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Academic excellence for
business and the professions

Centre for Food Policy

Educating, researching & influencing
for integrated and inclusive food policy

Centre for Food Policy

Highlights of 2019

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Connecting policy with people...

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Food – and its implications for nutrition, health, sustainability, livelihoods, society, culture and economy – was so much in the spotlight in 2019, it was hard to keep up. And yet despite the recognition that food holds so much promise as a solution to so many global problems, food policy is still not doing a good enough job of addressing those problems.

At the Centre for Food Policy we are dedicated to generating and sharing insights that shine a light on how food policy can do better. Our work focuses particularly on fixing policy disconnects. This year we initiated a series of briefs *Rethinking Food Policy: A Fresh Approach to Policy and Practice* which set out how food policy can be done differently by taking connections into account – the connections within the food system, between different challenges and between the policies designed to address those challenges.

We are not naïve to the challenge of putting this type of approach into practice. That's why in 2019 we expanded our educational offer beyond our thriving Masters to include Continuing Professional Development training courses which aim to shift mindsets and build skills to enable decision-makers and influencers to put this approach into practice. We look forward to building on that in 2020. In these pages, the alumni of all our educational programmes – who work in governments, UN agencies, businesses and NGOs across the world – talk about the difference a food policy education can bring to their ability to make connections in their work.

The voices of the staff and students of the Centre for Food Policy take us through the rest of our 2019 highlights. Our approach is to take a big picture view of how policy plays out in a food systems context – but to do so through deep engagement with the people and policies of the food system. Connecting policy with people supposed to benefit from it is a crucial part of that. It's an approach which is both grounded and sky-high - and will continue to characterise the way we do business into 2020.

Corinna Hawkes
**Director, Centre for Food Policy,
City, University of London**
January 2020

🐦 @CorinnaHawkes



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Masters Programme 2019

In July 2019, 34 students graduated from our MSc in Food Policy (19 Full Time and 15 Part-Time).

What our students say

Madeleine Coste, MSc Food Policy, 2018/2019

"What I retain from the MSc in Food Policy goes far beyond the knowledge I gained from the fascinating lectures from our top-quality professors. On top of the variety of topics covered, the course exposed me to so many different angles from which food consumption, production and policy can be analysed which has proven to be very valuable in my day-to-day work in a Brussels-based NGO. The methods and skills learned through the assignments have turned out to be completely applicable to the advocacy work I am now doing. Finally, I am very grateful that the course brought me out of my comfort zone as my dissertation topic led me to conduct interviews in South Africa, a very memorable experience!"

Katharina Wachter, MSc Food Policy, 2018/2019

"The MSc Food Policy taught me an incredible amount about food systems and their complexities. I now have a much more critical approach to possible policy solutions and recognise that it is never black and white, nor one-size-fits-all, as food is so deeply linked with health, environment, economy, culture... The need for an integrated approach is gaining in recognition, and the MSc has given me such a unique and sought-after profile that I was able to secure myself a traineeship within the new 'Farm to Fork' sustainable food strategy of the European Commission."

Anneleen Vos, MSc Food Policy, 2018/19

"In my MSc Dissertation, I analysed whether public policies in Senegal are driving or impeding a transition to agroecology. I received a prize awarded by the Worshipful Company of Cooks for the best MSc dissertation and was able to attend their prize winners' reception and lunch in London. Professionally, the MSc helped me move into a career in policy, as I am currently working as a Senior Policy Officer for the International Rescue Committee. In addition, I recently got a part-time job as a Coordinator for the Voice Network, a network of NGOs advocating for a more sustainable and just cacao sector."

As a part-time distance learner, I was able to combine work and study. During the last semester of the MSc, I travelled to Brazil where I got hands-on experience on organic farms. While analysing Brazil's food security policy for an assignment, I could attend a biennial meeting of Brazil's food security council in Brasilia which really brought the subject to life."

21 students obtained a Distinction for their degree, which is a reflection of how hard our students work and how engaged they are in the course.

As usual, dissertations covered a wide range of fascinating and topical questions including the policy implications of gendered meat eating, the governance of organic certification regimes in the EU, sustainable diets in South Africa, school food policies, EU Common Agricultural Policy, the role of small ethical businesses in urban food policy, and the influence of diet-related messages on Instagram.

We congratulate Anneleen Vos for being awarded the Worshipful Company of Cooks 2019 prize for the best overall dissertation, for her dissertation entitled *'Barriers and drivers for a multidimensional regime-shift towards agroecology. Are public policies driving or impeding a transition to agroecology in Senegal?'*

We also congratulate Helen Strong for receiving the the Worshipful Company of Farmers' Prize for the best dissertation of relevance to the food and farming sector, for her dissertation entitled: *'Setting the agenda for post-Brexit food policy in Britain: An analysis of how Brexit-related food issues are presented in the UK print media.'*

In September 2019, we

welcomed 36 students on the course: 16 full Time students, 5 Part-Time Year 1 students, and 14 returning Part-Time Year 2 students. The students this new cohort comes from 9 different countries, 58% are from the UK, 11% from other EU countries, and 31% from outside Europe (Australia, Iran, India, Malaysia, Japan and the USA). Their average age is 32 and 81% are female.

Programme Director, Dr Claire Marris, explains the unique nature of our MSc Food Policy

"Our Masters programme is unique because we use a systems approach and focus on the interconnections between health, environment and social dimensions of the food system in order to advance the Centre's vision of better food for all. The MSc in Food Policy is about analysing, researching and informing the future of food policy from the local to the global scale. It is taught by a team of food policy specialists who are each actively involved in research and policy making - practices that are reflected in the fresh approaches that we take to teaching, and the access that our students gain to new research being undertaken in the field of food policy.

I am particularly proud of seeing the way the students grow during the course...in their confidence about their ability to change the food system and make a positive difference in the world.

Using our research and teaching expertise, we train our students not in what to think, but how to think more rigorously. It was wonderful when a student told me just two weeks into the course this year that 'I am already thinking differently'.

We are proud to welcome students from a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and disciplines, making the programme very accessible. Our student body coheres through a shared passion to change food policy for the better, and through a desire to alter the way they think about food policy. We see its diversity as a real strength, and nurture the diversity and interdisciplinarity of our student body. Our students also learn from each other through their diverse backgrounds, and develop strong bonds with one another through the duration of their studies.

The strong academic and vocational opportunities that our programme provides is reflected in the range of exciting jobs in a variety of sectors that graduates of this course go on to obtain. You can read more about some of the amazing careers that our alumni are pursuing in the alumni section of this annual report."

You can read more about our MSc in Food Policy on our [programme page](#).

🐦 @claire_marris

Dr Claire Marris and Professor Tim Lang with three of our MSc Food Policy graduates; Madeleine Coste, Katharina Wachter and Anneleen Vos. Graduation, July 2019.



Our New Short Courses

Dr Rebecca Wells

Course Benefits

Our courses specialise in filling the skills and knowledge gaps in current food sector professions, and participants benefit in the following ways:

- **We promote intersectional learning**
Cross-curricular education which applies, integrates and transfers knowledge and promotes learning by increasing motivation and stimulating engagement.
- **We provide exposure to the latest food research**
Introducing up to date research from across a broad range of disciplines.
- **We provide networking and collaborative problem solving**
Engaging with other food professionals, gaining insights from a multi-sectoral approach in mixed-sector group working using real-life examples to promote group discussion and collective decision-making.
- **We apply practical local case studies to test theoretical concepts**
Collaborating with fellow participants in participant-led problem-based learning.
- **We use modern learning technologies**
Providing access to resources through virtual learning platforms.
- **We offer membership of a food systems network**
Creating a cohort identity which course alumni can take back into the workplace.

In 2019 the Centre for Food Policy developed, piloted and delivered a programme of complimentary Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses in Food Systems (in collaboration with IFSTAL, the Interdisciplinary Food Systems Teaching and Learning programme). Entitled 'Understanding Food Systems' and 'Changing Food Systems', the two day courses were led by Centre Teaching Fellows Dr Annabel de Frece and Dr Rebecca Wells. Bringing the Centre's academic excellence in food systems research to a wider audience of professionals across the sector, they also provide the ideal taster for our [MSc programme in Food Policy](#). The course leader, Dr Rebecca Wells, now a Lecturer at the Centre, explains how they work.

"The aim of these courses is to foster 'connected thinking' and food policy integration that is currently lacking, both in the processes which underpin policymaking and often within the policies themselves. Many tensions exist between the various actors in the food system, which have proven difficult to resolve. The concept of food systems is increasingly used among policymakers at all levels. Many would like a better understanding of what this concept means and how we can use it to enact positive change in the food system. We see these courses as an opportunity to bring together a diverse range of people who have a role in the food system and equip them with the skills, tools and opportunities to work on current and pressing food systems challenges together, whilst nurturing networking opportunities with a wide range of professionals from other (often complimentary) areas of the food sector. Interdisciplinarity lies at the heart of the Centre for Food Policy's work - an approach that we want to bring to a wider audience through these courses."

We aim to bridge existing gaps in food systems and food policy by bringing together professionals from across the food sector: from national government to local government; from international agencies to local charities and academics to food industry professionals in order to build a shared understanding of how food systems operate, and to influence food systems change for the better.

We were really pleased with the positive feedback. Participants told us the course was "really friendly and accessible", had a "fantastic balance of industry/NGOs/academic participants" and was a "stimulating thought provoking and most enjoyable experience."

 [@wellsrebecca](#)

What They Did in 2019

Centre for Food Policy Alumni

Clara Widdison – Programme Manager, Kitchen Social, Greater London Authority, London, UK (Graduated MSc Food Policy 2017)

“I lead Kitchen Social, a pan-London response to school holiday food insecurity, which is part of the Mayor of London’s food strategy. We provide food to more than 10,000 children each year who might otherwise not be able to access hot, nutritious meals, whilst also providing enriching activities to ensure all children have an enjoyable break. I am currently planning the first London Child Food Insecurity Summit at City Hall. This will be the first time cross-sector stakeholders will convene to develop a response to child food insecurity in the capital. The MSc at the Centre for Food Policy gave me the opportunity to explore different areas of the food system, and understand which areas interest me most. It developed my ability to produce evidence informed practice and assume a leadership role in my field. The course also gave me the confidence to go into the world and make a difference.”



Stephanie Lim – Senior Executive, Corporate Communications, Musim Mas Group, Singapore (Graduated MSc Food Policy 2017)

“I work to improve the livelihoods of oil palm smallholders in Indonesia, by scaling up smallholder programmes on a geographical landscape. I work for the second largest palm oil company globally. I’ve been to rural areas to see how smallholders farm, to meetings in the capital of Indonesia, and to palm oil conferences in other countries. To some, palm oil is seen as having a negative impact, but it does alleviate poverty and it can be done sustainably with proper planning. My work is to educate on the difference between palm oil vs sustainable palm oil. Being educated on the MSc at the Centre for Food Policy has made a difference to my career in that I am more aware of the wider issues of how the food supply chain has impacts on health, environment and society. Also, I am more familiar with concepts relevant to my field of work, such as land use issues, smallholders and value chains.”



Monica Foss – Supply Chain Coordinator, Equal Exchange, Boston, United States (Graduated MSc Food Policy 2018)

“I am a Fairtrade Supply Chain Coordinator with Equal Exchange. I handle the complicated logistics of moving organic bananas from Latin American farmer cooperatives to grocers in the U.S., while maintaining justice and equality in the chain. 2019 involved very diverse achievements - from authoring a Food Research Collaboration report to educating customers and food citizens on the benefits and necessity of Fairtrade. The MSc in Food Policy taught me the hard and soft skills needed to jump from research to logistics to marketing, while balancing the full scope of the food system’s social, political, economic and environmental aspects. I learned most importantly, we must be brought together if we want to achieve a truly sustainable food system.”



Jannie Armstrong – Learning Systems Developer, Integrated Phase Classification Global Support Unit, Rome, Italy (Graduated PhD Food Policy 2018)

“I’m based in Lusaka, Zambia, where I’ve lived for the past five and half years. I work for the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Global Support Unit, which is the international standard system for analysing food crises, and the global entity tasked with formally classifying famines if/when they occur. My job over the past few years has been developing a course curriculum based on the IPC’s analytical approach for use at leading universities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This has required collaboration with universities and faculty across the world, as we pioneered a collaborative approach to building a masters level course which would work in a variety of academic and food contexts, from Kenya to Niger to the Philippines. Having a PhD in Food Policy has encouraged me to reflect on how the food policy discourse in the Global South diverges from, or cleaves to, the discourse in the rich world.”



Ceyhun Gungor – Technical Officer, World Health Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland, (Graduated PhD Food Policy 2019)

“I am working as a technical officer at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva within the International Food Safety Authorities Network. I am responsible for developing and maintaining a global knowledge exchange platform to provide responses to global food health hazards. Within the first weeks of my role at the World Health Organisation in 2019, I could see how the work I am doing has a major impact on global food safety and health. It is motivating to work for the global community every day and support countries in their goal to fight food-borne diseases. My PhD at the Centre for Food Policy has had a major impact on my career. My PhD focused on international knowledge management systems in food sustainability and food safety and built the expertise central to my role at the WHO.”



Jess Halliday – Senior Programme Officer and Consultant, Rural-Urban Agriculture and Food Systems Global Partnership, Montpellier, France (Graduated PhD Food Policy 2015)

“I work as a senior programme officer and consultant to the Rural-Urban Agriculture and Food Systems (RUAF) Global Partnership. My role includes research and systematisation of policy experiences, providing policy advice, training and capacity building to local governments, and co-editing Urban Agriculture magazine. A major piece of work this year involved researching 70+ local government policy actions around the world for ‘A menu of actions on shaping food environments for improved nutrition’, in partnership with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. My PhD in Food Policy gave me a solid grounding in food systems governance that serves me every day. It also laid the foundations for an extensive professional network, and I am fortunate to work with a number of fellow alumni on a regular basis.”



“*The course also gave me the confidence to go into the world and make a difference.*”

”

Clara Widdison

Tomas Buendia - Nutrition and Food Systems Officer, Nutrition and Food Systems Division (ESN), Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Rome, Italy (Graduated Centre for Food Policy/IFSTAL CPD short courses in food systems 2019)

“I currently work as Nutrition and Food Systems Officer at the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). I support FAO’s work in promoting and improving sustainable food systems for healthy diets and improved nutrition, focusing on the distinctive relationship between agriculture and nutrition. I collaborate in the organisation of workshops and seminars and participate in the organisation of follow-up meetings, consultations and conferences. My greatest achievement this year was being able to contribute to the Sustainable Healthy Diets Guiding Principles, as well as to the organisation of the Future of Food Symposium. The short courses I took at the Centre for Food Policy on food systems helped me understand the complex interactions within food systems; and how to apply the food systems thinking approach within my work. Given the current challenges we face, understanding food systems is essential to promote and improve sustainable healthy diets from a holistic approach that considers all dimensions.”



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*... most importantly, we
must be brought together if
we want to achieve a truly
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Monica Foss

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Connecting Sustainability and Health in South African Food Systems

Dr Laura Pereira

The Centre for Food Policy is part of the Sustainable and Healthy Food Systems (SHEFS) project, a global multi-partner research consortium funded by The Wellcome Trust running from 2017 to 2021. The project is led by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) in partnership with the University of KwaZulu Natal, University College London (UCL), the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), the Food Foundation, the University of Aberdeen, the Royal Veterinary College, the Centre for Chronic Disease Control in India, the Ashoka Trust for research in Ecology and the Environment (Atree) in India and the Centre for Food Policy. The primary purpose of SHEFS is to provide new, interdisciplinary research that policymakers can use to shape food systems that will deliver healthy and sustainable food for future populations. It includes three country case study sites: South Africa, India and the UK.

Talking about change

Dr Laura Pereira was requested by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) secretariat to give a presentation to help frame the future IPBES assessment on transformative change. The presentation was part of a 3-day online pre-scoping conference attended by IPBES governments, stakeholders and experts to seek the broadest possible input at the initial phase in the production of an IPBES assessment. The goal was to define policy-relevant questions that the assessment would address, making it as relevant as possible to a diversity of stakeholders. To set the framing for the second day of the online conference, Laura was asked to give a 15-minute presentation on 'what to change', as well as moderate the subsequent discussion and respond to questions.

Dr Laura Pereira, who leads the Centre for Food Policy component, takes an interdisciplinary approach, taking into account the real lived experiences of people and engaging directly with policy makers and other stakeholders. Here she talks about the evidence the project is generating and its contribution to food policy:



Laura at a Coastal Wild Foods Transformation Lab

“My work in the SHEFS project is primarily about working with policy makers in South Africa to translate the findings of the science into policy interventions that could have significant impact in guiding the South African food system onto a more sustainable, healthy and equitable trajectory. Key in this is how food policy can be informed by qualitative data that references the lived experiences of people and their daily interactions with food as well as more quantitative evidence.

One of the critical aspects that has emerged from the research thus far is the need to emphasise the importance of indigenous crops as potentially healthier and more environmentally resilient foods that require more focus from the research and policy communities.

As part of this endeavour, we have led several transdisciplinary workshops with government officials and other stakeholders. This included a Transformation Lab (T-lab) on coastal wild foods in the Western Cape, South Africa that was attended by more than 30 people interested in reinvigorating a local food culture that builds on traditional knowledge and indigenous foods, which are healthier and more sustainable.

The T-Lab on coastal wild foods was intended to strengthen a coalition of coastal food actors from across the system by building connections and identifying practical steps that participants can take in anticipation of future disruptions and opportunities that arise. This was undertaken through practical connections, mutual learning, personal reflection, networking and strategic reflection particularly about policy.”

 @laurap18

Congratulations to Dr Laura Pereira

Recipient of the Ecological Society of America ‘Innovations in Sustainability Science Award 2019’ for the paper entitled *“Bright Sports: Seeds of a good Anthropocene”* for which she was a co-author. She continues to work on this project and has led subsequent papers that build on this innovative piece of research. Laura says her work enables her to take the Centre’s approach into the global context:

“In my work I make the link between the Centre for Food Policy’s approach and developing country contexts - India and South Africa in the case of SHEFS- thereby enabling the work of the Centre to be translated into more diverse contexts. My career has benefitted substantially from being allowed to explore the interdisciplinary research space of how to achieve a transformed, more sustainable food system, and through this to experiment with new, transdisciplinary research methods like Transformation Labs that can set a new frontier for policy relevant research.”

Rethinking UK Food Governance

Dr Kelly Parsons

Dr Kelly Parsons



The food policy disconnects that occur everywhere are very much in evidence in the UK. But how should it be better connected in government? Dr Kelly Parsons spent 2019 answering this question as research fellow for the Centre's Rethinking UK Food Governance project, part of Food Research Collaboration. The aim was to generate insights into what governance is needed for a more integrated and inclusive approach to food policy across government in the UK. The first time such an exercise has been undertaken, Kelly mapped out the current food policies that exist across government, identified the inherent disconnects between them and interviewed people working on food policy inside government and in business, civil society and academic stakeholders. Here she describes the evidence she generated and the implications for how to take a more integrated approach to food policy:

"The process of gathering data highlighted how diffuse (and often opaque) the myriad policies which impact the food system can be. The findings reveal that integrated policy is not simply a neutral state to be achieved (as is sometimes portrayed in political science) but is understood in different ways by different stakeholders. It also demonstrates that coming to a more unified agreement on how food-related policies could be better connected will be an important step in addressing food systems holistically. By talking to policy makers and looking directly at the challenges that we face here in the UK, we are better equipped to understand how best they can be addressed. Moreover, the methods we used can be used as a model for other countries wanting to assess the policies influencing their food systems. Thanks to this project, it is now more possible to clearly define what integrated food policy would look like in the UK."

Informing integrated food policy in Northern Ireland

Dr Kelly Parsons gave a presentation to a 50-person workshop in December, run by the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as part of their development of an integrated national food policy for Northern Ireland. Many stakeholders shared the view of a need for more policy 'coherence' in Northern Ireland food policy, and the most popular theme as voted by the participants at the end of the workshop was 'What structures are needed to facilitate a cohesive food policy?'

Kelly's research provided insights into the development of national food policies, the subject of the 2019 City Food Symposium (page 31). During the Symposium she delivered a presentation 'Is England ready for a national food strategy?'. The project also inspired a lively policy coherence 'speed dating' workshop that explored how different policy goals could be joined up in a future national food strategy.

[@thefoodrules](https://twitter.com/thefoodrules)

Gathering Perspectives on the Agriculture-Health Disconnect

Dr Rosalind Sharpe

One of the biggest disconnections in food policy is between agriculture and nutrition and health. Farming is about the production of food, and food provides the basis of health. It therefore seems self-evident that agricultural policy should be driven by health as one of its priorities. In practice, however, this has rarely been the case. In the UK, the Agriculture Bill presented in 2018 (necessitated by the UK's planned departure from the EU) neglected the issue of health in favour of emphasising the need for farmers to take more meaningful steps to protect the environment.

In a collaboration between the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation-funded initiative, the Food Research Collaboration, and the RSA's Food, Farming and Countryside Commission, Dr Rosalind Sharpe, Research Fellow, spent the summer of 2019 talking to a range of UK farmers about using farming to champion health. Did they think it was possible in practice to unite farming and health, and to have human health as a goal of their farming activities and business models? Ambitious in its scale, the project sought to give a platform to a broad range of voices and lived experiences in the farming industry not previously heard in this context.

Many of the farmers interviewed expressed interest in the topic, including conventional and exclusively pasture-fed livestock farmers, horticulturalists and arable farmers. Rosalind summarises the findings of her project:

“Human health definitely featured in their planning, but not always easily. For some, providing healthy food had been the main motivation for choosing the path they had taken. For others, the fact that what they produced was healthy was a bonus, making it more rewarding to grow it. Some literally cultivated health, welcoming people with mental health challenges onto their farms as a form of therapy. Almost all of them, however, spoke of the difficulty of making a market return on the healthfulness of what they produced. Many felt their kind of farming was undervalued and under threat.”

She also asked the farmers what they wanted to say to policy makers. “Engage more with farmers”, one said. “Get nutrition on the agenda” said another. A number of them called for policies that would reward farmers for caring for the soil, animal health and human health, which they see as being inextricably linked. Rosalind's findings show that future agri-food policy needs to ensure that human health is at the heart of the UK farming industry, and not simply a by-product of it. Healthfulness should underpin agricultural activity, providing incentives rather

than challenges for our farmers.

A selection of the interviews is now published in the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission publication [Field Guide for the Future](#) and 20 interviews in the Food Research Collaboration publication [Voices from the Field](#).

[@greenfoodpolicy](#)

Making the Connection Between Policy, Food Environments and People for Better Diets and Health

Dr Anna Isaacs

The world has a long way to go to place healthier diets centre stage, and the inequity is staggering. Designing policy from the top down alone has been shown to be no longer fit for purpose. Our lived experience work aims to generate insights into how policy can do better by connecting with people's lived realities and then to use this as a starting point for redesigning food systems that place healthy diets centre stage.

Obesity Policy Research Unit

The Centre for Food Policy is part of the Obesity Policy Research Unit (OPRU), a research collaboration led by University College London with co-investigators from the Centre for Food Policy and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Funded by the UK National Institute for Health Research, the OPRU is tasked with providing policy-relevant evidence on obesity prevention to the UK Department of Health and Social Care. The Centre for Food Policy leads the food systems policy workstream, which generate insights into how public policy can address inequality in obesity at the national and local level by connecting with people's real life contexts.

Communicating the findings

Dr Anna Isaacs gave a presentation to the Local Government Association Childhood Obesity conference in July 2019. Drawing on her ethnographic research, the presentation focused on how learning about people's experiences of the food environment could help to develop more effective local and national childhood obesity policy.

In 2019, our research focused on understanding the experience of buying and consuming of food among low-income families and interpreting what we learned for how policies can be more effective in these contexts. The programme is led by Research Fellow Dr Anna Isaacs, a medical anthropologist interested in understanding how structural inequalities are experienced by individuals and communities, and what this means for public health policy change. In the past two years, along with research assistants Joel Halligan and Kimberley Neve, Anna has conducted research in different areas

in the UK. Here she gives insight into the generation of evidence in the project:

"I have spent time conducting research in Great Yarmouth, Stoke-on-Trent, and Lewisham, London. We carried out ethnographic research with low-income families to understand, in-depth, their experiences of the food environment. We used a variety of methods including in-depth interviews, photo-elicitation, shop-alongs, participant-observation, and finally collaborative workshops, which brought our participants together with local stakeholders. Through this research, we have gained an understanding of the wide range of factors that shape families' food purchasing and consumption and how these both influence, and are influenced by, interactions in the food environment. We are therefore able to generate policy recommendations that take into account the reality of people's lives, rather than an idealised situation. For example, it is important to recognise that high fat, salty, and sugary (HFSS) foods might allow parents to provide their children with treats when they cannot afford other means of doing so."



Dr Anna Isaacs

“
...we are constantly engaging
with what our work means in
messy, complex realities.
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The Climate-KIC project, Copenhagen

In 2019, the Centre for Food Policy collaborated on a European project funded by EIT-Climate-KIC. The project aims to develop new approaches to improving urban food systems for human health and planetary sustainability in Copenhagen, Denmark and explore what the EAT-Lancet reference diet could look like in a Danish context. The aim was to understand how the experiences of individuals navigating their food environments might help or hinder this goal. Here, researchers Dr Anna Isaacs and Dr Mark Spires tell us about the evidence generated in the project and how it will feed into food policy:

"Taking a people-centred approach, in collaboration with project partner Gehl Architects, we conducted research on how the food environment in a Copenhagen neighbourhood shaped residents' purchasing and consumption. For this, we recruited 10 residents to take part in a series of photo-elicitation workshops. Participants took photos of aspects of their environments that either facilitated or hindered their purchasing of healthy foods. They discussed these with other workshop attendees, considering in what ways they might like to see change. The project culminated in a photo exhibition attended by participants, project partners, and employees of the City of

Copenhagen. We are currently analysing the data in conjunction with Gehl's foodscape analysis to provide evidence of lived experience that will feed in to the City of Copenhagen's work in this area, and ensure that food systems policies are taking full account of the context in which individuals purchase and consume food."

 [@anna_isaacs](https://twitter.com/anna_isaacs)

Congratulations to Dr Anna Isaacs

Winner of the 'New to Research Best Abstract Award' at the 2019 UK Congress on Obesity. Anna says her work links in with the Centre's broader approach.

"One of the best things about working at the Centre is how interdisciplinary it is. At the Centre for Food Policy we don't think in silos and this is essential not only for good research but for good policy engagement as well. I have been able to place my own research projects within the wider context of the food system and engage with others who are studying similar topics from very different perspectives. Due to our links with civil society and policy makers, research at the Centre is not removed from everyday life. Rather, we are constantly engaging with what our work means in messy, complex realities."



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Rethinking Food Policy: A Fresh Approach to Policy and Practice Policy Brief Series

Dr Kelly Parsons and Professor Corinna Hawkes

Food systems currently suffer from policy fragmentation. The gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies exposed by these disconnects are hindering attempts to resolve the health, environmental and social crises linked to food. The idea of joined up food policy is one that is widely supported, but not yet implemented. In this context, in 2019 we published a set of briefs designed specifically to outline what a more connected approach to food policy would look like in practice.

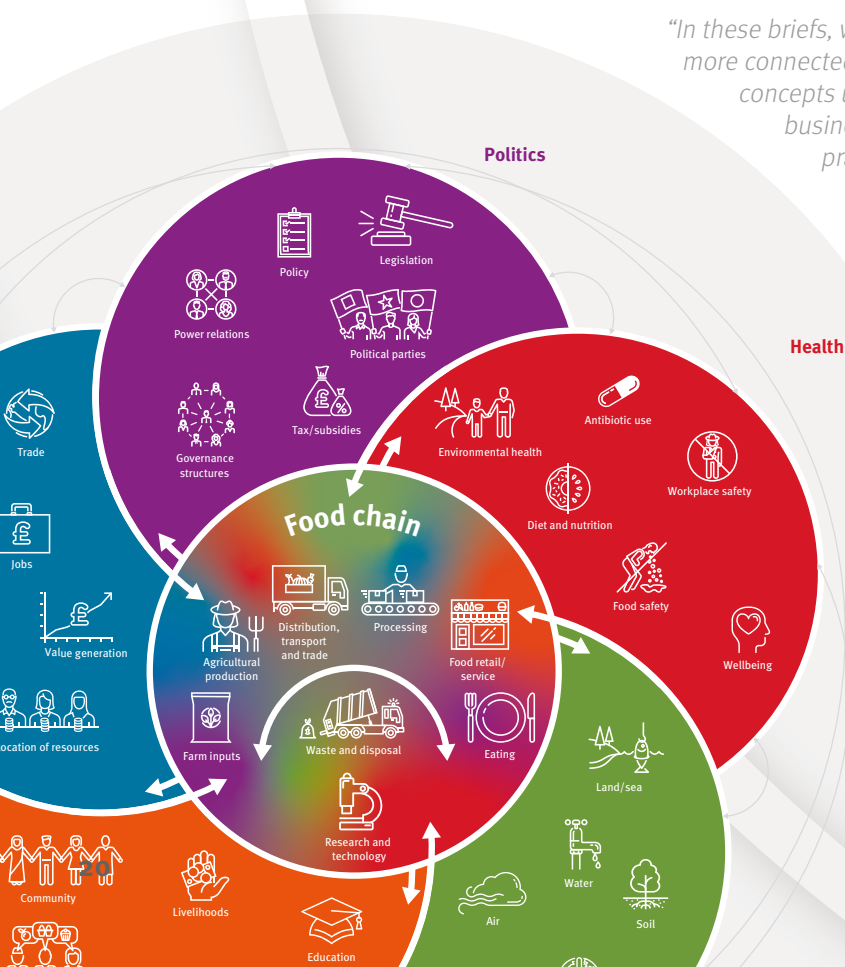
Launched at our City Food Symposium in April 2019, the brief series, *Rethinking Food Policy: A Fresh Approach to Policy and Practice*, aims to break down complicated, often vague, high-level ideas and concepts and explain their implications for food policy in practice in an easily accessible way. Drawing on the expertise of researchers from across the Centre, the briefs were written by Research Fellow Dr Kelly Parsons and Centre Director Professor Corinna Hawkes. As they explain:

"In these briefs, we wanted to interrogate big ideas around a more connected approach to food policy, opening often abstract concepts up to a wider audience of academics, policymakers, businesses and civil society organisations to enable practical action to be taken to address food systems challenges more holistically. Each brief explores a concept widely referred to in the field and sets out the practical implications for how we need to change what we do."

Brief 1, [‘Tackling food systems challenges: the role of food policy’](#) sets out the problems and challenges that face food policy and proposes a simple new definition of food policy as “all the policies which influence the food system and what people eat.”

In Brief 2, [‘Understanding the food system: Why it matters for food policy’](#) we present a new diagram of the food system and examine what the food system

Clockwise from bottom left:
‘The food system’, brief 2;
‘Fragmentations that integrated food policy can address’, brief 3; ‘Types of integrated food policy’, brief 3.



is, how it is defined, and the implications of this definition for rethinking food policy.

In Brief 3, [‘Integrated food policy: What is it, and how can it help transform food systems?’](#) we set out what integrated food policy looks like in practice.

In Brief 4, [‘Embedding Food in All Policies’](#) we consider how a Food in All Policies (FIAP) approach has the potential to achieve goals in a wide range of policy areas and in Brief 5, [‘Policy coherence in food systems’](#), we describe what policy coherence is and why it is needed for devising better food policy.

In Briefs 6 and 7, to be launched in early 2020, we focus on the challenges that global governance structures and tensions within the food system pose to food policy.”

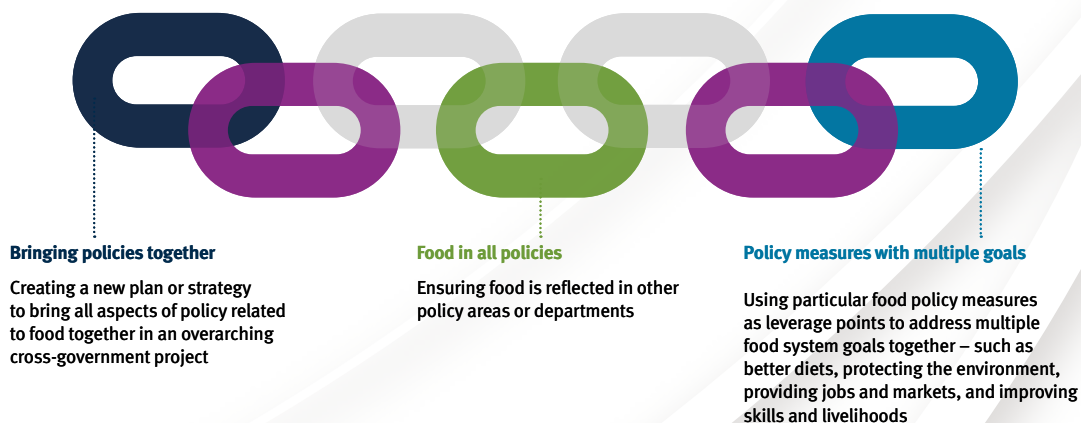


“
...we wanted to interrogate big ideas around a more connected approach to food policy...
”

Our food systems diagram (previous page) in our second brief is an example of how embracing complexity provides practical insights to address real world problems, and has already been reproduced for a range of different uses, including in [publications](#), [funding calls](#) and in workshops.

The diagram takes the complex concept of a connected food system with multiple dimensions and considerations, and translates this into a ‘visual thinking tool’ for seeing the bigger picture and plotting links between the many elements of the system. This provides practical support to those attempting to take a more holistic view of the food system, for instance to identify unintended consequences of interventions on one part of the system on another or opportunities for actions with multiple benefits, and can help ‘scientists who concentrate on single disciplines to look more broadly’, as one user put it.

🐦 @thefoodrules
🐦 @CorinnaHawkes



Understanding What UK Food Policy Needs to do in the Wake of the Post-Brexit Disconnect

Dr Rosalind Sharpe and Professor Tim Lang

A major part of the Centre's work in 2019 concerned the profound food policy disconnect that will be created by the departure of the UK from the European Union. Brexit has end-to-end implications for Britain's food system and represents significant risks as well as opportunities for both food policy and advocacy. The ramifications of Brexit for the food system were little discussed when the referendum was first announced – and are still not well understood, by politicians and policymakers.

To fill this gap, the Food Research Collaboration, the Centre's initiative which brings together academics and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to improve food policy in the UK by producing, sharing and using evidence-based knowledge, has focused on the implications of Brexit for food, striving to bring some of these implications to the fore through a series of Brexit Briefings. While Government departments have been working together to understand the impact that a withdrawal from the EU will have across a wide number of cross-cutting areas, these briefings outline some of the key issues relating to food policy.

Our briefings aim to get people talking about important issues by putting them in the public domain...



Dr Rosalind Sharpe, Research Fellow, and Professor Tim Lang, have worked together with other leading academics and CSOs to better understand what Brexit will mean for the future of food policy. To date, they have published 13 briefing papers co-authored by experts in academia and civil society, each addressing the likely impact of a different critical issue; ranging from food security and the Irish border to fisheries, food standards and animal welfare. Seven of these briefings were published in 2019.

“Our briefings have aimed to get people talking about important issues by putting them in the public domain,” says Rosalind. “They have been widely disseminated, showing just what a gap in knowledge there was. We are pleased the briefings helped improve understanding of the implications of Brexit for food. And we are very grateful for the effort of many academics and researchers contributing to this collective learning.”

The reports have been downloaded thousands of times, with the FRC team and authors fielding many press and public inquiries. The reports have been widely read inside Government departments and by local authorities. The briefing [‘Fish, Fishing and Brexit’](#), for example, was circulated amongst Members of Parliament, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Agroecology and the Fisheries Bill Committee. It was published in February 2019, two days after the Department of the Environment, Fisheries and Rural Affairs issued a guidance note on how a no-deal Brexit will affect fish exports and imports. [‘Brexit and Wales: A fresh approach to food and farming?’](#) linked the rising debate about Wales’ unique food and farming challenges with Brexit. [‘Sugar reduction in post-Brexit UK: A supply-side policy agenda’](#) featured on BBC Radio 4’s Farming Today programme and [‘Food, no-deal and the Irish Border’](#) was featured in a Sky News report with co-author Gary McFarlane. [Our three papers on chlorinated chicken](#) put the question of food standards high on the international trade agenda, at one point disrupting early trade talks, and the term ‘chlorinated chicken’ has been lodged in public consciousness as a symbol of food standards. Looking ahead, Tim says:

“The Brexit Briefings have shown how complicated and risky the apparently simple act of leaving the EU is turning out to be, and the process is only just beginning. It is no easy matter to disconnect our food system from the regulatory frameworks and trading relationships that have been built to support it over the course of the last 45 years. ‘Getting Brexit done’ may be a winning sound-bite. Our task is to prevent UK food policy ‘being done by Brexit’ and to achieve maximum societal benefit.”

You can read all of the Brexit Briefings published by visiting the [FRC website](#).

 [@greenfoodpolicy](#)

 [@ProfTimLang](#)



Dr Rosalind Sharpe

Connecting Different Forms of Malnutrition Through Double-Duty Actions

Professor Corinna Hawkes

When it comes to policies and actions to address the poor quality diets underlying malnutrition and diet-related ill-health worldwide, there is a profound disconnect. Some policies and interventions address undernutrition, while others focus on obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases. Policies are developed in silos from one another, and funding streams are different.

Building on previous work in her role co-leading the Global Nutrition Report, Professor Corinna Hawkes published a new paper in 2019 in the medical journal *The Lancet* "[Double-duty actions: seizing programme and policy opportunities to address malnutrition in all its forms](#)." Part of a special series on the double burden of malnutrition, it was written with Dr Marie Ruel of the International Food Policy Research Institute, and with Leah Salm, Bryony Sinclair and Francesco Branca, the Director of Nutrition for the World Health Organization.

The paper is a result of two years of work analysing the challenges and opportunities of redesigning policies and interventions already in place to address undernutrition so that they could also work to reduce the risk of obesity – so making them work ‘double duty.’ The research showed that different forms of malnutrition have common drivers (such as diet quality in early-life nutrition) and there are significant opportunities to use key platforms (such as health

services, education settings, social safety nets and agri-food systems and food environments) to achieve shared benefits.

The Centre for Food Policy was proud to co-host the global launch of *The Lancet's Double Burden of Malnutrition* [report](#) on 16 December 2019 in partnership with the World Health Organization and *The Lancet*. You can [watch the video](#) of the papers presented at this launch, as well as the following panel discussion, online.

[Twitter icon](#) @CorinnaHawkes



Richard Horton, Editor-in-Chief of the Lancet, speaking at the launch event at City

“

Thanks to this project, it is now more possible to clearly define what integrated food policy would look like in the UK.

”

Dr Kelly Parsons



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Tackling Obesity by Connecting with London's Children

London's Child Obesity Taskforce

Corinna Hawkes is the Vice-Chair of London's Child Obesity Taskforce (LCOT), an independent group appointed by the Mayor of London to bring about a transformation in London so that every child has every chance to grow up eating healthily, drinking plenty of water and being physically active. It builds on actions already being taken by the Greater London Authority, London's local authorities, NGOs, schools, communities, and the private sector to address the problem of childhood obesity in London. During 2019, Corinna led the drafting of the Taskforce's call to action, Ten Ambitions for London.

She says of the work:

"We spent 2019 addressing the issue head-on by talking to those directly affected by unhealthy environments. We listened to the voices of children in London, their parents and carers to discover what obstacles they face and to devise actions and strategies that would work more effectively for them which we published in [What makes it harder for London's children to be healthier?](#) After engaging with stakeholders across London, we also produced our call to action '[Every Child a Healthy Weight: Ten Ambitions for London](#)' which set out ten tangible ambitions each with concrete actions. Importantly, throughout the process we took a child-centred systems approach, identifying how to connect existing actions to create greater consistency and coherence throughout children's lives."

Corinna Hawkes and Paul Lindley, Chair of London's Child Obesity Taskforce at the Ten Ambitions launch event, London, September, 2019

Corinna and the other members of the Taskforce enjoyed presenting Ten Ambitions at the launch event at London's City Hall in September. Members of the Taskforce have also written in [City Hall's blog](#), where they each set out their rationale for taking this child-centred approach. Corinna is Chair of the organising committee for the inaugural [Cities Summit on Childhood Obesity](#) being hosted by the taskforce in September 2020, which will bring together those working to address child obesity in cities all around the world.

[@CorinnaHawkes](#)



EAT-Lancet Commission 2019

Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT-Lancet Commission

Professor Tim Lang and Professor Corinna Hawkes served as Commissioners for the EAT-Lancet report, [*Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT-Lancet Commission on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems*](#), published in January 2019. The report brought together 37 world-leading scientists from across the globe to connect the dots between diets for health and sustainability, defining what is needed for a healthy diet while also defining sustainable food systems that will minimise damage to the planet. Here Tim speaks about his role as Commissioner, about the impact the report has had, as well as shares his views on the controversies it has caused:

“The report from the EAT-Lancet Commission – Food in the Anthropocene - was published in January 2019. Reaction to its findings and prognoses continue to reverberate, unusually for such a report. I was policy lead throughout the process; we did not expect quite the global reaction it has had. Initiated in 2015, the Commission started work in 2016-17, asked to address a deceptively simple question: is it possible to feed 9-10 billion people healthily by 2050 without undermining ecosystem sustainability? The origins of the question comes from a basic disconnect: the world needed to produce enough food to ensure people have enough to eat, but in order to do so, lands have been drained, fertilised, sprayed and worked to such an extent that agri-food systems have damaged the very source needed to produce enough. Food accounts for about a quarter of Greenhouse gas emissions, is the biggest driver of biodiversity loss, and is the largest user of potable water. The ‘success’ of output has also tilted food from being mainly a global problem of under-consumption to being a triple problem of under-, over- and mal-consumption. Worse, at least a quarter of food produced is wasted.

Food in the Anthropocene had optimistic conclusions. It should be possible to feed the world healthily without further degrading ecosystems but that this necessitates a dramatic shift in what the world as a whole eats and in land use: less meat and dairy, more fruit, vegetables, nuts, less waste. This would be translated differently across the globe – hence the strong policy recommendations for nation states to conduct their own processes and routes in what the report called the Great Food Transformation. There is a strong case, for instance, that the affluent West must reduce total output and intake to allow the under-consuming developing world to eat more.

Part of the interest in and welcome for EAT-Lancet was that this was a major study of the possibility of sustainable diets globally, an issue the Centre for Food Policy has championed for years. Hostility came from some of the meat and dairy industries (and supporters) who saw it as yet another attack on meat, countering that cows can sequester carbon if grass-fed (but alas ignoring rising use of concentrates and grain). Some said the Commission was an apologist for artificial meats. Others said the Commission lacked knowledge of the realities of farming. Still more sensed a report from the affluent developed world telling the aspiring

Professor Tim Lang



developing world what to do, while drawing up the drawbridge. There was an explosion of coverage on e-media, and the debates continue, as they should.

“

It should be possible to feed the world healthily without further degrading ecosystems but that this necessitates a dramatic shift in what the world as a whole eats and in land use...

”

EAT-Lancet raised many questions for further research. The most important in my view lies in connecting better with the social sphere. Culture, social values, class position, income, gender, these all determine who eats what and how within societies. Top-down advice barely scratches culinary norms. EAT-Lancet did not model these aspects for 2050. Here lies fertile terrain for this Centre. But the urgency of the task and narrowing of room for manoeuvre in a climate changing and resource squandering world has been stressed by EAT-Lancet. Its challenge cannot be ignored.”

 [@ProfTimLang](https://twitter.com/ProfTimLang)



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2019 City Food Symposium. How to Develop and Deliver a National Food Policy: a Global Perspective

The annual event of the Centre for Food Policy is the City Food Symposium, generously funded by the Worshipful Company of Cooks. In 2019 the focus was “national food policies”. The context was the increasing interest by countries and cities to “join up” goals and policies related to food systems into an integrated national or city-level food policy. The purpose was to generate and share insights into the best practices and challenges to develop and implement a national food policy. The event brought together 250 participants and numerous presenters from several continents, from research, policy and advocacy.

“

“[The development of a national food strategy] is something that needs to be a national democratic process”

”

Henry Dimbleby, Independent Lead, National Food Strategy, UK

The Symposium featured:

- An opening address from Henry Dimbleby, Non-Executive Director, UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and co-founder of Leon and the Sustainable Restaurant Association, who has been tasked with preparing a review to support the development of a national food strategy in England.
- Nine short talks on efforts across the globe of developing ‘integrated approaches’ to food, including Belo Horizonte (Brazil), Brighton (UK), the European Union, France, India, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden and Zambia.
- Eight workshops to devise strategies and tactics for taking an integrated approach to food policy. Thank you to our



Henry Dimbleby, City Food Symposium, London, 2019

partners from The Food Foundation, Sustain, The Alliance for Better Food and Farming, IPES-Food, Nourish Scotland, the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation, the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, Oslo Metropolitan University and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) for leading these workshops along with Centre staff.

- A presentation by Centre Research Fellow Dr Kelly Parsons on findings from her research providing insights into whether England is ready for a national food policy.
- A panel discussion on how a national food policy in England should be developed and delivered, featuring Minette Batters (President, National Farmers Union), Tim Smith (Industry consultant and former Chief Executive, Food Standards Agency), Ruth Davis (RSPB and DEFRA), Sarah Bradbury (Group Quality Director, Tesco PLC), Alison Tedstone (Deputy Director Diet and Obesity, and Chief Nutritionist, Public Health England), Joyti Fernandes (Landworkers Alliance), and Ben Reynolds (Deputy Chief Executive, Sustain).
- Closing remarks were given by Anna Taylor (Director, Food Foundation), providing her view on the most important learnings from the Symposium.

“

“Reforming food systems can only occur if it is holistic. In other terms, if it tackles the different components of the food systems and, therefore, combines different disciplines, public health, economics, political science, in order to provide viable proposals to policymakers.”

”

Professor Olivier de Schutter, Co-Chair, International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)

By bringing together the global story on national food policies, and focusing on

“how” to develop and deliver them, the Symposium showed, in the voice of the Biraj Patnaik, who presented on the National Food Security Act in India, “It’s not just one set of actions alone that achieves something like this. It’s not by legislative action alone, it’s not bureaucracy, it’s not just by public mobilisation, it’s not just by parliamentary lobbying, and it’s not just by the communications that are developed around a programme. If you have to change the fundamental attitude of a society to its food... then it requires a combination of all of this to make it happen. Activists, academics, lawyers, parliamentarians, politicians working together.”



City Food Symposium, London, 2019

Thanks to our 2019 Food Thinkers

The Centre for Food Policy would like to thank Charlie Clutterbuck for kick-starting the Food Thinkers series for 2019 in January with *'Bittersweet Brexit: Where are we heading with our food and farming?'* – an excellent seminar that has made us think harder about what Brexit would mean for the future of agriculture both here in the UK and abroad.

Charlie Clutterbuck, London, January 2019

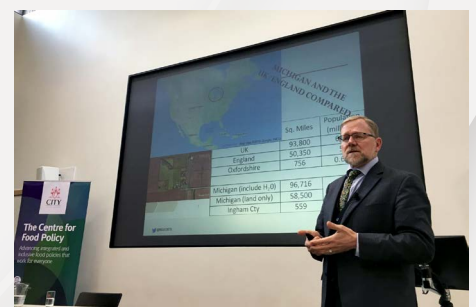


We would like to thank the RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission for hosting the sell-out February edition of Food Thinkers, which featured the stellar line-up of speakers including Dr Sandro Demaio, Corinna Hawkes, Tim Lang, Baroness Rosie Boycott, Helen Browning and Sue Pritchard as Chair who came together to consider the question: can we feed a future population of 10 billion people a healthy diet within planetary boundaries? – the subject of EAT-Lancet's 'Food in the Anthropocene' report. You can [watch the seminar online](#).

RSA, London, February 2019

A big thank you also goes to Mike Hamm for bringing his talk on *'City Region Food Systems: What, Why, How?'* to City in March, and for urging us to think more regionally about our food system within a global context – towards greater sustainability and equity - by using London as example of this way of thinking. You can [watch the seminar online](#).

Mike Hamm, London, March 2019



A wealth of gratitude goes out to Bob Doherty for coming to City to share his ideas about Food as a System and Resilience, and the impact that this way of thinking has upon the practice of coherent policy making. You can [catch up with his seminar online](#).

Bob Doherty, London, June 2019

“

“We do have to make sure we coalesce around a vision for our food system, and it’s got to be one that unifies loads of tensions and loads of different things. But we also have to fundamentally understand that there are competing visions for what should happen with our food system out there.”

”

Joyti Fernandes, Landworkers’ Alliance,
speaking at the 2019 City Food Symposium

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A Thank you to Professor Martin Caraher

2019 saw the retirement of Martin Caraher, Professor of Food and Health Policy at the Centre for Food Policy, after 25 years of service. He is now Emeritus Professor of Food and Health Policy here at the Centre

We bid a fond goodbye to Martin this year. Martin's legacy is huge: he helped establish the Centre in 1994 and in the 25 years since, has been a leading figure in academic debates on issues of food poverty and health inequities. His numerous reports, academic papers, book chapters and books, his role on committees and advisory groups in and out of academia, and his dedication to students have had huge academic and policy impact. Below we hear from Martin about his career at the Centre,

Dr Rachel Carey, Lecturer in Food Systems, The University of Melbourne, Australia, taught by Professor Caraher 2009-10

"Professor Martin Caraher has had a lasting influence on my work since I graduated with an MSc in Food Policy from the Centre in 2010. Martin's generous approach to mentoring students is something that I now aspire to myself in my own teaching. His focus on highly engaged research and stakeholder collaboration on real world problems has become a significant feature of my own approach to research. Martin's focus on the food system experiences of the most marginalised peoples in society, through his work on food poverty and equitable food access, is a reminder to us all to focus our research on what matters most. What really shines through about Martin though is his kindness and generosity. He's an outstanding academic, but more importantly, an exceptional human being."

The Centre for Food Policy...

*"When we set up the Centre for Food Policy in 1994, we envisioned creating the next generation of food policy researchers and food activists. We saw it as important that activists have access to, and understand, how research is used. We developed three main strands of work. The first consists of **research**, which involves academic research, as well as consultancy work. Secondly, we wanted to be a Centre for **teaching and learning**, which is reflected in the MSc and PhD programme. The third strand of work focuses on **publishing**, which we see as very important. We publish in academic journals, as well as develop publications and outputs which can be used by practitioners. For us, it's about getting the evidence out there to be used in a practical way. We saw it as important that activists have access to and understand how research is used."*

"The Centre for Food Policy is a unique place with a distinctive focus and outputs. It has always linked interdisciplinary areas such as obesity, ecological sustainability and agriculture, informed by a strong sense of addressing inequalities. We have always had a unique ethical stance. We do not take money from industry; this is an ethical stance and sets us apart. This does not mean we don't work with industry, but we don't work for them. As a Centre, we have also always worked across boundaries inside and outside of our institution. It's very important for food policy research to cross boundaries to incorporate many different perspectives."

Working at the local level...

"I think it is crucial to build from the ground up and work at the local level in order to win hearts and minds. It is also essential to publish findings from local level research, so as not to reinvent the wheel every five years. This kind of evidence can effect change, as it can hold up a mirror to local and national governments, highlighting what is happening, what is working well and what is going wrong. Another

way I see the Centre for Food Policy creating change at a local level is through our MSc Alumni. When they go back to work on a local level after the MSc, hopefully they look at their work with a new perspective. Working on the local level is necessary, however, on its own it is insufficient. We have to look beyond the local to try and change larger structures in order to create equity in the food system and our society.”

Working with practitioners...

“I have tried to collaborate with practitioners in my research. I believe it’s critical to give local people a voice. This means involving them in research and working in partnership with them, rather than seeing them as research objects. For me, this also means jointly publishing with practitioners. Good research for me is about how you engage with people and how the research is conducted.”

His contribution to the academy...

“Throughout my research career, I did a lot of reviewing for journals, as well as for a large number of UK and European research councils. I see this as vital, as it keeps you as a researcher in touch, you keep learning and you can give back to the academy. It is definitely a hidden part of the work of an academic, I feel like my contribution here involves bringing a unique food policy perspective. I have asked questions about the relevance of research to food policy, how it could be used practically.”

His work on food banks in the UK...

“In my research on food banks, I have purposely positioned myself as a critical voice offering a different perspective. I see it as a problem that food banks are seen by the charity sector as a solution to food poverty. Food charities are what we have classified as successful failures, failures in that they don’t tackle the roots of food poverty, successful in that they stumble forward opening new outlets. It’s been slightly difficult to position myself around this as food banks are portrayed as a good thing, so it’s not easy to argue against them. A large part of the problem is that the media champion food banks. This lets governments off the hook, thinking they don’t need to take care of people in a welfare state.”

The Centre’s impact...

“One of the main ways the Centre has impact on food policy is through our **publications**. Publications open doors, they give you standing. We have also had impact with our **unique influence in academia**. Due to our pioneering work, food policy is now recognised in academia. We still offer the only MSc in Food Policy, however in the meantime other academic institutions have built food policy modules into their MSc programmes on food and nutrition. Our influence extends also to the wider academic community; people come to the Centre to learn and do research with us. Additionally, I view our impact in terms of our **influence on government**. As an academic you can be an outsider holding up a mirror to government. But we have also worked with government. An example would be joint work with the Department of Health, where we have influenced the direction of research. Ultimately, our impact on food policy is based on a **sphere of influence**. By this I mean our students. I see our MSc alumni contributing to food policy as practitioners. Our PhD students I see as the next generation of food policy workers and major policy makers as they can translate research, they can question the world and influence.”

🐦 @MartinCaraher



Professor Martin Caraher

Laurie Egger, PhD Candidate supervised by Professor Caraher, Centre for Food Policy

“I met Martin Caraher my first week studying the MSc in Food Policy. From that first class, and over the course of the past five years studying with Martin, he has challenged the foundations of my long-held assumptions, gently and enthusiastically encouraging me to question inherited knowledge and pursue deeper angles. When, after the MSc, I felt I had just begun to study, Martin supported my desire to work toward a PhD. At the end of my first year he intuited that my topic was not asking the question that would interest me for years, so he sent me home to think of something that would excite me. Martin has always been my biggest champion, but I am not unique. Everyone who has been lucky enough to be taught by Martin has experienced his encouragement and enthusiasm. He understands that people are different and one of his strengths is his ability to cater his teaching to each individual. I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity to study with Martin.”

Welcome to Dr Rebecca Wells, Lecturer in Food Policy

We welcomed a Dr Rebecca Wells, former Teaching Fellow, as a new Lecturer in Food Policy in September 2019.

"I am delighted to have been appointed Lecturer in Food Policy and look forward to working with Centre colleagues, teaching on our Food Policy MSc programme and developing an exciting new programme of CPD courses for the Centre. I have a background in creating innovative and interdisciplinary teaching and learning programmes on food systems, having worked on the multi-university IFSTAL programme for the last four years. During 2020 we will continue to develop the Centre for Food Policy's own short courses, which will give a practical introduction to the use of food systems research and methods, in and for food policy. These courses will bring together diverse groups of participants from different food sectors – government, industry and civil society - giving them the opportunity to learn from the latest research and each other, working together to put theory into practice during hands-on, workshop based short courses.

Dr Rebecca Wells



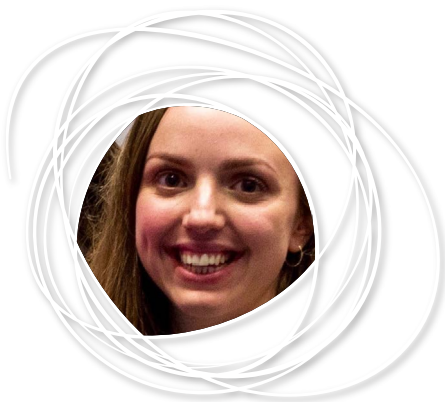
Alongside my work on food systems, my research interests have focussed largely on media portrayal of food issues and the ways both mass and social media interact with food policy and policymakers. Recent work in this area includes surveys of food policy in the realm of advertising and marketing; media portrayal of government recommendations on red and processed meat consumption; the ways in which the UK national media reported Brexit-related food issues and the portrayal of food banks and food bank users in the UK national print media. In addition, during 2019 I was a Research Fellow on the EU Horizon 2020 funded project QUEST which examined the quality and effectiveness of science communication across Europe."

[!\[\]\(553fc0557dc55ddc76815ec83dfa644a_img.jpg\) @wellsrebecca](https://twitter.com/wellsrebecca)

A New PhD Studentship on London's Food Environments: Welcome to Jessica Brock

We welcomed a new PhD student, Jess Brock, in September 2019. Jess completed her undergraduate degree in Nursing Studies at the University of Edinburgh, where she developed an interest in population health and more specifically, non-communicable disease (NCD) prevention through food and physical activity policy. She recently completed an MSc in Public Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, which she undertook whilst working for C3 Collaborating for Health, a London-based non-governmental organisation that focuses on NCD risk factor prevention. Here she tells us about her PhD project:

Jessica Brock



"My research at the Centre for Food Policy involves understanding how London's food environments can be shaped when actions and policies to create healthier food environments are co-designed with London's children. Using qualitative research methods, including photovoice and ethnography, one of my aims is to understand the lived experience of London children's food environments during their daily commute. Given the transdisciplinary nature of food systems and food environments, the Centre for Food Policy provides a great opportunity to work as part of a cross-disciplinary team that includes nutritionists, geographers, sustainability experts, public health researchers and anthropologists, who each offer a unique perspective that I am able to integrate into my work."

 [@jessicabrock](https://twitter.com/jessicabrock)

New Research Assistant: Kimberley Neve

Kimberley is a former teacher who retrained last year, gaining a MSc in Global Public Health Nutrition at the University of Westminster. She joined us in September 2019. We are excited to have Kimberley on board working as part of the Obesity Policy Research Unit (OPRU). She says of her work so far that the variety and depth have been the most rewarding aspects, in particular with the work on how people in low-income contexts engage with their food environment. She is really enjoying being part of such a multidisciplinary, talented and welcoming team.

🐦 @KLNeve

Kimberley Neve



New grant funding for new Post Doctoral Research Fellow Dr Mark Spires

In 2019, the Centre for Food Policy was awarded a £500,000 grant from the Global Challenge Research Fund in response to the call on *A Combined Food Systems Approach to Scaling-up Interventions to Address the Double Burden of Malnutrition*. The aim of project, which is a partnership between the Centre for Food Policy, the Western Cape Department of the Premier, the University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University, the Southern Africa Food Lab, and UNICEF, is to define and communicate what a “systems approach” to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in poor, urban areas of the Western Cape Province would look like. The focus will be on improving the quality of diets among children under 5 and women of childbearing age. Postdoctoral Fellow Dr Mark Spires, who joined the Centre in 2019, will be leading the project. Mark, whose research focuses primarily on the lived experience of food environments, explains:

“To more effectively address the double burden of malnutrition in low- and middle-income countries, we will seek to, first of all, understand how existing systems that influence nutrition (food systems, urban conditions, system of existing interventions) combine to influence diet quality in children under 5 and their mothers in the Western Cape, South Africa. This part of the project will be addressed in 2020 by employing an innovative combination of participatory methods to understand how low-income mothers engage with their food systems in the context of their urban realities and how these food and urban systems combine to effect diets and capacity to respond to the system of existing interventions. We will then use systems design workshops with all stakeholders to identify how to create coherence between these systems to improve diets. Ultimately, the aim is to provide valuable insights not just for the Western Cape but jurisdictions regionally and globally.”



Dr Mark Spires

Our Academic Publications in 2019

1. Adelle, C., Pereira, L., Görgens, T. and Losch, B. (2019). Making sense together: The role of scientists in the coproduction of knowledge for policy making. *Science and Public Policy*.
2. Asrar, G., Lucas, P., van Vuuren, D., Pereira, L., Vervoort, J., Semie, S. and Bhargava, R. (2019). Chapter 19: Outlooks in GEO-6. In: UN Environment, ed., *Global Environment Outlook – GEO-6: Healthy Planet, Healthy People*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
3. Boatema, S., M. Barney, Drimie, S., Harper, J., Korten, L., Pereira, L. (2019). Awakening from the listeriosis crisis: Food safety challenges, practices and governance in the food retail sector in South Africa. *Food Control*, 104, pp. 333-342.
4. Caraher, M. (2019). Home Economics—A personal reflection on 30 years of work, friendships and the future. *Journal of the Home Economics Institute of Australia*, 25(2).
5. Caraher, M. and Hughes, N. (2019). Tackling salt consumption outside the home. *BMJ*, 364, l1087.
6. Caraher, M. and Davison, R. (2019). The normalisation of Food Aid: What happened to feeding people well?. *Emerald Open Research*, 1(3).
7. Caraher, M. (2019). New food strategy for England. *BMJ*, 366, 5711. doi:10.1136/bmj.l5711.
8. Cramer, C., Pereira, L., Drimie, S., Wills, J., & S. B. Kushitor (2019). T-lab on coastal wild foods in the Western Cape. Stellenbosch, South Africa: Southern Africa Food Lab.
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Centre for Food Policy, School of Health Sciences, City, University of London.

This report was written by the staff of the Centre for Food Policy and compiled and edited by Elaine Hudson, Centre Coordinator, Natalie Neumann, PhD student, and Corinna Hawkes, Centre Director. It was designed by Gavin Wren and published in February 2020.



Elaine Hudson



Natalie Neumann



Gavin Wren (Wren&Co)
🐦 @GavinWren

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Telephone enquiries
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