



## **HOBART CITY COUNCIL – COMMUNITY/HOUSEHOLD FOOD ACCESS PROFILE**

**Introduction & disclaimer** – This profile has been developed by the Heart Foundation Tasmania as part of the Healthy Food Access Tasmania Project. The information highlighted in this profile was gathered in 2014. At the time we put it together it was up to date. Sometimes things change and when they do we are happy to update it for you. Also if there is other information you think should also be included please contact us.

### **Why does access to healthy food matter?**

Limited or poor access to healthy food has both health and social consequences. There are many health conditions and diseases which are associated with or caused by a poor diet, as a result of poor economic or physical access to healthy food. These diseases include heart disease<sup>1</sup>, diabetes<sup>2</sup>, some cancers<sup>3</sup> and other health conditions such as overweight<sup>4</sup> and obesity<sup>5</sup>. Reduced access to healthy food can cause poor physical development in children and impact their learning and attendance at school<sup>6</sup>. For adults who have poor access to healthy food it is often very stressful and causes them to be anxious and ashamed<sup>7</sup>. This often also means they avoid social occasions in their communities and with family and which can lead to them becoming socially isolated<sup>8</sup>.

### **How are the residents of Hobart City Council doing?**

Currently 54.9 % of adults living in Hobart eat the recommended two pieces of fruit per day and 11.4 % eat the recommended five serves of vegetables, compared with 42% and 9.8% for state averages<sup>9</sup>. Hobart residents are eating the same amount of fruit and slightly more vegetables in 2013 when compared with 2009 (54.4 % and 9.3 % respectively). For adults living in Hobart 17.6 % are obese<sup>9</sup>. Also of note, 13.1 % of Hobart adults report that their health is poor or fair, compared with 19% for the state average<sup>10</sup>.

While we don't have results for children at the local government level we do know that rates of overweight and obesity are increasing across Tasmania. The teenage years are particularly significant. Up to 30% of young people across Tasmania are overweight or obese<sup>11</sup>.

### **Food Security - How easy is it to access healthy food across Hobart City Council ?**

Often we hear about people being food insecure across Tasmania. *People who are food insecure do not have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life.* Across Tasmania about 5-10% of the adult population<sup>12</sup> can be described as food insecure. However it is estimated to be as high as 25% in low income households<sup>13</sup>.

The Healthy Food Access Tasmania project is focused on improving physical and economic access to fruit and vegetables in communities across Tasmania. When we think about access to healthy food we think about what is available and where, and how affordable it is? Can all residents easily get to the shops?

### **Food Access for Hobart Residents**

Across Hobart resident's ability to get to the shops is of course impacted by where shops are located and what transport they may have available to them. Recent research conducted by the University of Tasmania showed that there is wide variety of shops across the Hobart City Council area. In total there are 26 shops where fresh food such as fruit and vegetables can be purchased. This total comprises a mix of major supermarkets (6= 2 in New Town, 2 in Hobart, and 2 in Sandy Bay) minor supermarkets (6 –1 in Battery Point, Hobart, Lenah Valley, NewTown, West Hobart and South Hobart), general stores (11 –3 in North Hobart, 1 in Battery Point, Hobart, Lenah Valley, South Hobart & West Hobart; 3 in Sandy Bay) and fruit and vegetables shops (Sandy Bay, Hobart and NewTown).

Hobart also has a couple of independent or community operated points of sale. The FarmGate Sunday market has seasonal fruit and vegetables sold by growers. Salamanca Market operates Saturday morning and has a range of fruit and vegetables stall holders including local market gardeners, organic suppliers Harvest Feast and the growing collective Fork and Hoe.

### **Healthy Food Access Basket Survey – Tasmanian results 2014<sup>14</sup>.**

In March and April of 2014 the University of Tasmania, as part of the Healthy Food Access Tasmania project, conducted a price and availability survey for healthy food across Tasmania. The Healthy Food Access Basket survey collected data on 44 foods which are consistent with the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGHE). The AGHE was developed by the Commonwealth Department of Health and provides recommendations for how Australian's should eat for good health across the lifespan. This survey has been used widely in Australia as measure of the cost of eating well. Data was collected in 142 of Tasmania's 353 stores where fresh food is available. On page 3 there is a summary of the state wide results contained in Table 1. These results show the range in the price by the different kinds of stores and also the percentage of income required for 4 common household types using Centrelink payments as the income. It shows that the cost of healthy foods vary across store types and the varying impost on the household budget depending on household type. The range of cost of food was determined by the survey results and the calculation for the percentage of income has been made by the Healthy Food Access Tasmania Project. Results from the fruit and vegetables shops are not included here.

Area	Major Supermarket				Minor Supermarket				General and Convenience shops			
	2+2* family	1+2* family	Male Adult	Elderly Female	2+2 family	1+2 family	Male Adult	Elderly Female	2+2 family	1+2 family	Male Adult	Elderly Female
<b>Tasmania (Average cost)</b>	\$352.01	\$242.34	\$109.24	\$85.98	\$440.25	\$302.42	\$138.04	\$106.60	\$479.67	\$329.33	\$151.24	\$116.05
<b>Southern Region (Average cost)</b>	\$348.82	\$239.96	\$107.93	\$85.74	\$469.90	\$321.13	\$149.02	\$113.41	\$487.11	\$333.99	\$153.51	\$117.72
<b>Local Government Area where data is available</b>												
<b>Derwent Valley</b>	\$413.38	\$284.33	\$129.43	\$100.73	\$436.98	\$298.86	\$137.10	\$106.63	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Glamorgan/Spring Bay</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$439.02	\$302.10	\$137.05	\$105.72	\$464.46	\$317.29	\$147.84	\$112.19
<b>Kingborough</b>	\$391.96	\$273.31	\$117.49	\$96.72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$508.79	\$349.78	\$159.19	\$123.01
<b>Southern Midlands</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$489.25	\$334.62	\$154.60	\$117.49	\$414.15	\$285.50	\$128.80	\$100.15
<b>Tasman</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$476.35	\$320.81	\$156.35	\$115.84	\$490.33	\$335.24	\$156.19	\$118.83

n/a - data is not available for this store type in this area

\*2 + 2 = 2 adults, 2 children household; 1 + 2 = 1 adult, 2 children household

Source: S. Murray et al., (2014) Availability, Cost and Affordability of a Basket of Healthy Food in Tasmania. School of Health Sciences. University of Tasmania

## **Which residents in Hobart may have difficulty accessing healthy food?**

In the Hobart local government area there are 19,611 households and 48,741<sup>15</sup> residents. The residents and households who are likely to find it hard to access healthy food are likely to be:

- Households with low incomes including residents on Centrelink payments (21% of the local population are Concession Card Holders; 4 % unemployed)<sup>14</sup> often have a reduced ability to buy sufficient healthy food as there are many other costs such as housing, transport and utilities which drain the household budget
- Single parents and their children, particularly if they rely on Centrelink payments. (there are 363 single parent households<sup>13</sup> and 7 % of children 0-14 are estimated to be living in poverty across the local government area)<sup>16</sup>
- People with a disability or chronic disease (13.1 % of adults report their health as fair or poor and 1783 residents are receiving the disability support payment)<sup>13</sup> because they may have difficulty carrying shopping<sup>17</sup> and their medical expenses reduce the household food budget<sup>7</sup>
- Households without a car (12 % of households)<sup>13</sup>
- People experiencing housing stress. This is people who have a low income (bottom 40% of income distribution) and who pay more than 30% of their household income on rent or mortgage (40.5 % of local households)<sup>13</sup>
- People living in areas which rely on general stores, or do not have any shops at all within walking distance, limiting their physical access to healthy food<sup>18</sup>.
- People who have inadequate access to public transport.<sup>7</sup>

## **What can we do about improving access to healthy food for local residents?**

While the data about Hobart resident's health and diets may be concerning, there are some terrific programs and initiatives that are working towards improving outcomes. When these are combined with a systems approach good results can be achieved. Australian research<sup>19</sup> has shown that when several particular factors occur together, residents are able to eat well even if they have a low income. We call these *resilience factors*, which means people can still eat well despite other challenges.

In order to have the resilience to make healthy food choices easy choices, it is important that a number of the success factors are present in order to give people the support they need.

These success factors include:

1. Residents having good personal skills around food preparation, cooking and shopping. Being able to grow some of your own food is also very helpful.
2. Growing up or living in a family or community that values healthy eating and sees it as a 'normal' thing to do. This includes eating fruit and vegetables.
3. Importantly, residents must have access to affordable healthy food. This means it must be available in their community or it must be easy to get to where it is available.

Using these success factors we have compiled some of the characteristics of the Hobart Local Government area to show how strengthening coordination between these factors, as well as the organisations and/or program activities that are underway, can help contribute towards building a community in which healthy eating is achievable for all.

**Linking and coordinating these factors present in the community will contribute towards making healthy food choices easy choices for Hobart residents.**

**Supportive environments influencing healthy food access and supply**

- **Markets at the Salamanca**
- **Supermarket and fruit and vegetable shops**
- Meals on wheels and home delivery from the supermarkets and other shops helps ensure people who can't get to the shops can still get nutritious food
- Agencies which provide fresh fruit and vegetables as part of their food relief for residents who are food insecure

**A culture of healthy eating in a variety of community settings**

Schools and early childcare centres which are part of the Move Well Eat Well program are working towards children, young people and their families regarding healthy eating as normal and important to achieve.

Some workplaces have health and wellbeing programs which promote healthy eating to their workers.

Healthy catering or food at community events assists people to make healthy food choices more often.

Promoting locally grown food

**Individual skills, knowledge to shop, cook, grow and prepare healthy food**

Schools and community groups and gardens and other community organisations may be running programs that teach people to cook, grow food, shop/budget and how to eat well and affordably.

Family Food Patch Volunteers

## **How can it make a difference when we connect it all together?**

Seeing the resilience factors as a 'system' and ensuring they are linked to each other can have a positive impact on making healthy food choices easy choices for local residents. For example, if cooking programs use local seasonal produce available in local shops it is easier for people to purchase affordable, healthy food and prepare and eat it. If schools teach children that eating tasty fruit and vegetables are important and 'normalise' it, this makes the family meal more enjoyable for the 'cook' and the whole family. If shops and markets in neighbourhoods and towns have a ready supply of affordable fruit and vegetables, this makes it easier, even for people on a tight budget to buy it and eat well. If it is locally grown it is also a great boost to the local economy. Making sure that people who need support in times of crisis also receive healthy food such as fruit and vegetables will help them to continue to eat well and maintain their health during challenging times.

Below is a list of the businesses, organisations and groups who have an interest in improving access to healthy food that we are currently aware of.

### **Supportive environments influencing healthy food access and supply**

- Emergency Relief Food Agencies including agencies who have fresh fruit and vegetables provided by SecondBite
- Markets
- Supermarkets, fruit and vegetable shops & general stores
- Community Transport and home delivery of fresh food

### **A culture of healthy eating in a variety of community settings such as schools and early childcare and community meals programs**

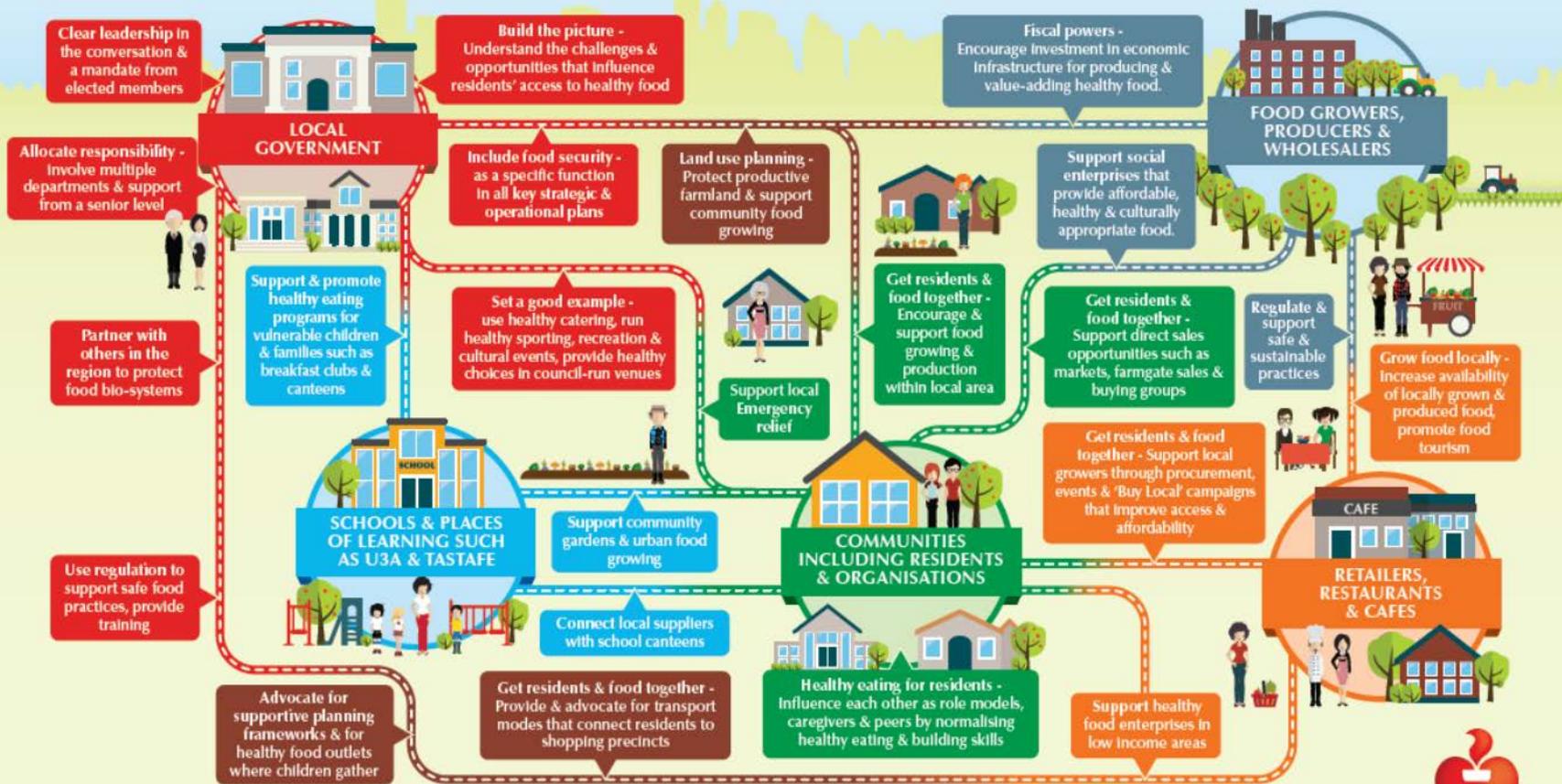
- Move Well Eat Well Schools – Albuera Street PS, Goulburn Street PS, Hutchins Junior School, Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School, Landsdowne Crescent PS, Lenah Valley PS, Mt Nelson PS, Mt Stuart PS, sacred Heart PS, Sandy Bay Infant School, St Mary's College junior School, St Michael's Collegiate Junior School, Waimea Heights PS
- Move Well Eat Well Early Years Education and Care Centres - Discovery Early Learning Centre, Goodstart Early Learning Centre Hobart and North Hobart, Goulburn St Kindergarten, Hutchins School Kindergarten; Lady Gowrie Battery Point, campbell St, Day Care, South Hobart and University South; Lenah valley Child care and ELC; Lipscombe Child Care Services, Nutgrove, Seagulls; Rainbow Child Care Centre, Sandy Bay Child Care Centre, Scots Early Learning Service, Southern Childcare Services Family Day Care, View St - Stepping Stones Children's Centre
- Social Eating with friends
- Breakfast programs and accredited school canteens

### **Individual skills, knowledge to shop, cook, grow and prepare healthy food**

- Community and school gardens
- Family Food Patch Volunteers

**In recent years in the Hobart City Council local government area there has been a lot of activity promoting healthy eating, access to healthy food and funding of initiatives**

# What is the role of local government in supporting community food security in Tasmania?





Healthy Food Access  
Tasmania

[www.healthyfoodaccesstasmania.org.au](http://www.healthyfoodaccesstasmania.org.au)

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- <sup>4</sup> Mirza M, Fitzpatrick-Lewis D, Thomas H, 2007. Is there a relationship between food security and overweight/obesity. Ontario Canada: Effective Public Health Practice
- <sup>5</sup> Burns C, 2004, A review of literature describing the link between poverty, food insecurity and obesity with specific reference to Australia. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation
- <sup>6</sup> Ramsay, R, Giskes K, Turrell G & Gallegos D, 2011. Food insecurity among Australian children: Potential determinants, health and developmental consequences. Journal of Child Health
- <sup>7</sup> King S, Moffitt A, Bellamy J, Carter S, McDowell C & Mollenhauer, 2010. State of the Family Report: When there is not enough to eat. Canberra: Anglicare Australia
- <sup>8</sup> King S, Moffitt A & Carter S, 2010 When the cupboard is bare: food, poverty and social exclusion State of the Family Report: When there is not enough to eat. Volume 1 Essays Canberra: Anglicare Australia ,
- <sup>9</sup> Department of Health and Human Services Tasmania ( 2009 & 2013) Tasmanian Population Health Survey ( This 2013 survey was funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health)
- <sup>10</sup> <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/phidu/maps-data/data/>.
- The Social Health Atlas of Australia includes data on a range of population characteristics, including demography, socioeconomic status, health status and risk factors, and use of health and welfare services.
- <sup>11</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, 2013. State of Public Health 2013
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- <sup>15</sup> <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/phidu/maps-data/data/>. The Social Health Atlas of Australia includes data on a range of population characteristics, including demography, socioeconomic status, health status and risk factors, and use of health and welfare services
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