is beginning to be addressed at a strategic, higher-level way, for example through council policy, however specific processes for obtaining permission for community groups to undertake food projects were still viewed as difficult, particularly in the Dunedin context, this was viewed as yet to ‘match’ the political mandate Council had to support community groups.
8.3 Research Implications and Significance

The first chapter of this thesis situated the research in the wider context of the immense issues with the current food system. The current industrial food system is fundamentally unsustainable and has created significant inequalities between those who are under, and over nourished throughout the world (Levkoe, 2011). ‘Disembedding’ characteristics of the global food system are often held responsible for externalizing and creating numerous environmental, social and economic impacts (Wittman, Beckie & Hergesheimer, 2012). A global neoliberal environment has been held responsible for leaving local governments’ throughout the world with inadequate means to provide for their people (Allen, 2010). In response to these concerns, numerous diverse alternative food networks are materialising throughout the world. These local, context-dependent initiatives being used as a means to take control back of the food system and fill gaps left by government cut-backs (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Levkoe, 2011). Simultaneously, urban governments throughout the world are beginning to engage with food systems issues through local level policy and governance arrangements, most notably food policy councils. The food system provides opportunities to translate the ‘fuzzy’ concept of into meaningful policy and action. However, despite this engagement and opportunity, it is clear that there are challenges for local governments, given that food has been an issue traditionally addressed at higher-levels of government (Mendes, 2008).

This study has provided insights into these issues in the New Zealand context, which was previously under-researched. The qualitative comparative case study undertaken has provided a detailed understanding of local food networks in the two locations, and their interactions with local councils. It has highlighted, that as in other contexts, these initiatives are working to create change and obtain more control over their food system, while filling gaps left by the market through concerning themselves with social justice and resilience. While research has critiqued AFNs for perpetuating neoliberal thinking and lacking real means to create structural change in the food system, the research agenda on AFNs has been focusing on how these initiatives can scale up the impact they are having, without sacrificing core ‘alternative’ values. This research has demonstrated local food networks have been able to scale up the impact they are having through collaborative implementation of local food policy. Local councils’ current involvement with food issues has also been highlighted in the two cities. Thus, this research provides insights into success factors or barriers for the local councils engaging with food issues in the different contexts, and their engagement with the local food movements. It has highlighted the factors that are
important in relation to food for these movements, such as resilience and social justice, which could allow the councils to better engage with food issues due to this. Thus, the significance of this research is that it has provided insights into how local food networks and local governments are working collaboratively to advance work on food issues, a previously under researched area in New Zealand. The section that follows will discuss recommendations specific to the networks and contexts that were the basis of this research.

8.4 Recommendations

This research has shed light on both barriers and enabling factors for councils engaging with food issues, policy and community groups involved with local food and food resilience. The Christchurch context has provided a positive example of collaborative food policy enactment. This example reveals lessons for other councils and policy makers, particularly for the Dunedin context. Key factors for this success in the Christchurch context included the presence of a staff champion that was willing to work in a genuinely collaborative manner with members of Edible Canterbury. Both parties were thus advancing their goals through this relationship in an interdependent way. The staff member had also worked with community members for a significant time period, thus building a trusting relationship. In Dunedin, Council key informants expressed desire to implement a food policy council. However, members of OFN expressed concern with this becoming ‘dominated’ by the Council. Thus, drawing on the Christchurch example, it is recommended that if the DCC were to implement a formal FPC or other governance arrangement, it should work in a genuinely collaborative manner with community groups and other stakeholders to ensure interdependence and advancement of goals for both parties. A level of trust and mutual benefit between different stakeholders were aspects considered important for collaborative planning and the success of food policy councils in other research also.

Secondly, it is also recommended that high-level strategic goals or policies implemented by the councils regarding food issues need to be better reflected in all aspects of council activities. This was particularly emphasized in the Dunedin context where the process to obtain consent and permission for community groups to undertake community gardening or orchard activities was viewed as difficult to get through, despite political support for the issue. Factors such as previous knowledge of the system and confidence with bureaucracy were viewed as important for getting through the process. Similarly in Christchurch, key informants highlighted that processes were relatively restricted. Thus, there is a need in
Chapter Eight: Conclusion

both contexts to ensure that higher-level strategic goals are reflected better in ‘every-day’ processes.

Lastly, it is recommended that the councils in both locations play a stronger advocacy and leadership role on food issues. While many key informants highlighted that local food initiatives, such as community gardens, needed to be community-driven in order to be successful, key informants felt there was more room for the Council to advocate for local, healthy food such as at community events, purchasing or catering. Key informants from both contexts viewed awareness as a key barrier for local food, and thus there is clear potential for the councils to better support and encourage local and healthy food in order to promote these alternatives which are beneficial for communities’ wellbeing.

8.5 Areas for Future Research

Several areas for future research can be identified through this research. Primarily, this thesis sought to explore how councils’ were currently engaging with food issues, which was being undertaken under the Local Government Act 2002. Thus, there is scope for more research that examines how local governments could address food systems issues through planning mechanisms under the Resource Management Act 1991, such as through district plans. Furthermore, the theoretical basis for this study was formed based on the theory of ‘phronetic’ social science that emphasizes contextual knowledge that can provide actors with the means to produce change. Thus, it is evident that research in other contexts could provide more insights into context-dependent food movements. Furthermore, this research focused on two more ‘strategic’ networks that were grouping local food initiatives in the two cities and fulfilling higher, advocacy-related functions. Thus, there is scope to explore in-depth social enterprises and alternative food networks that are involved more directly with food distribution and retail to understand better how these initiatives are addressing the issues of scaling up in the New Zealand context.

8.6 Concluding Remarks

Our world is faced with mounting sustainability challenges that require significant changes to current thinking and existing structures. The food system is one example where these immense challenges can be better understood, and also addressed. This research has shown that like elsewhere, grass-roots community initiatives in New Zealand are working to take back power, and control of the food system in order to create a more sustainable and equitable future. These groups are creating real change and directly influencing the local
authorities in which they reside. It is evident that in order to make a brighter future a reality, local governments need to engage with these groups in collaborative and genuine ways in order for mutual relationships to be formed, and real progress created on the numerous challenges our society and environment faces.
Reference List


study of urban planners and urban farmers from the greater Chicago metropolitan area', *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 3, 3: 1-12.


Food Resilience Network (2014), *Food Resilience Network Action Plan*.


Our Food Network (2013), *Our Food Network Principles and Objectives*.


**Legislation Referred To:**

Local Government Act (2002)

Resource Management Act (1991)
Appendix A: Ethics Information Sheet and Consent Form

[Reference Number: as allocated upon approval by the Human Ethics Committee]

Date

Food Systems Planning in Christchurch and Dunedin: A comparative case study
INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The project aims to research local food networks in the localities of Dunedin and Christchurch, and also the ways in which the local governments in the two contexts could best engage with these movements and food system issues. This research is being undertaken as a requirement for Kathleen’s Master of Planning programme.

What Types of Participants are being sought?

Participants who have an involvement with local food networks or food issues in Christchurch and Dunedin are being sought to participate in this research. Planners, councillors or policy advisors working in local government are also sought for the study.

What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in an interview.

If you are participating in an interview you will be asked your opinion on local food issues and the networks in either Christchurch or Dunedin. This interview will be recorded if you consent. There will be topics of discussion that I would like to discuss allowing the interview to develop along different lines of discussion you
find important. You have the option of remaining anonymous if you wish. It is intended that the interview will be between half an hour to an hour in length.

Participants will also be asked if they wish to partake in later discussions regarding the preliminary research in order to provide feedback on initial analysis of the research.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself at any time.

**What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?**
Participants may be recorded with their consent. Audio recordings will be securely stored and only available to the researcher and the immediate supervisor.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. Any personal information, such as contact details, will be destroyed immediately and remaining data will be securely stored electronically in a password-protected file. The results of the project may be published and will be available to those who have been involved, upon request.

Reasonable precautions will be taken to protect and destroy data gathered by email. However, the security of electronically transmitted information cannot be guaranteed. Caution is advised in the electronic transmission of sensitive material.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes the motivations, opportunities, goals and barriers of the different food networks. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the Department of Geography is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

**Can Participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself.

**What if Participants have any Questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

*Kathleen Haylock* and *Sean Connelly*
This study has been approved by the Department stated above. However, if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479-8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Food Systems Planning in Christchurch and Dunedin: a comparative case study

CONSENT FORM FOR

PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information e.g. audio files will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning will include the goals, motivations, opportunities and tensions of the different food networks. Questions for those involved with local government will consist of similar ideas regarding food systems issues including what barriers or opportunities exist for Council to engage with these. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. It is anticipated that it will be unlikely that you will suffer any discomfort by participating in this research. However, you may withdraw at any time if you feel uncomfortable. There is no penalty or disadvantage to you if wish to withdraw.

6. There is no reward or compensation for participation.

7. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity (If I have requested it).

I wish/do not wish to remain anonymous (circle one).

I agree to take part in this project.

............................................................................. ........................................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.............................................................................
(Printed Name)
Sample questions/topics of discussion for people involved with the local food initiatives:

1. What is your motivation for your involvement with the local food network? Does this vary between members?
2. What is the make-up of the group, who is involved? What other organisations does the network work with (if any)?
3. What are the predominant goals of the food network you are involved with?
4. Are there any tensions that exist within the network between different groups/members involved?
5. What are the key challenges/constraints the network faces?
6. Does the network plan to ‘scale up’ the impact it is currently having?
7. How does the network currently engage with local government?
8. Do you think there is room for more engagement and in what way could this be facilitated?

Sample questions/topics of discussion for people working in local government:

1. How does the council currently engage with local food/food systems issues?
2. What opportunities/barriers are there for this engagement?
3. What local food/food issues is the council currently aware of?
Appendix B: Our Food Network Survey Questions

Hello:
You are invited to participate in this survey to help guide Our Food Network (OFN) in its support of local food initiatives in the Dunedin Region. You will be asked to answer questions about your perceptions and experience with local food initiatives. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can either skip the question or withdraw from the survey at any point. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this survey will be reported only in the aggregate. Your name and contact details are collected purely to keep you informed of OFN activities. No personal information will be made available without your prior consent. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Dr. Sean Connelly at 479-8771 or by email at sean.connelly@otago.ac.nz.

Part A: Profile of personal interest in Dunedin Region food system
1. Name
2. Email / Contact Details
3. Location / Neighbourhood
4. From the list below, please indicate the top three values or issues that contribute to your interest in local food initiatives (please choose only three):
   - Supporting family farms
   - Ecological restoration / biodiversity
   - Climate change and food miles
   - Food security and social justice
   - Public health / nutrition
   - Trust and transparency in the food system
   - Food quality
   - Local economic development
   - Barter economy / social economy
   - Self-sufficiency
   - Other (please specify)

5. From the list below, please indicate the top three local food initiatives that you currently contribute to or would be most interested in supporting or contributing to (please choose only three):
   - Buying local food
   - Commercial production of local food
   - Community gardens
   - Farmers markets
   - Local food processing
   - Education and awareness
   - Policy and advocacy for local food
   - Organic production
   - Backyard gardening
   - Community supported agriculture
   - Retail
   - Food service / restaurant / catering
   - Bee keeping
   - Community orchards
   - Job training / support for new farmers
   - Wild harvesting
   - Financial investment in local food
   - Other (please specify)

6. What skills and resources can you offer to advance your interests identified above?
7. Are you currently involved with any formal or informal local food initiatives or organizations? Please list them here and continue on with Part B. If no, skip to Part C.

Part B: Profile of formal and informal organizations involved in local food initiatives. Please skip to Part C is this does not apply for you.
8. Thinking of the initiative that you are most involved with, how would you describe its aims and objectives?
9. How long has this initiative been operating?
   - Less than 1 year
1. How many people does this initiative employ (FTE)?
   Less than 1
   1-2
   3-5
   more than 5

2. How many volunteers does this initiative rely on, on a regular basis?
   Less than 1
   1-2
   3-5
   More than 5

3. What is the annual operating budget of this initiative?
   Less than $5000
   $5000-20000
   $20000-50000
   More than $50000

Other (please specify)

4. What is the primary source of funding / revenue for this initiative?
   Government grants
   Foundations / trusts grants
   Fundraising / donations
   Sales

5. What other organizations does this initiative work with on a regular basis?

6. What methods do you use to connect with other people and organizations engaged in local food activities?

Part C: Food System Challenges and Opportunities

6. What is your motivation for being involved in local food initiatives?

7. In your view, what are the three main challenges that limit what it is that you are currently doing?

8. The food system is often described as the linkages between production, storage, distribution, processing, retail, consumption and waste. What aspect of the food system do you see yourself contributing to the most?
   Production
   Storage / distribution
   Processing
   Retail
   Consumption
   Waste

9. In your opinion, what aspect of the food system needs to be addressed in order to expand local food opportunities in Dunedin?
   Production
   Storage / distribution
   Processing
   Retail
   Consumption
   Waste

Part D: Role of a local food network

10. What role for a local food network would best support your interests or those of the organization(s) / initiative(s) you are involved with?
   Coordination of local food activities
   Education and awareness
   Food policy advocacy
   Capacity building
   Marketing

11. What organizations do you seek support from (in terms of funding, knowledge, experience, best practices, etc.)?

12. What skills and/or resources would you be willing to contribute to Our Food Network?

Thank you for your participation. We will notify you of the results from this survey in 2014.
Appendix C: Food Resilience Network Action Plan
(Adopted by Edible Canterbury)

SUMMARY - Food Resilience Network Action Plan
Version 20-10-2014

Vision: a patchwork of food producing initiatives based around local hotspots and linked together like a ribbon woven into the fabric of our communities.

1 Cultivate Relationships
Foster partnerships, coordinate activities and provide governance on food resilience.

a) Create a supportive network for mentoring leaders, coordinating actions and advancing on the vision through the Food Resilience Network.
b) Encourage organisations to sign the Edible Canterbury Charter and to make commitments on how they will advance food resilience in the region.
c) Identify and map key stakeholders, potential supporters and sponsors of food resilience in Canterbury so approaches can be made to advance involvement and support.
d) Develop sponsorship package based on mutual benefits to potential supporters and the Food Resilience Network activities.
e) Use established crowd sourcing tools to build support for specific food resilience projects.
f) Develop supportive information sharing networks across New Zealand and internationally.

2 Grow understanding, skills and celebrate local food
Communicate, educate and inspire people to grow and enjoy local food.

a) Establish Edible Canterbury web-portal to create one stop shop for information about growing and enjoying local food.
b) Develop resources that help individuals, communities and institutions to grow their own food, to find food in their area, and to find places to buy healthy, local food in Canterbury.
c) Establish targeted events and communications at key planting and harvest times.
d) Provide practical help and advice to gardeners at local markets and events such as soil PH testing and Pest Identification and through education courses run at community gardens.
e) Work with local businesses and nurseries to offer DIY training education for the public on how to grow and cook healthy food.
f) Foster local champions, patrons and community leaders able to inspire and lift the profile of edible Canterbury activities.

3 Propagate and Support Edible Gardens
Support new and existing edible gardens in homes, schools, and
### 3 Communities and Food Security

- **a)** Raise the profile and encourage volunteers and support for the existing edible gardens in Canterbury.
- **b)** Support councils in identify land potentially suitable for edible gardens in Canterbury.
- **c)** Establish edible garden brokering and educational services to facilitate new community gardens and school gardens in Canterbury.
- **d)** Foster linkages able to support new and existing community and school gardens—such as: local businesses; plant and material suppliers; City Care; educators such as CPIT (Te Puna Oranga o Seven Oaks); and designers such as Lincoln University landscape faculty.
- **e)** Explore feasibility of establishing a “Fruit Trees For Canterbury” organisation to deliver low cost, disease resistant plants for public and community garden use.
- **f)** Support high-profile demonstration edible garden projects such as Agropolis in central Christchurch and explore organic waste processing from surrounding businesses.

### 4 Strengthen Our Local Food Economy

*Encourage more localised food production, distribution and access to healthy food.*

- **a)** Enable more local growers of food by supporting the Biological Husbandry Unit’s Stepping Stone programme that incubates budding market gardeners.
- **b)** Support the establishment of food cooperatives surrounding our towns and cities that are able to supply local markets with fresh locally grown produce.
- **c)** Encourage new farmers markets, green grocers and boxed delivery services in the region.
- **d)** Develop demonstration sites able to promote innovative production and distribution methods such as urban agriculture/city farm linked to local food cooperatives and Kaputone Community Orchard in Marshlands.
- **e)** Establish heritage fruit and nut archive and nursery to improve the availability of disease resistant and nutritious plants well suited to Canterbury conditions.

### 5 Grow Supportive Policies

*Evidence based policy development and advocacy to advance food resilience.*

- **a)** Collaborate with the Christchurch City Council on the creation and implementation of its Food Resilience Policy.
- **b)** Encourage and support Selwyn and Waimakariri District Council actions that support community gardens and food resilience in the region.
- **c)** Advocate for the availability of healthy food in schools, local village shopping centers, and at Council facilities and events.
- **d)** Advocate for healthy food and gardening literacy within the school curriculum to support establishment and on-going operation of school gardens.
- **e)** Explore ways for community gardens to become more self-sustaining organisations and the creation of other social enterprises that advance food resilience.
- **f)** Explore incentives for businesses offering land for productive uses or
volunteer time from staff.

g) Examine existing policies, regulations or bylaws that act as barriers to the establishment of edible gardens and suggest ways to create an enabling food framework.

h) Work with CERA and local councils about opportunities for productive spaces in Residential Red Zone areas.

Key supporting organisations of the Food Resilience Network (in alphabetical order)

- Avon Otakaro Network
- Canterbury Community Gardens Association
- Canterbury District Health Board
- Canterbury University
- Christchurch City Council
- Christchurch Food Forest Collective
- Enviro-Schools – Environment Canterbury
- Garden City 2.0
- Greening The Rubble
- Kids Edible Gardens
- Lincoln Envirotown
- Lincoln University – Biological Husbandry Unit
- Project Lyttelton
- Rangiora Express
- Selwyn District Council
- Soil and Health Canterbury
- Sow and Grow
- Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu
- Tree Crops Association
- Waimakariri District Council
Appendix D: Our Food Network Objectives and Principles

OUR FOOD NETWORK
Our Food Network is based in Dunedin. Its aim is to stimulate the production, distribution and consumption of local food and in that way contribute to the building of a resilient and prosperous community.

BACKGROUND
The Network had its beginnings in two Local Food Forums held in Dunedin, the first in November, 2012, and the second in August, 2013. On each occasion it was evident that there is a broad constituency of interested parties, including home and community gardeners, small-to-medium-scale commercial growers, food distributors, academics and welfare agencies. Equally clear was the belief that there is a place for some sort of agency to convert that considerable energy into a powerful combined force for change. Our Food Network was set up to provide that agency.

PRINCIPLES

• **Openness**

  The Network is open to anyone with any kind of interest in local food. Although it is based in Dunedin, it sets no physical “boundaries” for its operation. It encourages informed debate and discussion about the many issues – social, technological, environmental, political, economic and ethical – concerning local food provision in our communities.

• **Sustainability**

  Like similar groups around the world, the Network sees itself as having a crucial part to play as we strive to adapt to the multiple challenges we face in the twenty-first century. The Network is committed to the belief that a strong local food system is essential to our continued well-being in an increasingly uncertain world.

• **Community**

  The Network is dedicated to the promotion of community as the basis for a resilient society. It is a “grass roots” organisation which embodies the idea of a responsible citizenry.

• **Food Rights**

  The Network believes all people have the right to decide what they eat and that everyone should have access to healthy food that is locally produced.

OBJECTIVES

• **Connection**

  To provide mechanisms for individuals, organisations and businesses to share information, ideas and resources to build a strong, collaborative, local food network.
  To facilitate communication and coordination of local food related activities amongst network members.
  To liaise with other local food networks throughout the country.
To share information about local food developments around the world.

- **Engagement**
  
  To promote conscious participation in the local food system by producers, processors and consumers by encouraging and advertising activities such as positive food procurement practices, redistribution of excess food and easy identification of local food products.

- **Production**
  
  To support all food producers (from commercial operators to backyard and community gardeners) by helping to break down any barriers to increasing the quantity, quality and diversity of local food products.

- **Prosperity**
  
  To increase the significance of local food in our regional economy by promoting the interests of businesses (new and existing) involved in the production or distribution of local food on a commercial basis.

- **Education**
  
  To ensure that we all have access to the knowledge we need to grow, process, store - and *value* - the food we consume. To promote the benefits of producing and consuming local food within our communities.

- **Research**
  
  To encourage academic study of all aspects of our local food system and make the findings of those studies available to the wider community.

- **Advocacy**
  
  To engage with authorities at both regional and national level on issues relating to the sustainable production, processing and distribution of local food.

- **Social Justice**
  
  To support agencies working to ensure equitable access to food.

- **Celebration**
  
  To celebrate the production, distribution and consumption of local food. To promote or endorse events which enhance our
Appendix E: Edible Canterbury Charter

We, the signatories to this Charter, believe that all people in the Canterbury region have the right to fresh, nourishing food that is grown and prepared locally in ways that are ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate.

We support the Food Resilience Network’s vision of “a patchwork of food producing initiatives based around local hotspots and linked together like a ribbon woven into the fabric of our communities”.

As such, we commit to working collaboratively with the other signatories of this Charter to make this vision a reality.

Edible Canterbury Charter — an initiative of the Food Resilience Network

Values and Principles

**Accessibility:** access to nutritious food is the right of all people and is a basic determinant of health;

**Mahinga kai:** food gathering and food growing spaces that reflect the values of local iwi are integral to the vision of a food resilient region;

**Cultural appropriateness:** food and culture are intimately connected and the many different cultural groups that make up our region’s population should all have access to food that is culturally appropriate to them within the limits of our climate;

**Ecological sustainability:** a resilient food system implies one in which food is grown in ways that regenerate the natural environment (for example using principles of organic agriculture, permaculture, agro-ecology etc);

**Social enterprise and local economic development:** we endorse the establishment of organisations and businesses that grow, process and distribute food locally, and the development of a diverse local food economy;

**Food education:** education about nourishing food for all ages and in a variety of learning places is crucial;

**Community empowerment:** everyone has a role to play in creating a food resilient region and everyone’s role is valued;

**Collaboration:** creating a food resilient region requires partnerships between many agencies and cannot be owned by any single group.

[www.edible.org.nz](http://www.edible.org.nz)