FABIAN COMMISSION ON FOOD AND POVERTY
Working paper 2: Context and access

Contents

This paper provides context, background and key questions for the second hearing of the Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty on 'context and access'.

The hearing is at 11am on Tuesday 9th December in Room W1, Westminster Hall, Westminster.

Witnesses will be:

Dr Hannah Lambie-Mumford, Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute
Dr Wendy Wills, University of Hertfordshire
Jon Alexander, New Citizenship Project

December 2014.

Introduction

Access to 'good' food is not all about income. In *Poverty Bites* (2001), Dowler, Turner and Dobson define the term 'food poverty' as 'the inability to acquire or consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so.' This definition highlights the elements of uncertainty and anxiety, the inability to acquire food, and the social acceptability of doing so.

In order to increase access to nutritious, sustainable, affordable food, a broad range of barriers need to be looked at. The evidence suggests that the first and foremost barrier is that of income, and the first hearing of the Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty looked closely at the recent rise in food prices and the squeeze on living standards that make it harder for people to access a 'good' diet. This second hearing will look at access to food in a wider sense, as well as establishing the context in which food habits and food norms are shaped.

The Commission's first hearing heard about the ways in which low-income households were reducing the amount of money they spent on food as a result of falling real incomes. In some cases this meant that because of low wages, benefit delays, sanctions or an otherwise insufficient income, many households could not afford a nutritious diet.

One might have an adequate income so as to be able to afford a diet of sufficient quality and quantity, but they may feel they are unable to eat it in a socially acceptable way, or they may feel anxious entering certain shops because of their appearance, or they might be unable to acquire the food they want and in their price range in shops close to them. These are all cases in which access to a socially acceptable means of acquiring or consuming appropriate food is denied to these people.

Thus, we can take these issues forward to look at food and poverty in a wider sense than just income.

Overview of the issues

This broad strand covers the issues of access to food, the social and cultural context within which food sits and food marketing.

Physical access to food

At the most basic level, physical access refers to the availability, quality or choice of nutritious food in nearby shops, as well as difficulty in being able to get to shops. The problem of physical access to food can be exacerbated in areas of multiple deprivation and remote rural areas, where there is often less immediate physical and economic access to nutritious food.

From a review of food poverty in case studies of New Deal for Communities Partnerships, (2012) Hannah Lambie-Mumford looks at a range of determinants of food poverty. While low income and insufficient funds are the key and primary reason, there are other prominent and recurring issues. For example, people cited a lack of availability, quality or choice in nearby shops, as well as difficulty in being able to get to shops. Furthermore, there is a link between 'poor neighbourhoods' and a lack of retail provision or access to services.[1] This link is an example of when other issues – such as distance to local shops – exacerbate the impact of low incomes on people's access to food.

The idea of a lack of physical access to food invokes the debated concept of 'food deserts'. The term 'food deserts' comes from areas in which nutritious food is difficult, or impossible to obtain. It also refers to places where shops are poorly stocked, where crime, litter and other undesirable conditions are prevalent, and where shopping is a miserable experience. It is a term more often referenced internationally, particularly in the USA, for example in Atlanta, where thousands have to drive more than 5 miles to the nearest 'megamarket' in order to acquire food for the family.[2] In the context of the UK, the term 'food desert' has largely been used in relation to the local area and rarely features in today's food policy lexicon. In 2002, Hitchman, Christie, Harrison and Lang looked at several areas that represented such areas. They found that low-income communities in particular suffered from changes in food retail geography. This was characterised by a general trend towards out-of-town supermarkets, and fewer and fewer local retail outlets. The services that remained, or even grew, tended to be fast food outlets or smaller shops with reduced choice and higher prices compared to larger stores. In these cases the people living in these areas would need to have access to a car or to use public transport to access supermarkets or places in which they could find a broad enough range of nutritious food at affordable prices.

There has been little work published on 'food deserts' in the UK more recently. However, the rise of out-of-town supermarkets continued to gather pace long after the publication of the Hitchman, Christie, Harrison and Lang pamphlet which would have exacerbated problems of access for those without access to a car or public transport. More recently, supermarkets are beginning to lose interest in the out-of-town model, partly because of the rise of internet shopping, partly because shoppers are changing their practices away from one-stop major shop, and partly because shoppers are returning to the smaller convenience store market – a trend characterised by former Tesco Chief Executive Philip Clarke's declaration of the "end of the space race" for megastores.[3]

Evidence given by Professor Mark Schucksmith to the Defra Select Committee in 2013 suggests that physical access for low-income households is a particular problem in some remote rural areas, in which distances to stores are large, and choice is limited. This is also a

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[1] *Improving Shopping Access for People living in Deprived Neighbourhoods* (Policy Action Team 13, Department of Health / Social Exclusion Unit, 2000)

[2] This example is taken from an account from Burns, R. 'Atlanta's food deserts leave its poorest citizens stranded and struggling' in *The Guardian* (US Edition, 17 March 2014). Available here.

[3] Ruddick, G. 'Supermarkets in new space race' in *The Telegraph* (7 December 2013). Available here.

problem for those living in 'out-of-town' large older social housing estates, with access to services and amenities limited.

Access to food is also an issue for disabled people. With 45% of adults over State Pension experiencing a limiting long term, illness, impairment or disability, this disproportionately affects older people in the UK, with 16% of working age adults also experiencing disability.[4] People experiencing mobility difficulties can find it difficult to get to the local supermarket, and to access a broad range of shops. This problem is exacerbated by bad local transport networks with poor disabled access, and where there are large distances between stores such as in remote rural areas. Visual impairment can also be a barrier as nutritional information on products is often inaccessible and in too small a font to be legible.

While previous witness Dr Clive Black emphasised the new trend in the growth of more local supermarket stores as an opportunity for improving access to food, others highlight the damage the supermarkets have already done to local food supply. Work by Dr Martin Caraher pointed to the decline of wholesalers, which support local independent shops, caused by the rise in share of food retail by the big supermarkets. Caraher also lays the blame with a lack of proper planning policy, who are not ensuring, for instance, that older people, those caring for young children, and those with physical disabilities, many of whom are council estate residents have access to independent, local shops with a proper supply of nutritious food. Too often this results in a poverty of choice of food, so nutritional needs are not able to be met in a given local environment.

Social and cultural context in which food sits

Food is more than a 'bundle of nutrients' and plays an important social and cultural role within all of our lives. Eating is often a social endeavour and food can be used as a means of expression. Taste, food preparation techniques and attitudes to food can therefore be viewed within a social and cultural context.

An ongoing thread through food policy discussions when looking at demand and consumption is the tension between approaches that on the one hand look at individual food consumption behaviour, and on the other look at the structural, societal pressures that shape collective behaviour.

The demand-led school of thought focuses on individuals and ultimately how government and society can help people to make better choices around food. For example, in *Halting the Obesity Epidemic,* (2000) Nestle and Jacobson list 36 examples of policy guidelines published by American government agencies and health organisations over the previous 50 years that focus on improving the choices made by individuals in regards to diet and exercise.

One particularly striking US Senate report referenced by Nestle and Jacobson contained the guidance "to avoid overweight, [sic] consume only as much energy as is expended; if overweight, decrease energy intake". While this might seem like a very dated food policy

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[4] *Disability facts and figures* (Department for Work & Pensions / Office for Disability Issues, Janaury 2014). Available here.

approach, parallels can be drawn with the '5 a day' campaign, which is still a prominent part of the UK Department of Health's food strategy. Launched in the UK in 2003 after a similar campaign in California, the campaign aimed to help people make better decisions around their food intake. While some have called it a "phenomenally successful public health campaign,"[5] others such as Professor Tim Lang have criticised it for lacking a 'radical cultural change emphasis'.[6] The significance of the 5 a day campaign will be covered in the third working paper on health.

Another key factor in food behaviour is the way in which food is prepared. Ready meals often provide an affordable way of 'outsourcing' preparation and cooking time. Less and less food is prepared and cooked now than in previous decades, and more and more pre-prepared food is being purchased. The average time taken to prepare the main family meal has reduced from 60 minutes to 34 minutes over the last 30 years.[7] This is accompanied by a lack of spare time particularly in busy dual-earner households, and the rise in availability and affordability of cheap, packaged ready meals. Promotions can often mean high-saturated fat, high-salt, high-sugar meals can appear to provide better value (especially when time and fuel costs are taken into account) than home prepared food, and the increased availability of such foodstuffs has reduced the necessity of a wide range of food preparation and cooking techniques and skills.

More recently the environmental context has come to the foreground when addressing food consumption. A recent review of interventions made to target obesity in the UK, (Dodds et al, 2014) identifies 6 interventions targeted towards education and 20 towards personal responsibility, while the vast majority – 48 – are focused on the environment.

The Brazilian Ministry of Health has recently set out what it believes are the key obstacles to dietary public health:

- scarcity of reliable information,
- problems of supply of healthy foods,
- the relatively high cost of some perishable foods,
- the loss of culinary skills,
- lack of time, and
- incessant advertising and promotion of ultra processed foods, especially to children and young people.[8]

An example of the importance of the environment in which food consumption sits in the UK is the phenomenon of the so-called 'obesogenic environment'. These are social, cultural and

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[5] Nicole Rothband of the British Dietic Association quoted in Cocozza, P. 'The five-a-day disaster: why the numbers don't add up' in *The Guardian* (14 May 2014). Available here.

[6] Prof Tim Lang quoted in Mosley, M. 'Five-a-day campaign: A partial success' in *BBC News Online* (3 January 2013) Available here.

[7] *Kantar Worldpanel UK – Friday Fact #9* (Kantar, 8/3/13) Available here.

[8] *Dietary guidelines for the Brazilian population* (Ministry of Health of Brazil, December 2014) Source available here and referenced in Geoff Tansey's blog here.

physical environments which 'promote a high energy intake and sedentary behaviours' (Swinburn et al, 1999) in which people are less likely to both maintain a balanced, nutritious diet and do physical exercise, thereby leading to higher incidences of obesity. A recent University of Cambridge study (Burgoine et al, 2014) found that people living or working near 'clusters' of fast food outlets are twice as likely to be obese as those living further away. A 2007 Government Foresight report described this obesogenic environment as a consequence of the 'technological revolution of the 20th century' that has exposed the 'biological vulnerability of human beings'.[9]

The social environment in which food is consumed is another key factor. Wills et al have outlined the differences in eating habits between families from different socio-economic groups, and the different role that food plays in their lives. In their study (2011) the families from middle class backgrounds were more likely to prioritise variety of food and a concern for health, whereas the families from working class backgrounds that they worked with were more likely to leave taste and preference to their children's discretion. An example of this was one working class family identifying their priority as making sure everyone 'got fed' as opposed to a middle class family's approach that prioritised 'presentation and self-preservation'. This links in to comments made by witnesses at the Commission's first hearing that the key barrier to a nutritious, sustainable food was income. The research from Wills et al highlights that income is tied to social and moral elements of 'feeding a family'.

The way in which different people view and use food is an important point to highlight that has roots over many decades. In his 1937 book *The Road to Wigan Pier*, George Orwell compared the New Statesman reader's 'orange juice and Ryvita biscuits' to the plight of the poor and unemployed. 'The less money you have,' Orwell wrote, 'the less inclined you feel to spend it on wholesome food…you want to eat something a little *tasty.'* Today this behaviour manifests itself in the rise of the 'affordable treat', where consumers make up for budget cuts on every day and higher cost lifestyle expenditure, such as the weekly food shop or holidays, with cheaper treats like a premium cup of coffee or indulgent snack.[10] This convergence of contemporary retail industry analysis and decades-old social storytelling is testament to the history of viewing food in a social and cultural context.

However, in a review of studies on income and behaviour rather than socio-economic background (including Low, 2011 and Cole et al, 2011) Harkness et al (2012) contest the idea of 'learned behavioural responses'. While they do not make reference to food, the authors find there is little evidence of a 'culture of poverty' and instead headline the issues raised in the first hearing – those of income, employment opportunities and social security. The case is that rather than picking up behaviours from family members and local communities, poverty carries over from generation to generation because the structural circumstances – economic opportunities above all - are likely to be similar. These authors and others are keen to dispel the 'culture of poverty' because it can reinforce perceptions that poverty (including

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[9] Butland et al, *Foresight: Tackling Obesities: Future Choices – Project report* (Government Office for Science, 2007). Available here.
[10] The 'affordable treat' was referred to by Clive Black in oral evidence to the Commission at the first evidence hearing.

food poverty and more general poverty) is caused by behaviours and decision making processes which are passed through communities and generations, rather than the structural environments. The approach that dispels a 'culture of poverty' implies that those experiencing poverty often have a lack of agency to escape that poverty because of their environment and shifts the burden of removing them from poverty over to society and away from the individual's behaviours.

Food marketing

Food marketing plays a role in shaping food habits and norms and affecting levels of demand for different types of food. It can often obscure nutritional details of food and can support the existence and growth of obesogenic environments, often drawing consumers to categories of 'junk food', 'fast food' and generally low-micronutrient food rather than just building individual brands within those categories.

Advertisers are streaming messages in to our eyes, ears and in some cases the noses (with supermarkets and fast food outlets purposefully re-directing baking smells out to customers and entrances). Jon Alexander at the New Citizenship Project has set out how marketers are always looking for new ways to signpost their products, whether it be using train windows, Google Glass or even forests as mediums to sell their goods.[11]

The Commission's first evidence hearing heard from Dr Clive Black who discussed the ways in which food retailers are responding to changing consumer behaviour. The Commission heard that some food retailers were responding quicker and more effectively to changes in consumer demand, most obviously with the rise of the discounters, Aldi and Lidl. Those retailers that have been able to fulfil new needs for cheaper foods have benefited, though sometimes this has resulted in a squeeze on the food supply chain.

While in many ways the food industry is responding to changing consumer demand – not least to falls in real incomes and the rise of other costs such as fuel and housing – there is an arm of the industry geared around doing the opposite: driving consumers towards their offer. This is food marketing.

Food marketing is successful at shaping food consumption norms because it has the power not only to change the preference of a consumer at brand level, but also at 'category level' (Hastings, 2003). This ability to affect category level changes, which is particularly marked in relation to children, means that consumers are more likely to develop a preference for the types of food that are marketed to them. So for example, food marketing goes beyond the choice of whether to pick up a Twix or a Mars bar, but whether to pick up a chocolate bar over another snack, like a piece of fruit.

In a 2009 systematic review of evidence into food marketing to children, Cairns, Angus, Hastings and Caraher set out how contemporary food marketing 'predominantly promotes' low nutrition foods. In fact, the study found that 50 – 80 per cent of food and drink marketing is for low nutrition foods and that it directly contributes towards the creation of obesogenic environments (see section above).

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[11] Alexander, J. *Christmas is for sharing?* (New Citizenship Project, 19 November 2014). Available here.

While careful analysis of goods advertised can lead to conclusions over the prevalence of low nutrition foods, it is often hard for consumers to tell the difference. This is because foods with low levels of micronutrients are often marketed as being 'good' in other ways, such as improving family life. An example of this misleading appearance of food might be found in Michael Pollan's recent book, *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto*. Pollan describes the how the fast food industry marketed itself in support of women's liberation in the United States in the 1970s. KFC proclaimed "we've got it covered!" and urged women to leave behind the shackles of domesticity in favour of their particular brand of fried chicken. This could be seen as an example of the claim to improve family life, when it is also promoting low nutrition food and creating a more obesogenic environment.

A review of proposed solutions

There have been a range of previously proposed and trialled policy solutions and interventions to deal with access to food. However, as forcefully pointed out by Prof Liz Dowler in the first Commission hearing, no matter how inventive people are in in any community in the UK, if they can not afford the level of micro-nutrients needed, they can not be adequately fed.

<u>Physical access to food</u>

Identification of public institutions with an impact on food poverty

In order to account for the various public policy areas that have an impact on 'food poverty', Hitchman et al (2002) recommended that a new food strategy is set out that identifies public institutions at all levels that affect access to food and social inclusion. This draws from international progress at the time in Denmark and the Netherlands where food councils were set up to coordinate government policy. More recently Local Authorities in the UK have adopted this approach, including Bristol, Brighton & Hove, and Manchester

In order to look at access at a local level, which would include issues around access to nutritious food in deprived areas, Hitchman et al recommended regional 'food forums' which would include local authorities, health authorities, NGOs, citizen groups. Such groups could identify and tackle public transport blackspots, and where regeneration and development was needed to improve access to good. A recent example of this in the UK was the *Zero Hunger City* report (2013) from the London Assembly that set out a strategic approach for the City.

Create data to allow an annual audit of food and social exclusion

The first hearing paper from the Commission identified the absence of official statistics for food insecurity, hunger, or 'food poverty'. This is an issue which has importance in this strand of research too, which would be able to more easily identify the common issues behind a lack of access to nutritious food. This could include local geographic areas as well as demographics.

There are various sets of such data. These include the Food Insecurity Vulnerability Mapping System,[12] the United States Department of Agriculture measurement of Household Food Security[13], and the Food and Agriculture of the United Nations measurement of Food Security.[14] In the UK, Dowler and Donkin have mapped out areas for food access in Brent and Sandwell.[15]

Giving low-income communities a role in the planning process

Planners and planning offices could look at access to food as part of their process. One way of instituting this would be to allow low-income families into the planning process. Allowing low-income families into the planning process would address issues around a lack of access to shops and outlets serving nutritious food, Hitchman et al argue. This would balance the power away from larger retailers in local planning policy. This is an approach that could particularly have resonance in rural communities.

Developing the food retail and service offer in communities

One way to address the lack of access to food in certain rural and urban communities is to encourage and facilitate the development and growth of new enterprises within the local environment that can deliver this access. This also increases the choice available to inhabitants and can erode obesogenic environments. Caraher talks of the ability of new food co-ops and other small enterprises to fill these gaps in access and thereby regenerate local areas (2005).

An example of a disruptive social enterprise aiming to fill such a gap is 'Box Chicken', a Shift social enterprise aiming to provide young people in deprived, obesogenic environments with an affordable nutritious food offer that offers an alternative to the high-fat, low micronutrient 'affordable treat'.[16] There are many other grassroots, local initiatives like the Incredible Edible network and Making Local Food Work that are working to build skills, awareness and access to sustainable, nutritious food in local communities.

This is also an approach identified by Shucksmith, in combination with a harnessing of technological change, as an opportunity for regeneration in remote rural areas.

Another means towards developing the food retail offer, and thereby increasing access to food, is to attract retailers in to areas of deprivation. Successful initiatives in this space have created new shop unit spaces that meet the market needs of retailers and have offered ongoing business advice to potential retailers.[17]

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[12] Set up after the 1996 world food summit, referenced by Hitchman et al (2002)
[13] Measures the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods and ability to acquire such foods. Referenced by Lambie-Mumford in an interview with the Commission.
[14] Voices of the Hungry information available here.
[15] Donkin, Dowler et al, 'Mapping access to food at a local level' in *British Food Journal 101, 7* (2000)
[16] For more information on Box Chicken, see *Box Chicken: Providing some healthy competition to fast food outlets* (Shift, 2014). It is available here.
[17] Carley, Kirk and McIntosh, *Retailling, sustainability and neighbourhood regeneration* (JRF, 2001). Referenced by Caraher, 2005. Available here.

Social and cultural context

Government public health information campaigns

There is a long history of information-based campaigns aimed at helping people to budget, prepare food and develop nutritional awareness better (Lambie-Mumford, 2012). The most high-profile example of such a campaign is the '5 a day' campaign, which is explored in the previous chapter. A more recent incarnation is the UK Government's Change 4 Life campaign designed to get people to eat more healthily and do more exercise. This includes a television advertising campaign and smart recipes apps for smartphones.[18] However, because it is hard to demonstrate impact and prove causation, there is little evidence that such campaigns do filter down throughout the population.[19]

Education in schools

Education in school plays an important role in shaping attitudes towards food and developing food skills. An example of this is a Caraher, Seeley, Wu and Lloyd study into school cooking classes, which showed that they create an intention to change diets, as well as increased cooking confidence and vegetable consumption.[20] Dodds et al found that the school curriculum can be an effective, low cost way to reduce obesity. For these reasons Pollan advocates 'bringing back home ec' into schools in order to ensure pupils can develop adequate food preparation skills. Recent initiatives, such as the Food For Life Partnership have taken this principle further, working with schools to ensure pupils have a sense of where food comes from, how it's grown, cooked and experienced.[21]

Regulating the local environment

One way of addressing local issues such as obesogenic environments is to introduce restrictions on the number and proportion of non-nutritious food outlets in a given area. For example, Birmingham City Council has introduced a new regulation that no more than 10 per cent of units in any shopping area can be takeaways. While this method does not differentiate between nutritional levels, and does not include retail stores, it sets out a possible approach for Local Authority planning policies.

Food marketing

Food transparency

Greater food transparency has been said to be an answer to misleading marketing campaigns on food. The Which? food price campaign successfully called on the big UK food retailers to commit to simple unit prices on their foods. The charity felt consumers were

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[18] More information available here.
[19] This is explained in more detail in Dowler, E., Caraher, M. and Lincoln, P. Inequalities in food and nutrition: challenging 'lifestyles' in Dowler, E. and Spencer, N. (eds) *Challenging Health Inequalities: from Acheson to 'Choosing Health'* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2007)
[20] Caraher, Seeley, Wu and Lloyd. 'When chefs adopt a school? An evaluation of a cooking intervention in English primary schools' in *Appetite 62* (2013)
[21] More information available here.

often left confused by pricing promotions and different packaging.[22] There is also an issue around nutritional information, which the British Heart Foundation says is often published on food packaging in too small a font and can be unclear.[23]

However, there is debate over how successful these approaches can be in catering as opposed to retail. Serrano et al looked at a case study in a catering setting where additional information was made available on the menu, and it did not lead to a decrease in the amount of fat consumed or a decrease in energy intake.[24]

Television advertising

Television advertising of 'unhealthy foods and beverages' to children during child-specific television programmes was banned in the UK in 2009.[25] This resulted from a recognition of the negative impact that marketing could have particularly on children, particularly as sophisticated campaigns were being developed. This regulation followed previous bans on tobacco advertising and recognised the potentially damaging impact of marketing on diets and behaviour. However, Boyland et al found that this regulation led to little dietary change in young people because the campaigns were being targeted by other means. Instead, they recommended that the ban was developed to also include family television which was watched by more young people.[26]

Internet advertising

It is often more difficult to identify or be aware of the provenance of advertising on the internet. This is even more the case with viral marketing and the use of social media as a platform for marketing, in which the explicit aim is to make impressions on consumers while giving the impression that the brand endorsement is not coming directly from the marketer. Recently a campaign for the biscuit manufacturer Oreo was banned by the advertising watchdog for not making it clear it was a promotional video.[27] This has led Blades et al to suggest there should be greater clarity of the provenance of advertising on the internet.[28]

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[22] More information available here.

[23] *A fit choice?* (British Heart Foundation, 2009) Available here.

[24] Holmes AS, Serrano E, Machin J, Duetsch T, Davis G. 'Effect of Different Children's Menu Labeling Designs on Family Purchases'. Appetite 62. 2013

[25] Halford, J. 'The marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children. Setting the research agenda' in Appetite 62. 2013

[26] Boyland, EJ and Harrold, JA and Kirkham, TC and Halford, JCG. Persuasive techniques used in television advertisements to market foods to UK children. Appetite, 58. 2013

[27] *YouTubers ads for Oreo banned for not making clear purpose of videos* (The Guardian, 26 November 2014) Available here.

[28] Blades, M., Oates, C.J. and Li, S. Children's recognition of advertisements on television & on web pages. Appetite, 62. 2013

Possible questions for witnesses

About the witnesses
Hannah Lambie-Mumford is Faculty Research Fellow at the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute. Hannah will draw from her research on food poverty and access to food, including the Defra commissioned review of food aid.

Wendy Wills is Reader in Food and Public Health at the University of Hertfordshire, where she leads the work of the Food and Public Health Research Unit. She will draw on her experience of conducting research with children, young people and their families in relation to the socio-cultural and socio-economic context of food and eating practices. Wendy convened the British Sociological Association Food Study Group for a number of years and was previously a member of the Food Standards Agency's Social Science Research Committee.

Jon Alexander is Founder of the New Citizenship Project. Jon will draw on his background in the advertising industry in which he worked for several years before co-authoring a major report into ethics in advertising in 2011. Jon is also a member of the Food Ethics Council.

Physical access to food

- In what ways do low-income households struggle for access to nutritious food?
- What barriers are there to people obtaining nutritious diets beyond income?
- How can planning policies be changed to better provide 'good food' for low-income households and communities?
- How can food retailers be attracted into deprived areas?
- What other ways are there to increase physical access to food?

Social and cultural context

- How are food behaviours and cultures passed through communities?
- Should we prioritise affecting individual food behaviours or the environments that shape choices?
- What government policies and actions for businesses, schools and other organisations can be introduced to a) improve food behaviours on a national scale, and b) address the environmental issues that shape collective food consumption?

Food marketing

- In what ways does food marketing affect diet and consumption of food?
- How can food marketing become more ethical?
- Where has government regulation on food marketing improved wellbeing?
- A recent report from the Brazilian Public Health Ministry has made a link between the types of food that receive the most advertising and the types of food that should be avoided by those wishing to maintain a nutritious diet. Is this a link that we should make too?

Key texts

Burgoigne et al. Associations between exposure to takeaway food outlets, takeaway food consumption, and body weight in Cambridgeshire, UK: population based, cross sectional study. British Medical Journal, 2014.

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