

2013

Heywood Food Access – Action Plan



Melanie Russell

Background

The Heywood Food Access Action Plan has been developed as a pilot project as part of the strategic direction of the South West Transport Connections 2012/13. A community development approach has been used to generate a community driven solution to local food access concerns. The outcomes of this pilot could then provide opportunities for implementation with other communities across the catchment.

Research was conducted in 2011 by the Portland and Heywood Transport Needs Analysisⁱ which identified food access as one of the main concerns affecting the Heywood community with 35.7% of Heywood participants reported that lack of transport impacted on their weekly food shopping. From October to January 2012, Transport Connections continued community consultation by conducting interviews, focus groups and a community survey to identify the access issues at a local level and further define the problem.

What We Found:

Access to emergency food is limited for residents in Heywood with no local storage and, although stakeholders expressed a perceived need for emergency food, there were few referrals (possibly as a result of stigma and lack of a clear access point in Heywood). Loaves and Fishes expressed interest in a coordinated food parcel delivery to Heywood if storage was available.

The SGPCP Food Security Needs Assessmentⁱⁱ found that transport impacts on access to food in small communities; access to fresh food is limited for people in rural areas due to limited supply through stores and supermarkets. This also impacts on food quality, availability and cost.

Availability and cost of food was reported as a barrier to food access through the stakeholder engagement and community consultation. A community survey administered to community members found that 35% of young families indicated some trouble accessing the food they want to eat. The survey captured the distribution of the source of food for young families in Heywood with 70% of survey respondents accessing the supermarkets in Heywood and Portland, a small percentage (10%) growing their own produce, while a small percentage (10%) accessed take away foods. When asked the major barriers to accessing desirable food, the majority of respondents indicated availability (35%) and freshness (17%) were their biggest concerns.

Common areas of need identified during consultation included increased access to fresh accessible food, further education around home grown produce and healthy lunch box choices, and increased access to emergency food options.

What's Next?

South West Transport Connections will respond to access needs by working with the Heywood Community to increase the economical and physical access to food for low SES families.

The Heywood Food Access Plan will primarily focus on; strengthening existing local partnerships. The community consultation highlighted a number of community assets in Heywood that could increase food access such as the weekly shopping bus, backyard gardening and development of small raised garden beds (wheelbarrows), food breakfast programs (WMAC), potential garden opportunities through Men's Shed, Community kitchen and the Heywood Food Swap . This project will work with partnerships throughout Heywood to increase access to the Heywood Food Swap by low SES families and will include evaluation of current participation, promotion of the Food Swap to the target group, education and skill development to facilitate participation, sustainability by connecting to HEARL and post project evaluation and reporting.

This project will also investigate opportunities to link the Heywood Community to emergency food services.

Action Plan:

| Objective: To increase the participation of low SES families in Heywood Food Swap Meet by June 2013. | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|---|------------------|
| Strategy | Activity | Key Partners | Evaluation | Timelines |
| 1. Set up co-ordination structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with HRH, HFS committee and HEARL | HRH HFS HEARL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination structure set up Agenda item for HEARL meetings | - Jan – Mar 2013 |
| 2. Collect baseline data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather anecdotal evidence from HRH, HFS steering committee and Men's Shed Collect attendance records and some demographic data | HRH HFS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected | - Jan – Feb 2013 |
| 3. Work with HFS committee to develop communication plan and appropriate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication strategies may include; logo creation, local presentations, brochure development, case studies, cotton shopping bags and increased | HFS HEARL & partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication plan complete Promotional material circulated | - May 2013 |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|------------|
| promotional material | Facebook promotion. | | | |
| 4. Develop a community engagement plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist coordination group to plan family friendly activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring food swap to Kindergarten for special meet (sausage sizzle, face painting, giveaways). - Family friendly workshops following HFS (baby food making, healthy lunch box, growing vegetable basics). | HFS Playgroup / Kinder Primary / secondary schools HEARL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of activities • Attendance numbers & outcomes | - Apr 2013 |
| 5. Increase skill development to increase produce available to swap for target group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate workshops showcasing homemade goods (seedlings, recipe cards, handmade crafts, fact sheets) that can be swapped by the children / families. | Playgroup / kinder Primary / secondary schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops complete • Survey post workshop | - Apr 2013 |
| 6. Write report and disseminate findings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write report • Disseminate findings to community, stakeholders and service providers | Local community / stakeholders SGGPCP partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report complete | - May 2013 |
| 7. Gather post project data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate attendance records from each HFS, including demographic data • Gather qualitative data throughout other activities; including attendance / barriers / enablers | HFS Playgroup/Kinder Primary / secondary schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collected | - May 2013 |

Emergency Food Access

| Objective: To investigate the access to emergency food relief in the Heywood community by June 2013. | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|------------------|
| Strategy | Activity | Key Partners | Evaluation | Timeline |
| 1. Investigate current logistical arrangements to access emergency food through Loaves and Fishes and OzChild. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Loaves and Fishes and OzChild to document current processes | L&F OzChild | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information documented | - Feb 2013 |
| 2. Investigate partnerships that could facilitate emergency food distribution in Heywood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with partners to identify local capacity Investigate potential storage options | Heywood service providers Primary / secondary schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners and storage options identified | - Mar 2013 |
| 3. Work with local providers to promote emergency food access through local networks and publications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather current information regarding emergency food relief across Heywood and Portland Place information in local newsletters, newspapers and relevant publications. Circulate through networks | L&F / OzChild Local newsletter / newspaper Local service providers Primary / secondary schools HEARL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information circulated | - Mar 2013 |
| 4. Report recommendations to emergency food services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write report and circulate to relevant services | L&F / OzChild | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report complete | - Mar – May 2013 |

ⁱ 2011 Portland and Heywood Transport Needs Analysis

ⁱⁱ 2011 Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership, Community Food Security Needs Assessment