

# FOOD CONNECTIONS CLARENCE

## Community Food Security 2024

Clarence City Council is funded through the *Lift Local Grants*, (Healthy Tasmania) to research community food insecurity, assess the needs and engage with community agencies to explore future collaboration and the specific role of Council to support agencies. We have mapped what's currently happening and gathered data and case studies. A Forum was held in March 2024 with community and statewide agencies, the Tasmanian Food Security Coalition members and the state government. This infographic provides the highlights from the research, data collection, case studies and actions from the Forum.

Clarence Council has a **long-term commitment to health and wellbeing** through its *Community Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032*. Delivery of this project aligns with priority 2 and 3 in the Strategy.

TASMANIAN RESEARCH HAS FOUND SOME WAYS THE COMMUNITY SUGGESTS COULD IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY

"More freshly grown local food needs to be available easily"

"More community gardens or garden programs outside of work hours"

"Support for local distribution or produce grown by local growers in the area"

"Better promotion of where to get help and how"

"Delivery type food assistance, someone to drop off food parcels"

### THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF FOOD INSECURITY



20%  
eat smaller meals



50%  
say they can't eat a balanced meal

1 IN 4  
skip meals

### ABOUT ACCESSING FOOD RELIEF

31%  
feel judged

21%  
say agencies don't have the food I prefer or want

18%  
I am not sure where to go to seek support



### THERE ARE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF FOOD INSECURITY.

- 1 MARGINAL FOOD INSECURITY** – people experience anxiety about getting enough food.
- 2 MODERATE FOOD INSECURITY** – people are eating food which is of a lower quality, variety, and desirability.
- 3 SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY** – people have a reduced food intake and are regularly going without food.

### How are community agencies and organisations in Clarence responding to community food insecurity?



**PROVIDING EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF HAMPERS AND PANTRIES** (with food support from Loaves and Fishes and Foodbank Tasmania and donations from community, faith-based organisations, and local businesses) – fresh fruit and veg and shelf staples are provided



**DELIVERING PROGRAMS** – teaching cooking, budgeting and how to grow your own food; selling low-cost ready meals and discounted fresh food for home cooking; cooking and serving low-cost regular meals for the community to enjoy meals together; providing school breakfasts and lunches (in pilot schools only).

These programs are funded through organisational operational funding, grants, government service agreements and grants, and donations



**IN A RECENT SURVEY AGENCIES REPORTED THAT DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF SUPPORT IS GROWING, A LOT.**

### How is the State Government responding to community level food insecurity?

Tasmanian Food Relief to Resilience Strategy

Consulting and partnering with the Tasmanian Food Security Coalition

Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan and grants

Clarence is a Healthy Together grant recipient

Funding the School Food Matters lunch pilot (Clarendon Vale, Rokeby and Warrane Primary Schools); Loaves and Fishes, Foodbank Tasmania agency food distribution and one-off grants for community programs

### Who is most at risk of food insecurity?

**18-24**  
year-olds and students



People relying on Centrelink payments



Single people



Single parents



Families with children



Tasmanians with a disability

**MANY TASMANIANS ARE EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY FOR THE FIRST TIME DURING THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS.**

### What triggers community members becoming food insecure?



Insufficient income to cover all household costs



Increased housing costs (whether renting or mortgage)



Insecure housing



Receiving a big bill such as electricity, car registration or insurance



Health issues (physical and/or mental health)

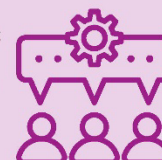


22% of adults living in Clarence have a long-term health condition

### What's next?

Following on from the Food Connections March 2024 agency Forum, the following actions are proposed.

- Support community agency capacity building and building trustful partnerships to enhance collective action
- Strengthen and inform collaboration at a local and state government level with a focus on informing policy review and the *Healthy Together Clarence* project
- Communicate to educate the community about food insecurity and profile local agency efforts



All data references and sources are included in the *Food Connections Clarence* report.





## CLARENCE CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY PROFILE

### Background

The Clarence City Council Community Food Security Profile was funded through the Lift Local Grant Scheme which is part of the [Healthy Tasmania Five-Year Strategic Plan](#). The grant funding objectives were to:

- Research the issue of food precarity/security in the local context of Clarence municipality.
- Provide evidence-based research to quantify service provision, assess the needs of the sector and community, and identify and address the gaps within our municipality for the enhanced health, connection, and wellbeing of our community members.
- Produce a report and needs analysis of the sector that will contribute to strengthening Council programs, capacity-building across the sector and relationships.

The project is delivered in stages. This document delivers against stages 1 and 2.

**Stage 1 – Mapping what’s currently happening** - survey and interview community agencies who provide emergency food relief to residents.

**Stage 2 – Setting the scene** – conduct desktop research to review key data that helps us to understand the residents most at risk and the broader context for action.

**Stage 3 – Community-led strengths and needs assessment** – deliver workshops with community agencies to develop priorities and a roadmap for action, including a clearly defined role of Council.

**Stage 4 – Collate and share findings** – produce a final report and proposed next steps for action.

### Clarence City Council’s commitment to community wellbeing.

Clarence City Council has a long-term commitment to the health and wellbeing of community through the [Community Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032](#). In delivery of the Strategy, Council adopts a set of health and wellbeing principles, which it uses to guide partnerships, planning, programs/interventions, research and monitoring of health and wellbeing. We acknowledge that there are protective and risk factors that contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community. Protections include healthy conditions and environments, psychological factors, effective health services and healthy choices. Risks include the social and commercial determinants of health, behavioural and physiological factors, and psychosocial factors. Our principles to support health and wellbeing of community are:

- ✓ Community focussed to ensure community voices are heard.
- ✓ Evidence informed by research and measuring the results of actions.
- ✓ Place based responses drawing on local strengths.
- ✓ Inclusive of all abilities, ages, cultures, sexuality.
- ✓ Collaborative to understand needs and partnerships to deliver shared objectives.

✓ **Integrated by working across Council to capture expertise and resources to achieve objectives.**

**This project aligns with and will deliver against the priority areas 2 and 3 of the Community Wellbeing Strategy.**

**Priority 2 - Places and Spaces – the built environment and open space**

**Priority 3 – Opportunities for Community Wellbeing – improving access to healthy food and increasing skills and knowledge of community members and agencies, plus using an action learning approach.**

Prior to COVID-19 disruption *Food Connections Clarence* had a long collaborative history with community agencies and service providers across the local government area. It is intended that this project will reinvigorate partnerships across agencies and programs that support community member's food security.

## What is food security?

The definition of food security was updated in 2020 to include agency and sustainability<sup>1</sup>. It is captured in the following diagram below.

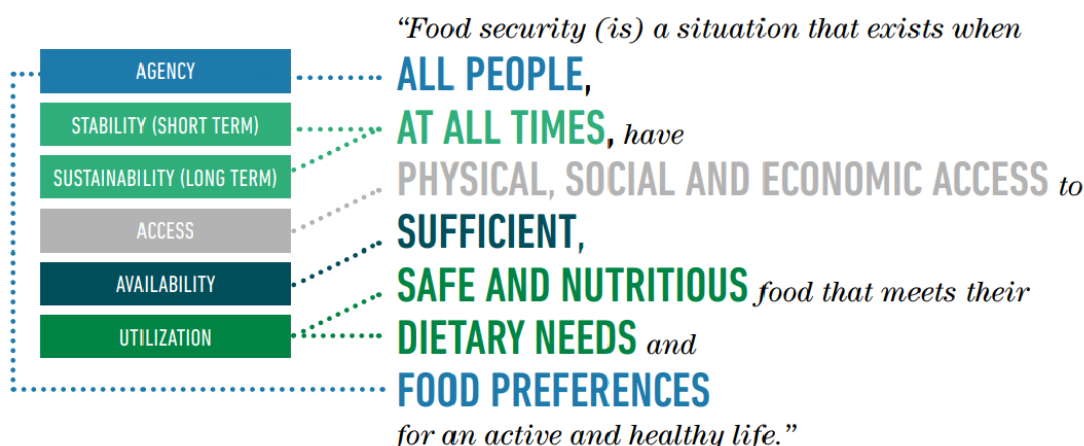


Diagram 1. What is food security?

## There are different levels of food security and food insecurity.

- Food secure – people have ready access to food.
- Marginal food insecurity – people experience anxiety about getting enough food.
- Low food insecurity – people are eating food which is of a lower quality, variety, and desirability.
- Very low food insecurity – people have a reduced food intake and are regularly going without food.

In 2020, at the start of the COVID *Stay Home Stay Safe* period, the Tasmanian Government commissioned the University of Tasmania (UTas) to deliver a research project, *The Tasmania Project*<sup>2</sup>, to monitor how Tasmanians were doing. Since April 2020, food security has been measured on four occasions by UTas. The results are captured in the Table 1.

<sup>1</sup> HLPE. (2020). *Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030*. A report by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.utas.edu.au/community-and-partners/the-tasmania-project>

	May 2020 <sup>3</sup>	September 2020 <sup>4</sup>	May 2021 <sup>5</sup>	October 2022 <sup>6</sup>
Marginal food insecurity	11.6%	6.9%	7.6%	7.4%
Moderate food insecurity	11.6%	8.3%	11.8%	23%
Severe food insecurity	4.5%	4.3%	7.5%	20.2%
<b>Total food insecure</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>

Table 1. Food insecurity in Tasmania May 2020 – October 2022

When food insecurity was last measured in October 2022, one in two (51%) of Tasmanian households has experienced food insecurity over the previous month. This is nearly double the rate recorded in May 2021 (27%) - 7% experienced marginal food security (anxiety over a shortage of food in the house), similar to the levels reported in 2021: 23% have low food security (reduced quality and variety of food eaten), double the levels reported in 2021; 20% have very low food security (regularly skipping meals and going hungry), nearly triple the levels reported in 2021.<sup>7</sup>

While food insecurity rates are increasing – only a relatively small percentage of Tasmanians access emergency food relief - 10%.<sup>8</sup> Findings from the Foodbank 2023<sup>9</sup> report provide some insights into this:

- 77% of those households experiencing food insecurity did so for the first time (the first timers are increasingly younger (81% aged <45), employed (83%) or with mid (80%) to higher (85%) incomes).
- At least 60% of food insecure households had someone in paid work.
- 56% of food insecure people don't seek help (from family, friends, or emergency relief).
- They don't seek help because they are ashamed (45%), perceive others to be in greater need (32%), 1 in 4 do not know about EFR services and/or prefer to ask family and friends for support (22%).
- 18% don't use EFR as they aren't able to travel where it's available; 17% say it's too difficult to apply for; 11% service does not open at a suitable time or food provided doesn't suit their needs.
- Majority of households hit by food insecurity typically struggled multiple times a month or more often, and for most, each struggle typically last within a week (although for a substantial third, the experience could last for several weeks or even longer).<sup>10</sup>
- **For households experiencing food insecurity is every few months (30%), monthly (35%) and for 20% it is most weeks or chronic.**<sup>11</sup>

## Who is most at risk for food insecurity in Tasmania?

The U Tas research identified particular groups in Tasmania which are vulnerable to food insecurity. They include younger people, unemployed Tasmanians, single parent households, Tasmanian with a disability and people with

<sup>3</sup> Kent K, Murray S, Penrose B et al., The new normal for food insecurity? A repeated cross-sectional survey over 1 year during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia <https://ijbnpa.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12966-022-01347-4>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.utas.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf](https://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.utas.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf](https://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

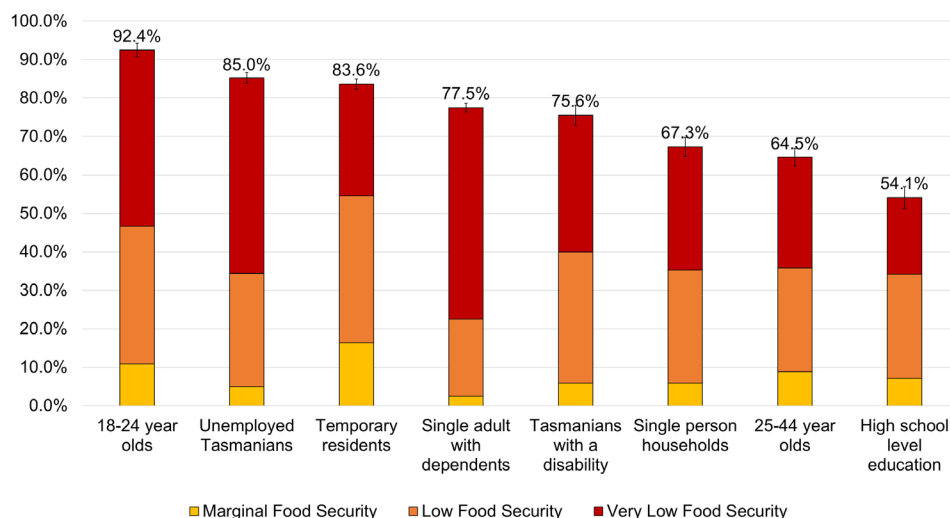
<sup>9</sup> Foodbank Hunger Report 2023

<sup>10</sup> [https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023\\_Foodbank\\_Hunger\\_Report\\_IPSOS-Report.pdf](https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023_Foodbank_Hunger_Report_IPSOS-Report.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid



high school only educational attainment.<sup>12</sup> The level of risk and experience of the severity of food insecurity are captured in Graph 1.



Graph 1. Groups of Tasmanians that are at higher risk of food insecurity<sup>13</sup>.

The 2021 Census findings<sup>14</sup> for the Clarence City Council (CCC) Local Government Area means the following number of community members identified in Table 2 are potentially vulnerable to food insecurity

At risk groups	Clarence City Council Community Members number and/or %
20–24-year-olds	3207 (5.2%)
25–44-year-olds	16494 (26.8%)
Unemployed	1584 (5.2%)
Single parent families	17.2% of CCC households
Single person households	26.3% of CCC households
People with a disability	Data n/a at LGA
High school only educational attainment	19468

Table 2 Community members at risk for food insecurity

## The lived experience of food insecurity in Tasmania

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.utas.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf](https://www.utas.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA61410>

A research project<sup>15</sup> exploring the experience of food insecurity by Tasmanians was conducted by the Department of Health (Public Health Services) in 2022. In the project summary report<sup>16</sup> captures the lived experience of food insecurity and also the impacts of the interventions delivered during COVID by the State and federal Governments. Diagram 2 illustrates the summary of online survey results on coping strategies Tasmanians adopt when food insecure.



Diagram 2. Coping strategies for Tasmanians experiencing food insecurity<sup>17</sup>

Beyond the online survey, the research project conducted in person focus groups and one-on-one interviews and brought together sector leaders to help understand the data and stories. Several key themes emerged.<sup>18</sup>

1. The most vulnerable Tasmanians are affected inequitably amplifying the impacts particularly for people experiencing other intersecting issues such as housing, unemployment, mental health issues, poor access to health services and isolation. This often manifested in people having to make decision about what they would prioritise – accessing food or attending appointments because EFR services are often time limited.
2. Choice around food and prioritising nutrition is valued- the increase in income support as part of the COVID response allowed Tasmanians to make healthier food choices through buying more fruit and vegetables and consequently were eating better. This counters the often-heard sentiment that people on low incomes do not want to eat healthy fresh foods. Food access in communities and sourcing locally produced food were rated as important. Local settings such as Neighbourhood houses were key facilitators.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/publications/food-security-2020-and-beyond-tasmanian-experience>

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.health.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/food\\_security\\_in\\_2020\\_and\\_beyond\\_-\\_the\\_tasmanian\\_experience\\_research\\_summary\\_part\\_one\\_doh Tasmania2022.pdf](https://www.health.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/food_security_in_2020_and_beyond_-_the_tasmanian_experience_research_summary_part_one_doh Tasmania2022.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Department of Health, Community Nutrition, Public Health Services 2023 Food Security Needs Assessment Food Security 2020 and Beyond Summary Document, 2023

<sup>18</sup> Department of Health, Community Nutrition, Public Health Services 2023 Food Security Needs Assessment Food Security 2020 and Beyond Summary Document, 2023

3. Tasmanians value local connection to access and food relief and for social connection - social connection helps prevent crisis and navigate the system of supports for people who are food insecure. How Tasmanians would like to help themselves or their community to improve food security is illustrated in Diagram 3.



Diagram 3. Ways to support community to improve food security<sup>19</sup>

Other key findings from the research<sup>20</sup> were :

- Income support and the food relief system are important safety nets
- It's important to elevate the voices of Tasmanians who are food insecure.
- Food relief needs to meet the nutritional, cultural and social needs of food insecure Tasmanians
- Lack of access to EFR across Tasmania means other community food programs are needed. They should meet the needs of the community and may build capacity through knowledge and skills, pathways to further education and employment and social connections and improved access to healthy foods.

## Loaves and Fishes State-wide Research

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Health, Community Nutrition, Public Health Services 2023 Food Security Needs Assessment Food Security 2020 and Beyond Summary Document, 2023

Loaves and Fishes conducted research in July 2023 with emergency food relief (EFR) agencies across Tasmania. The research included exploring what the triggers were for people needing EFR. The cost of housing was the second highest reason for seeking support. The reasons are listed in the Table 3. In the survey responses, 74% of agencies said **demand for supporting food insecure Tasmanians had increased a lot in the last six months.**

What are the main reasons that trigger community members needing emergency food relief support?		
	2022 Survey	2023 Survey
<b>Centrelink insufficient to cover household costs</b>	85%	<b>78%</b>
<b>Received a big bill such as utilities</b>	61%	54%
<b>Insufficient work hours</b>	36%	43%
<b>Wage is insufficient to cover household costs</b>	58%	61%
<b>Recently lost their job</b>	32%	28%
<b>Health issues (physical or mental)</b>	72%	61%
<b>The cost of housing (rent or mortgage has increased)</b>	Not asked in 2022	<b>71%</b>

Table 3. Triggers for needing EFR 2022 compared with 2023

## What is likely increasing the risk of food insecurity in CCC community members?

### Cost of Living

The household food budget is often described as the most *elastic* part of the budget. Many other household costs are set and or increasing, meaning the amount of money available for food is being limited. Normally food stress occurs when eating well costs more than 25% of household income.<sup>21</sup> In a high inflation environment there are many pressures on household food budgets.

*“All Tasmanians are affected by the rising cost of living. It is the number one issue of concern for Tasmanians as they try to manage the squeeze on their household budgets, with no relief in sight. Hobart’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) has risen by 8.6% in the past year and there are forecasts that inflation has not yet peaked. At the same time incomes are stagnant or falling in real terms. While everyone is affected by these price increases, the impacts are not felt equally. National research shows low-income households are experiencing the greatest cost of living pressure. This is because most, if not all, of their income is spent on non-discretionary goods and services, so they feel it the hardest when prices rise at much higher rates than nondiscretionary items. This trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The rising costs of food, housing, electricity, fuel, and health care are forcing Tasmanian households to make choices between paying the rent, putting food on the table, turning on the heater or going to the doctor. Those who face financial hardship can also experience the added burden of social stigma, as well as declining physical and mental health and wellbeing.”<sup>22</sup>*

**The 2023 Food Bank Australia National survey<sup>23</sup> found the cost of living is the most common reason for being food insecure at 79%, up from 64% in 2022. The cost of basic needs – food and shelter – is now the most common cause of food insecurity in Australia, with the cost of food and groceries reported as the chief contributor to food insecurity (69%), followed by energy costs (56%) and then housing costs (50%). Increasing rent (34%) is twice as likely to be cited as a factor compared to increasing mortgage repayments (18%).**

<sup>21</sup> Ward PR, Verity F, Carter P, Tsourtos G, Coveney J, Wong KC. Food stress in Adelaide: the relationship between low income and the affordability of healthy food. J Environ Public Health. 2013;2013:968078.

<sup>22</sup> <https://tascoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/TasCOSS-2023-24-Budget-Priorities-Statement-%E2%80%94-Wellbeing-First-Summary.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> <https://reports.foodbank.org.au/foodbank-hunger-report-2023/?state=au>



**“Food insecurity impacts households across a wide variety of demographic and socioeconomic cohorts including previously less vulnerable groups. Looking at all food insecure households, 60% have someone in paid work, which makes it clear that a job does not necessarily insulate a household against going hungry. Also, a half of all renters and a third of all mortgage holders were food insecure in the last 12 months.”**

## Rising cost of food

Price is one of the key influences on what foods people choose to buy. Affordability of healthy food is critical to ensuring population health equity, and to addressing food security. The 2022 research by UTas found food insecure households reported being ‘very or extremely’ impacted by the rising cost of grocery staples, meat, and fresh produce. These households used many coping strategies to put food on the table, such as buying less meat and fresh produce, buying food on credit, and seeking food from their family, neighbours, and friends. Very few food insecure households seek support through emergency food relief from a food bank/ emergency relief providers (10%).<sup>24</sup> Food insecure people cope using a variety of strategies (see Diagram 4).

The national CPI food increases from June 2022-2023 were on average 7.5% versus 7.3% for Tasmania. The biggest increases were dairy (15.2%), bread and cereals (11.6%), take away (7.5%) and fruit and vegetables (1.6%).<sup>25</sup> Over the past year, all components of the Greater Hobart CPI have increased, however the largest increases were recorded in food.



Diagram 4 – Coping strategies to manage the cost of living.<sup>26</sup>

## Housing Affordability

Housing is one of the five basic human needs along with food, water, clothing, and sleep. The quality, security and affordability of housing is fundamental to wellbeing and economic participation - an important determinant of physical and mental health.<sup>27</sup> For renters, data consistently shows that Hobart remains the least affordable Capital City. Since 2016, the median rental rate in Hobart has grown by 60% and is now 11% higher than the Melbourne median rent. Average rental household income, however, is 18% lower.<sup>28</sup>

Although household incomes in Tasmania are significantly lower than the national average, rents are only marginally lower than mainland averages. The gap between income and rent has been widening over the past four

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.utas.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf](https://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1630662/TTP8-Food-insecurity.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release>

<sup>26</sup> <https://reports.foodbank.org.au/foodbank-hunger-report-2023/?state=au>

<sup>27</sup> [https://sheltertass.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Shelter-Tas-Budget-Submission-2023-24\\_WS.pdf](https://sheltertass.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Shelter-Tas-Budget-Submission-2023-24_WS.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

years, with little sign of abating. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significantly improved affordability in several parts of the city, from Central Hobart to Lindisfarne. However, these gains were short lived, and in June 2021 almost all parts of Greater Hobart, including Clarence were considered unaffordable.<sup>29</sup> The average rental household in Greater Hobart in 2022 has a gross income of \$84,613 per annum. High rents, relative to household incomes, mean that Greater Hobart is the least affordable metropolitan area in Australia and has been since 2019. Despite a brief improvement during 2020, upon the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hobart is now nearly at its least affordable level across the period measured by the Rental Affordability Index (reached in 2019).<sup>30</sup> Diagram 5 shows that (where data is available for CCC), rents are unaffordable or moderately unaffordable for CCC community, putting an additional strain on household food budgets.

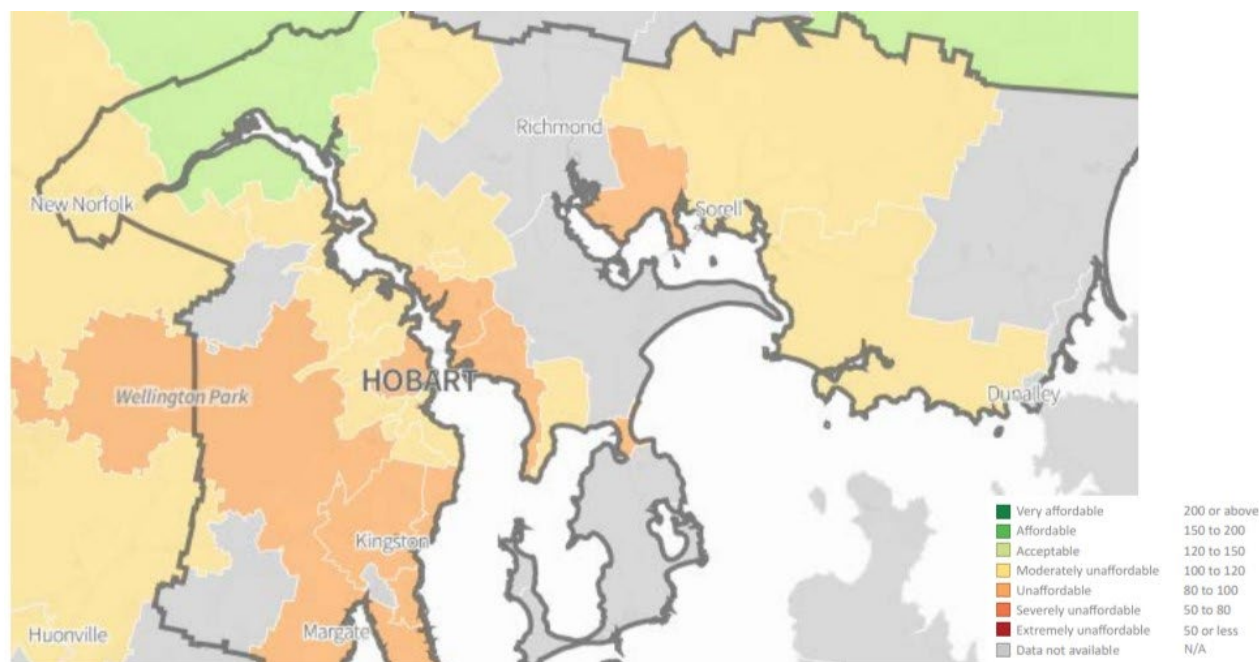


Diagram 5. Rental affordability in Greater Hobart

In the Census data for CCC, nearly 1 in 4 households rent (23%) and in 2021 35% of them were experiencing rental stress<sup>31</sup>.

Table 4 shows the areas in CCC with 10% or higher % of renter households.

Area/Suburb	% Households that are renters
Clarendon Vale	65%
Warrane	50%
Rokeby	38%
Risdon Vale	34%
Montagu Bay	32%
Mornington	31%
Bellerive	29%
Oakdowns	27%

<sup>29</sup> [https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/SGS-Economics-and-Planning\\_Rental-Affordability-Index-2021.pdf](https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/SGS-Economics-and-Planning_Rental-Affordability-Index-2021.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> [https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/Rental-Affordability-Index\\_Nov\\_2022\\_low-resolution.pdf](https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/Rental-Affordability-Index_Nov_2022_low-resolution.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA61410>

<b>Clarence City Council</b>	<b>23%</b>
Lindisfarne	22%
Rose Bay	22%
Howrah	18%
Geilston Bay	17%
Rosny	17%
Opossum Bay	16%
Richmond	15%
South Arm	14%
Tranmere	12%
Lauderdale	10%

Table 4. Renters by suburb for CCC, for areas 10% or higher<sup>32</sup>

In the Census 2021 mortgage stress was occurring in 10% of CCC households, however in 2023 Roy Morgan estimates 29% of households are experiencing mortgage stress.<sup>33</sup>

## How is the health and wellbeing of people living in CCC?

The Census 2021 provides some useful information about how we are doing.

Chronic disease can result in functional limitations and disability associated with ill health. As a result, people with chronic disease may be limited in their ability to participate in the workforce.<sup>34</sup> People with poor health have a higher risk of leaving paid employment earlier, as well as remaining unemployed for a longer period.<sup>35</sup> This increases their risk of becoming food insecure and/or an increasing severity of food insecurity.<sup>36</sup> Food insecurity can be both a precursor to, and a consequence of, chronic disease and low household income.

Community members with long term health conditions in CCC<sup>37</sup>

- One condition 21.9% (13,455)
- Two conditions 7.4% (4573)
- Three or more conditions 3.8% (2325)

Rank order, top 5, for long term health conditions<sup>38</sup>

1. Arthritis (12%)
2. Mental health condition (including depression and anxiety) 11.3%
3. Asthma (8.8%)
4. Diabetes (4.6%)
5. Heart Disease (4.4%)

The Tasmanian Population Health Survey (TPHS), undertaken every 3 years, measures a range of health behaviours that relate to healthy eating and managing chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and mental health. Between 2009 and 2019 obesity rates in adults in CCC increased from 20% to 26%. Consumption of sufficient fruit and vegetables unfortunately also headed in the wrong direction. The number of adults eating 2 serves of fruit per

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.roymorgan.com/findings/9309-mortgage-stress-risk-july-2023>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/chronic-disease/chronic-disease-participation-work/summary>

<sup>35</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29725787/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7502278/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA61410>

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

day decreased from 60% to 53.5%; and for vegetables 52.4% to 90.2%. At the time of writing this report we are awaiting the results from the TPHS in 2022. More comparative health data of CCC versus Tasmania is available through the Primary Health Tasmania [Clarence Community Local Government Profile](#).

## Employment

The Census 2021 unemployment rate was 5.2% (5.9% Tas) and 14.5% for youth unemployment.<sup>39</sup> In March 2023 the unemployment rate was 3.6%<sup>40</sup> The region youth unemployment rate has fallen from the 2020 highs to 10% in the Hobart and Southern regions which includes CCC.<sup>41</sup>

## What food security programs are available for community members in CCC?

### Loaves and Fishes Tasmania (LFT) – fresh healthy food distribution to community agencies in CCC.

In the last 12 months LFT distributed 33,761<sup>42</sup> kilograms of fruit and vegetables and frozen meals through 7 community agencies (Wintringham Housing and Homelessness, Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood House, Salvation Army Doorways Clarence, St Cuthbert's Catholic School, Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre, Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre, Adult community Mental Health Services Clarence and Eastern District). Loaves and Fishes receives donations from growers, producers, and processors across Tasmania. Food to EFR agencies and programs is provided free of charge. LFT are funded primarily through the Tasmanian Government. Their donations underpins much of the food shared through EFR.

In addition to EFR distribution LFT have a social enterprise food service kitchen which prepares meals for school lunches, including 3 schools in the CCC area. More recently, LFT is trialling a new community wholesaling social enterprise model with several local agencies. LFT purchases and sells in bulk a range of fresh foods that are either on sold or used to make community meals which are on sold – the wholesale pricing allows agencies to stretch their limited financial resources and increase the variety of foods they can offer to community members, beyond EFR.

### Foodbank Tasmania

In January to October 2023 Foodbank Tasmania distributed 22,022 kilograms of hampers (fresh and ambient food and other goods) to 18 services providers and schools (food for breakfast programs) in the CCC local government area. They provided to Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre, Warrane/Mornington Neighbourhood Centre Rose Bay High School, Christian Family Centre, Warrane Primary School, Mission Australia Gateway Services- Rosny Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre, Clarence City Council - Youth Service Anglicare - Bayview Lodge, Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre, Risdon Vale Primary School-Kitchen Program, John Paul II Catholic School, Clarendon Vale School Breakfast Program, John Paul II Catholic, Primary School Lindisfarne Primary, Clarendon Vale Primary School, Bayview Secondary College, and Abundant Life Church.

Foodbank Tasmania is funded through the state and commonwealth governments. Foodbank charges for delivering food and its hampers.

### School Food Matters – School Lunch Project

The Tasmanian Government Funds a school lunch pilot currently delivered in 30 schools across Tasmania. The funding is part of the delivery of the Food Security to Food Resilience Strategy. There are 3 school in the CC LGA

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<sup>39</sup> <https://profile.id.com.au/tasmania/about?WebID=160>

<sup>40</sup> <https://economy.id.com.au/tasmania/unemployment?WebID=160>

<sup>41</sup> <https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/media/ylkf1zmt/labour-market-dashboard-tas-combined-feb-2023.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Personal communication with the General Manager of LFT.



who are part of the program. The program uses a rotating seasonal menu that provides healthy and nutritious meals. The specific details for school lunches are in the Table 5.<sup>43</sup>

School	Days	Number of students per day (whole school)	Food service arrangement
Clarendon Vale Primary	3 days - Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	123	Cook meals from scratch in the school kitchen using ingredients supplied by LFT
Rokeby	4 days – Monday to Thursday (1 day self-funded)	175	Meals prepared in the central kitchen of LFT and delivered for heating and eating (generally accompanied by a salad and fruit)
Warrane Primary School	3 days – Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	127 Wednesday (includes kindergarten) 112 Thursday and Friday	Meals prepared in the central kitchen of LFT and delivered for heating and eating (generally accompanied by a salad and fruit)

Table 5. CCC schools participating in the School Lunch Program

## What did the Clarence EFR Agency Survey tell us about food insecurity in their community?

In October 2023 we asked community agencies and service providers whose work includes supporting food insecure community members to complete a short survey. This survey included questions used on past surveys for Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania and Loaves and Fishes Tasmania. The purpose of the survey was to map the current level of support and to produce a shareable overview so accurate information could be shared in the community. See Appendix 1 for the survey questions.

## Some survey highlights

### EFR is provide to community members through

- Breakfast programs
- Food pantry where clients choose what they would like
- Vouchers to buy food from the local supermarkets
- Emergency hampers with preselected items
- Free meals to eat at our agency
- Free meals to take home
- Meals provided by our mobile van
- Community members can help themselves to the food grown in our community garden

<sup>43</sup> Data provided by School Food Matters

- Fruit and vegetables

Conditions or criteria to receive support are living in the local area, being a from a target group for the service (e.g., families, people with mental health issues) None require proof of hardship through discretion can be used by case workers. Most agencies are open to providing regular support as needed though some limit the frequency.

**Community members needing support include the following:**

- Single people
- **Families with children**
- Older Tasmanians (65 and older)
- Single parents
- People with a disability
- Migrants and/or refugees in Tasmania
- Community members who are unemployed
- Community members who are employed
- Couples
- **Young people / students**

**The reasons that trigger them needing support:**

- **Their Centrelink payment is insufficient to cover all household costs**
- They received a big bill, for example from a utility company, car registration/insurance etc
- **The cost of housing, whether renting or paying a mortgage, has increased**
- They don't have enough work hours
- **They do not have secure ongoing housing**
- Their wages are insufficient to cover all household costs
- They recently lost their job
- **Health issues (physical or mental health)**

**Agencies source food for EFR through:**

- **Loaves and Fishes Tasmania**
- **Foodbank Tasmania**
- Local businesses donate food e.g., supermarket, butcher, bakery
- Community members donate food they grow at home
- **Buy food from the local supermarket**
- Local churches donate food
- Local community groups donate food

Agencies are generally satisfied with the quality, variety, freshness, and quantity of food they are able to provide to community members through EFR.

**Funding for EFR comes through:**

- Tasmanian State Government service agreement
- Federal Government service agreement
- Local Government grant program
- Healthy Tasmania Grant
- Grant funding (not TCF or Healthy Tasmania)
- **Fundraising**
- **From our operational budget**
- **Donations from community**

**Demand for EFR is increasing a lot.**

**Beyond EFR agencies support community members through other programs and activities such as:**

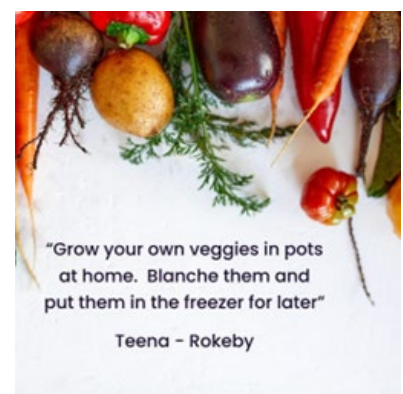
- **Teaching cooking**
- Teaching budgeting
- Providing information about affordable places to shop locally
- **Cooking and serving a regular meal for community members to enjoy together**
- **Teaching how to grow your own food**
- Low-cost food co-op
- Sell low-cost meals

## Clarence Community case studies – Food as a community connector, building skills and improving affordability.

In December 2023, the Food Connection Clarence Project Team visited some of the key food security agencies in the area to gain insights beyond the survey results. During these site visits we heard about existing programs from the agency managers, program staff and volunteers. Several of the agencies and their programs are highlighted below.

### One Community Together

One Community Together is a collective of residents, community groups and organisations in Clarence Plains. Collectively they work on shared goals with, and for, the local community that build on the individual strengths aiming to create positive change together. While not a service delivery agency their community *conversation* includes social media. They have regular budget saving posts where they highlight ways that community members save money on the household food budget. Other local agencies have taken up this online conversation too, with lots of practical ideas being shared by community members.



Images from the One Community Facebook Page

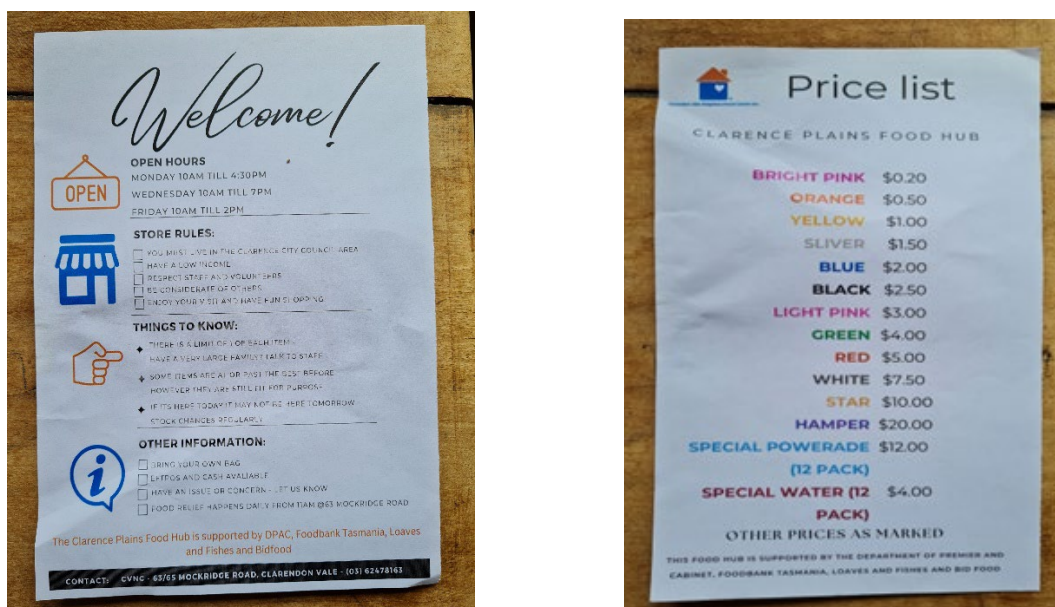
### Warrane Neighbourhood House (WNH)

WNH is on a mission to move away from EFR (except in crisis situations) to provide support for community members to eat well and be food secure in more sustainable ways. They are focussed on developing programs that build skills and provide local cost meals. Their recent *More than a Free Lunch* Sidney Myer funded cooking program allowed them to explore this further. The program was delivered by a dietitian with 20-30 participants of all abilities, ages and cultural diversity participating. Fortnightly the participants cooked and shared an affordable meal and received the recipe to prepare at home. Activities include *Food Bingo* to make the session fun and engaging. The program was an adaptation from the Okines Neighbourhood House Cook, Eat Repeat program which allows participants to learn by doing. The dietitian has now further developed program models to deliver in the

future and is engaging with Eat Well Tasmania who are funded by the State Government to develop a program and resources to meet the needs of neighbourhood houses (see page 18).

## Clarendon Vale NH (CVNH) –

In addition to the Healthy Tasmanian funded *Cooking on a Budget* program, CVNH has recently established a Food Coop in partnership with LFT. This innovation provides an affordable option to buy fresh food (meat, fruit and vegetables, precooked meals) and dry goods. The Food Coop opened in early December and to date has been well received by the community. LFT acts as a wholesalers for the Coop for fresh food and Foodbank provides dry goods. They purchase other items from a food wholesaler. The shop uses simplified colour coding for pricing for shoppers. Using the point-of-sale device the Coop coordinator will use the sales data to monitor sales and drive inventory choices. The Coop coordinator delivers both the cooking and coop programs – she has a valuable background in working as a chef and within supermarkets.



The new CVNH Food Coop Flyer

## Clarendon Vale Child and Family Centre

The Centre collaborates with their neighbour, CVNH and the local primary school<sup>44</sup> – their close proximity creates a ‘healthy food and eating’ precinct where complementary food security programs are delivered. The Centre supports families with children up to 5 years old. The Centre has a trained and very experienced community educator who has developed and delivered cooking classes for children and parents for many years. The educator uses the tried and tested frameworks from the [Food Cents](#) program and the Tasmanian Family Food Patch program to build skills and knowledge about healthy and affordable eating. This 8-week program is unique as the primary targets are the children and then their parents – kids cook, and parents help. The educator has observed that this targeting approach has resulted in increased engagement and participation in the program compared to past programs. Across the Centre, healthy food and numeracy and literacy are part of every program they offer.

## Rokeby NH

In addition to providing EFR and local cost meals which community members can purchase for \$5, Rokeby Neighbourhood House has delivered a series of Facebook Live cooking sessions. The sessions are delivered by an

<sup>44</sup> Which has a 24 Carrot Garden and school garden coordinator



enthusiastic House volunteer and her child. The idea is to build skills and confidence in food preparation and normalise family members helping out. The sessions make meals and snacks using recipes from the volunteer and also provided by the community. The local shopping centre, Glebe Hill, has supported the sessions by providing vouchers to purchase ingredients. The videos of the sessions are online for community members to also watch at a time that suits them.<sup>45</sup>

### Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre (RVNC)

RVNC has a relatively new manager who has observed what an important *connector* food is in her community. Beyond EFR the Centre has an after-school program, a vibrant and productive community garden, and a community lunch program. The garden is run by 3 volunteers and a day release prisoner. What is grown in the garden is used in the kitchen of the centre and also tops up the EFR offered. They are hoping to become more self-sufficient in the future. The centre runs a 'diner' which cooks low-cost meals for community members, \$5 for two courses, take away. Through a new agreement with Loaves and Fishes they are now purchasing affordably priced ingredients for the diner meals, stretching their budget further to meet increasing demand.



*Images from the RVNH Community Garden in December 2023*

## What is the Tasmanian Government doing to address community food insecurity?

### Tasmanian Food Relief to Resilience Strategy

The [Tasmanian Food Relief to Resilience Strategy](#) and the [action plan](#) encourages Tasmanian agencies in the emergency food relief (EFR) space to explore sustainable pathways and models to build food resilience within communities. The priorities of the action plan are to:

- Provide integrated support – Collaborative and connected leadership and innovation.
- Deliver place-based responses – Support for community food resilience solutions.

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Adminrnc/videos>

- Share data and information – Understanding Tasmanian food relief and food resilience through improved data and information sharing.

Commitments made in April 2023 from the state government included:

- A place-based pilot program (\$800,000) to deliver community-led solutions to move from food relief to food resilience.<sup>46</sup> The program will develop sustainable food security solutions that meet community needs, although as of December 2023 this funding is yet to be allocated;
- A Local Community Food Relief Grants Program for local food organisations (\$300,000). The program funding was to assist with sufficient delivery of food relief in Tasmanian communities;
- The development of nutritional programs by Eat Well Tasmania for delivery in Neighbourhood Houses (\$100,000);
- Additional funding to providers to deliver emergency food relief to Tasmanians in need. Funding was allocated to Foodbank Tasmania (\$100,000) and Loaves and Fishes Tasmania (\$200,000); and
- Additional funding to the School Lunch Pilot program of (\$400,000)

In the Tasmanian March 2024 State Election the government [announced](#) a review of the current Strategy and continued funding of a variety of agencies. At the time of this report the government had just formed, so some changes to policy and investment are likely in the near future.

**The delivery of the strategy is led by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and one of the key partners is the Tasmanian Food Security Coalition (TFSC). Please view Appendix 2 for the membership and their current priorities and activities.**

In a 2022 submission to the state government TasCOSS recommended the following actions to Government<sup>47</sup>

1. Immediately increase resources to prevent Tasmanians going hungry by boosting funding for emergency food relief providers, the School Lunch Program and other programs that assist Tasmanians to access and consume nutritious food.
2. Co-design and implement a community awareness campaign about food insecurity to improve information about where to find support and reduce stigma.
3. Work with the Tasmanian Food Security Coalition and other stakeholders to deliver the Healthy Tasmania Strategy recommendations on 'Eating Well.'
4. Review state legislation and guidelines to ensure they include the objective of achieving community food security; food relief meets minimum dietary guidelines; and demonstrates a contribution to community-based food security outcomes.
5. Introduce a grants program to fund locally based initiatives that respond to food insecurity.

In their 2024 budget submission TasCOSS have asked the government to prioritise supporting Tasmanians in a worsening cost-of-living crisis.<sup>48</sup> The submission calls for

<sup>46</sup> Initially the announced funding commitment was for \$800,000. This was halved in October 2022 and redirected to existing food security program investments

<sup>47</sup> <https://tascoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/TasCOSS-2023-24-Budget-Priorities-Statement-%E2%80%94-Wellbeing-First-Summary.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> <https://tascoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/TasCOSS-%E2%80%94-Supporting-Tasmanians-in-a-Worsening-Cost-of-Living-Crisis-FINAL-v1-12-12-23.pdf>

“Improving food security and help achieve wellbeing and sustainability goals of no poverty and zero hunger, TasCOSS recommends:

- A significant funding boost for food relief Immediately increase resources to prevent Tasmanians going hungry by significantly boosting funding for emergency food relief providers, Neighbourhood Houses across Tasmania, the School Lunch Program, and other programs that assist Tasmanians to access and consume nutritious food.
- Implementing a community awareness campaign about food insecurity - National data suggests one-in-four food insecure households accessed food relief support last year, whereas Tasmanian research indicates this figure is as low as 10%. Key reasons for the low proportion of those seeking help are the surge in households experiencing food insecurity for the first time not being aware of the range of services available to them, and stigma/shame felt by those seeking help. A co-designed community awareness campaign will improve information about where to find support and reduce stigma.
- Delivering the Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan recommendations -Work with the Tasmanian Food Security Coalition and other stakeholders to deliver the Healthy Tasmania Strategy actions on ‘Eating Well,’ including establishing guidelines to ensure food relief meets minimum dietary standards.”<sup>49</sup>

## Healthy Tasmania

The *Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan* has ‘eating well’ as one of its eight focus areas. The Plan principles are equity, empowerment, and sustainability. Through the eating well focus the strategy commits to:

- deliver the Food Relief Strategy to support an integrated food relief sector and actions for long-term food resilience,
- build on the Food Relief Strategy to form a Tasmanian food policy coalition, involving stakeholders from across the food system, including agriculture and hospitality, to help shift to a healthier food culture in Tasmania, and
- support community-based food programs

Success for the Strategy equals > all Tasmanians having access to affordable nutritious food (are food secure).

### Healthy Tasmania Grants

The Government has committed \$8 million over four years for the Healthy Tasmania Grant Fund. A key action of the Healthy Tasmania Plan 2022-26 was the review of the Healthy Tasmania Fund. Beyond the Lift Local which funded this project there are other grant types.

**Healthy Together – this grant is available for place-based action in selected Tasmanian communities. CCC has been selected as one of the eight places to receive this \$300,000. Organisations in the CCC will be supported to get together, discuss priorities and plan how they'd like to improve local health and wellbeing. Grants are flexible, so communities can test and adjust as they go, with support from the Healthy Tasmania team.**

**Healthy Focus** grants support action on Healthy Tasmania focus areas: priority populations, health literacy, mental health and wellbeing, active living, eating well, smoke-free communities, reducing alcohol harm, and climate change and health. Healthy Focus grants are from \$20,000 to \$100,000 for projects or activities up to two years. A new grant round will be open in 2024.

**Step Forward** grants are up to \$5,000 for a wide range of activities and equipment that support health and wellbeing. They could be for training, posters, brochures, or equipment needed for services and programs. The

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, page 15-16

focus is on activities that keep people healthy and well, by preventing rather than treating illness. Another grant round will open in 2024/25 financial year.

The grant's effectiveness will be measured by looking at short- and medium-term changes, such as:

- Greater shared decision making
- Greater intersectoral collaboration
- More inclusive leadership
- Greater collective responsibility
- Better data sharing
- Evidence informed actions, increase workforce capacity
- More responsive funding<sup>50</sup>

Across Tasmania, there are several food security initiatives currently funded through these grants.<sup>51</sup> They include the Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood centre *Cooking on a Budget* program.

## Other funders

### Tas Community Fund

The Tasmanian Community Fund (TCF) provides regular grants for the Tasmanian community to support projects for a diverse range of community organisations. "The TCF is committed to making a real difference with and for the Tasmanian community."

Their strategic focus areas are:

- [Connected and Educated Children and Young People](#) – the recent past round did have a focus on nutrition in November 2023. Future opportunities may emerge
- [Community infrastructure](#) – Clarence is not eligible as it is not considered regional or rural
- [Leadership](#) – including grassroots governance planning which may be applicable to a future governance group if it emerges from this project.
- [Community Action](#) – closed for 2023. Will reopen in 2024 (\$5-50,000)

## What works to address household food insecurity?

Effective solutions to household food insecurity are designed to reflect the needs of the area or region in which the issue arises and use an approach that includes data about the determinants and mapping of the existing efforts to support community members. The role of local government is best defined collaboratively with community partners, as is the intention of the Food Connections Clarence project. This approach is part of the stakeholder consultations in stage 2 and in stage 3 through the community forum. See Appendix 3 for possible ways for local government to work internally and externally to support community food security.

Research evidence<sup>52</sup> from the USA, Canada and Europe suggests *"while efforts at the community level, in the form of food banks and community food programmes, attempt to alleviate this problem, there is lack of evidence showing that these programmes effectively reduce food insecurity. Importantly, even if they can have positive*

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<sup>50</sup> Jose K, Doherty B, Galvin L, & McGrath G 2022 Healthy Tasmania Five year Strategic Plan Research and Evaluation Report 1 Baseline [https://www.health.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-06/UTAS\\_Menzies\\_HealthyTas\\_Baseline%20Report\\_ACCESS\\_V3%20%5Baccessible%5D%200623.pdf](https://www.health.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-06/UTAS_Menzies_HealthyTas_Baseline%20Report_ACCESS_V3%20%5Baccessible%5D%200623.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/about/what-we-do/strategic-programs-and-initiatives/healthy-tasmania-strategic-plan/healthy-focus-grants>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/proceedings-of-the-nutrition-society/article/interventions-to-address-household-food-insecurity-in-highincome-countries/F2D7D0B429C175D9098237B8F7CDDCDF>



effects, they may not reach many people who experience food insecurity. Conversely, public policy interventions have been shown to reduce food insecurity and reach large numbers in the population. Governmental efforts to expand investment in social protection in high-income countries would likely further reduce food insecurity and may have long-term benefits for reduced spending on healthcare and other expenditures resulting from the harms of food insecurity”.

The social protections that are proven effective are those that relatively reduce the price of healthy food – either by increasing income or reducing (e.g., through subsidies or shorter supply chains) the cost of food in communities where people are food insecure. Unfortunately, other community food security programs success is limited because of the low number of people they ultimately reach compared with the true number of people who need support.<sup>53</sup> The research suggests that when moving from a reliance on EFR to community food security resilience, approaches that improve affordability should be a key resourcing focus and at the scale required.

## What are other Tasmanian local governments doing to address food insecurity?

Central Coast Council has a Local Food Security Strategy which was last reviewed in 2021.<sup>54</sup> Councils interest in food security dates back to 2015/2016 following a health and wellbeing forum hosted by the then Mayor. After the forum they received funding through the [Healthy Food Access Tasmania](#) (HFAT) project to work with community to develop a strategy. HFAT was funded by the Commonwealth government during a time of significant investment in community food security programs. In 2012 a state level food security strategy, a first in Australia was being developed and implemented, *Food for All Tasmanians*<sup>55</sup>. Interventions focussed on food access and affordability, community driven solutions, regional development and food bases social enterprises and planning for sustainable food systems. This plan had a much broader priorities and actions than the current state *Food Security to Food Resilience Strategy* which is focussed on EFR.

New research<sup>56</sup> exploring the role of Tasmanian governments in supporting the health and wellbeing of residents. From interviewing local government, the effective roles of local government are:

- As a facilitator or partner – helping to build relationships and work together
- Advocacy to other levels of government about local issues
- Service provider of infrastructure e.g. parklands, paths and community spaces to bring people together
- Regulatory to ensure environments promote good health, e.g. food safety and no smoking areas.

What influences local government to act includes mandating in the local government act, resourcing ( funding and staffing) for supporting health and wellbeing and managing the expectations of community and other levels of governments, and access to data to inform local level decisions - “data would help councils and communities gain a deeper understanding of their local contexts, monitor trends and patterns across municipalities, and make more informed decisions”.<sup>57</sup>

*For additional context, the State Government Local Government (LG) review has committed to supporting community health and wellbeing as a key role of LG*

*“The role of local government is to support and improve the wellbeing of Tasmanian communities by:*

- 1. harnessing and building on the unique strengths and capabilities of local communities;*
- 2. providing infrastructure and services that, to be effective, require local approaches;*

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Central-Coast-Local-Food-Security-Strategy-February-2021.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.healthyfoodaccesstasmania.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Food-for-all-Tasmanians.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> Morgan et al, 2023 Local government's roles in community health and wellbeing in Australia: Insights from Tasmania <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/hpja.831>

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

3. representing and advocating for the specific needs and interests of local communities in regional, state-wide, and national decision-making; and  
4. promoting the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of local communities, by mitigating and planning for climate change impacts. “<sup>58</sup>

## Food Connections Clarence Forum

The Food Connections Clarence project held a community forum on 20.3.2024. at the Grace Centre in Rokeby.

The aim of the forum was to:

1. share key findings from the research and stakeholder engagement of the project so far
2. showcase examples of frontline agency action to support food insecure community members
3. strengthen connections between agencies, and
4. workshop the role of local government and develop several future actions.

Across the day each agency was given an opportunity to briefly share about how their programs support food insecure community members or intersects with support agencies.

Below is a summary of the discussions and ideas proposed by the Forum participants ( n=24). Participating agencies included front line faith-based organisations, food and nutrition not for profits, Neighbourhood Centres (program workers, managers), Clarence City Council staff, Tasmanian Food Security Coalition members and State Government staff (Department Premier and Cabinet and Community Nutrition).

In table-based small group discussions participants were asked to discuss a series of questions, aligned with the Forum aim. Below is a list of the questions posed and a summary of the responses. They along with other information have informed a series of proposed future actions.

*For consideration – in communities there is sometimes a tension between the health and wellbeing (HWB) role of Council and the expectation of rate payers who do not necessarily see food security as an area of consideration for council.*

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<sup>58</sup> <https://www.futurelocal.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/The-Future-of-Local-Government-Review-Final-Report.pdf> page



**Pictured Julie Dunbabin presenting on the School Lunch Program and Forum participants**

**Question 1. What should Council be focussed on? What is Council's role in supporting community food security?**

- Supporting and/or facilitating a coordinating function to:
  - Set a strategic approach
  - Connect and enhance connections between stakeholders
  - Communicate about outcomes, events, stories of success: provide regular updates; keep in touch with agencies and share with the broader community
  - Facilitate financial support through grants, endorsing/supporting applications for grants, coordinating bigger grant applications, auspicing; stewarding role; advocacy for greater funding to other levels of government
  - Local data, stats, and stories collection – capture who is doing what and the lived experience stories through frontline services
  - Create a Clarence Food Security Action Group
  - Educating and empathy building across community about support, events, programs, why the issue of food security is important etc
  - Facilitate knowledge sharing across the org network – e.g. site tours
  - Create opportunities to talk, listen, learn
  - Opportunity to participate should have a low burden for organisations
  - Authentic engagement
  - Adopt the community development framework
  - Follow up and close the loop
  - Identify community agency needs and service gaps
- Provide venues for community food security related events at a low or no cost
- Consider health and wellbeing in its planning function
- Adopt an integrated framework for working with organisations who interact with community members who may be food insecure not only EFR, e.g. housing, mental health services; develop a strategy
- Create a service map that shows all the current types of services provided to support food insecure community member ( see Appendix ?)

- Work with agencies to identify service gaps and reduce duplication where it exists

## **Q2. How can we all collaborate to have a greater impact?**

### **Effective collaboration will be based on the following principles, practices, and actions:**

- Good action planning, with timelines and accountability; clear roles for each org/service
- Agencies understanding what services exist, referral pathways to avoid duplication
- Alignment with the existing priorities of the network of orgs to make collaboration relevant.
- Available time and energy
- Working on a specific project together – establish a working group- adopt and demonstrate good project management and governance
- Use a multipronged approach and work with key stakeholders
- Being action oriented; act over the long term; act bravely; get some easy wins to gain momentum
- Each agency understanding their role including those that might not see their core function around food security but are supporting potentially vulnerable community members (consider other orgs that work in the social determinants of health space)
- Effective regular, concise communications to the network and community; share facts and stories of success and empowerment, why is FS and HWB part of the role of local government, why is addressing food insecurity important
- Forums and gatherings must have food
- Trust – build through a strong story of how and why, create the hook for people to stay involved; keep it simple through nurturing relationships, building knowledge e.g. through monthly site visits)
- Adopt a community development approach
- A shared repository for holding files, resources, templates etc

### **Lobbying and advocacy**

- be persistent, specific messaging, demonstrate reciprocity and how acting on community food security issues is strategic aligned and a solution for governments
- all of the agency network advocating to politicians and policy makers with consistent messaging
- work with Tasmanian Food Security Coalition to support the local efforts

## **Q3. What are the biggest challenges to change?**

### **Mindset and attitudes**

- It is a big shift from a reliance on EFR to true community food resilience.
- We need to change motivations (for example, shift from welfare to wellbeing) and have a shared language and concepts
- What do we mean by community? It's about connection not only geography
- There is resistance to change
- Communications doesn't connect us – some organisations are isolated/isolating
- Community organisations having a competitive mindset due to the current grant landscape (Healthy Together is the exception if executed well). When they try to work together, they can inadvertently default to their own agenda due to a lack of shared vision.

### **Resourcing**



- Insufficient financial and people ( including expertise to navigate change)resources
- The constant crisis ‘sucks up resources ( time, people and \$\$) so there is no opportunity to move towards resilience – there is a permanency of food insecurity for many – food insecurity is like an iceberg, understanding the drivers is critical
- What can community/citizens do to contribute?

### **Structural issues**

- Persistent community inequity – the determinants are not easy to resolve
- We live in a fast food drenched world that influences food choices, how do we make healthy choices easy and affordable.

### **Community and organisational capacity**

- We can see what is possible, we have the solutions . The lack of action is due to lack of resources – people and financial - then how do we maintain the energy to act and build trust with the desire to work together ?
- Increasing community decision making in solutions and implementation
- Not marginalising the people experiencing food insecurity – communicating that it is more common due to the current cost of living crisis
- Whose responsibility, is it? Seeing the issues as someone else’s problem stops us from acting
- What would it look like if we did have the people, trust, culture, performance, desire, dynamics, and alliances to make the change needed?
- Avoid top-down approaches – support communities with expertise to change their path
- Beware the external expert trying to impose a solution

### **Q 4. What are the biggest opportunities?**

#### **The how**

- Our community is resourceful
- Let’s get people excited about change
- Exploring new models to move away from emergency food relief (EFR) – e.g. the community wholesaler model. We all want to decrease the reliance on EFR as the solution. It should be a safety net only.
- Communication – sharing the good news/stories and being inclusive of efforts outside of the EFR agencies e.g. Good Karma Network, “Clarence looks after Clarence”
- A joined-up community wide approach where food links with education links with what’s growing in gardens, and with wholesaler supply etc – could link with school lunches
- Collaborate to action the community needs – good chance to unify the community and organisations
- Mapping existing activity
- Building capability and capacity
- Proposing the Healthy Together project focussed on addressing food insecurity in Clarence

### **Influencing policy and investment**

- The promised review of State Government *Food Security to Resilience* Strategy provides a good opportunity for collaboration between local and state govt and community. Contributing should aim to strengthen

focus and ensure new investment on supporting community action and collaboration meets community needs.

- Cost of living challenges presents an opportunity to frame the importance of this issue and why it matters
- Access to healthy food is a human right
- Focus on young people and schools as important settings
- Targets - Eliminate severe food insecurity, reduce moderate food insecurity
- Leveraging additional \$ and people resources to direct to solutions

## **Proposed short term actions for Clarence City Council in collaboration with community agencies**

**Following on from the forum, site visits with community agencies and a review of the policy, program and local data, the following actions are proposed.**

### **➤ Support community agency capacity building and building trustful partnerships**

- Create a draft service map to share with stakeholders. Data has already been collected during this project. (completed – see Appendix 4)
- Plan a series of agency site visits to keep stakeholders connected and build knowledge about local programs and expertise.

### **➤ Strengthen and inform collaboration at a local and state government level**

- Share this final report with:
  - Agency stakeholders including the *Clarence Healthy Together* (CHT) project host Mission Australia – this project and the data collected provides an opportunity to progress planning, collaboration, and actioning community need to move towards a more resilient approach to community food security through CHT.
  - DPAC who lead delivery and review of the Food Relief to Resilience Strategy and Healthy Tasmania Team who funded the Food Connection Clarence project.
  - Explore a partnership with Tasmanian Food Security Coalition. Through the partnership share case studies and data from Clarence to support their advocacy to the State Government to improve community and household level food security.

### **➤ Communicate to educate the community about food insecurity and profile local agency efforts**

- Update the project infographic to include the short-term actions (completed). The infographic is a key communication tool for project partners and in advocacy.
- Working with Clarence City Council communications team to incorporate profiling and storytelling about food insecurity programs within Clarence and Council's broader role in supporting community health and wellbeing.

## Appendix 1 – Clarence EFR Survey



Clarence City Council has received a Lift Local grant through the Healthy Tasmania Grant scheme. The grant will be used

### Clarence City Council Emergency Food Relief Agency Survey 2023

The survey will take less than 10 minutes to complete. We really value your input.

Thank you.

to conduct a project exploring food security in the Council area. Many agencies, including charities, schools and community service agencies are currently providing food, vouchers, or meals to support local residents who are food insecure. We thank you for your great work. Completing this survey will help us to gain a full picture of emergency food relief in the Council area. During the project we will also speak directly with agencies, as well as collecting information through this survey.

If you have a question/s about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Leah Galvin who is conducting this survey for Council. [leah.galvin@live.com.au](mailto:leah.galvin@live.com.au) 0425723409

\* 1. What is the name of your agency or organisation please?

\* 2. What area of Clarence City Council does your agency or organisation operate in? Please select all that apply.

☐ Acton Park Bellerive Cambridge

☐ Campania Clarendon Vale Clifton

☐ Beach Colebrook Cremorne

☐ Dowsing Point Dulcot

☐☐☐☐☐☐

☐ Gelston Bay Grasstree Hill Howrah

☐ Lauderdale Lindisfarne Montagu

☐ Bay Mornington Mount Rumney

☐ Oakdowns Opossum Bay Orielton

☐ Otago Penna Richmond

☐ Risdon Risdon Vale

☐ Roches Beach Rokeby

☐ Rose Bay Rosny Rosny Park

☐ Sandford

☐ Seven Mile Beach South Arm

☐ Tranmere Warrane



\* 3. What types of emergency food relief services do you offer to the Clarence community? Please select all that apply

☐ Breakfast program

☐ Food pantry where clients choose what they would like Vouchers to buy food

☐ from the local supermarket Emergency hampers with preselected items

☐ Free meals to eat at our agency Free meals to take

☐ home

☐ Access to donated bread whenever needed

☐ Community members can help themselves to the food grown in our community garden Fruit and vegetables

☐ Other (please specify)

☐

\* 4. What conditions or criteria apply for receiving emergency food relief from your agency or organisation? Please select all that apply

☐ You must be a healthcare card holder You must live in the

☐ local area

☐ You must provide proof of your financial hardship

☐ We don't have any conditions or criteria for receiving emergency food relief support Other (please specify)

☐

\* 5. How often are community members able to access emergency food relief support through your agency? Please tick one.

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly ☐ Monthly ☐

Quarterly

☐ Twice per year

☐ Community members can access food as often as they need to Other (please specify)

☐



\* 6. Which days and times do you provide emergency food relief? Please select all that apply.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuesday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wednesday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thursday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 7. Which Clarence community members commonly present to your agency needing emergency food relief?  
Please tick all that apply.

- ☐ Single people   Families with children
- ☐ Older Tasmanians (65 and older)   Single parents
- ☐ People with a disability
- ☐ Migrants and/or refugees in Tasmania   Community members
- ☐ who are unemployed   Community members who are
- ☐ employed Couples.
- ☐ Young people / students
- ☐ Other (please specify)

\* 8. In your experience, what are the **main reasons that are currently triggering**  
community members need emergency food relief support? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Their Centrelink payment is insufficient to cover all household costs.
- ☐ They received a big bill, for example from a utility company, car registration/insurance etc   The cost of housing,
- ☐ whether renting or paying a mortgage, has increased
- ☐ They don't have enough work hours
- ☐ They do not have secure ongoing housing
- ☐ Their wages are insufficient to cover all household costs   They recently lost their
- ☐ job
- ☐ Health issues (physical or mental health)

☐ Other (please

\* 9. Where do you source the food for your emergency food relief program from? Please tick all that apply

- ☐ Loaves and Fishes Tasmania Foodbank Tasmania
- ☐ Local farmers donate food
- ☐ Local businesses donate food e.g. supermarket, butcher, bakery Community
- ☐ members donate food they grow at home
- ☐ We buy food from the local supermarket We buy food from
- ☐ local farmers
- ☐ Local churches donate food
- ☐ Local community groups donate food Other (please specify)
- ☐

\* 10. How would you rate the food you are able to provide to community members?

	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Unsure
Variety of food provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of food provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freshness of food provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quantity of food provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 11. What are the **current sources of funding** for your emergency food relief program? Please select all that apply

- ☐ Tasmanian State Government service agreement Federal Government
- ☐ service agreement
- ☐ Local Government grant program Tasmanian
- ☐ Community Fund Healthy Tasmania Grant
- ☐ Other grant program Fundraising
- ☐ From our operational budget Donations from community
- ☐ members Philanthropic organisations
- ☐

☐ Other (please

\* 12. Thinking about the last 6 months, do you think **demand for emergency food relief** in your agency or organisation is?

- ☐ Stable
- ☐ Increasing a bit ☐ Increasing a lot
- ☐ Decreasing

\* 13. Beyond providing emergency food relief, what other **types of community food programs do you deliver** for our community? Please select all that apply

- ☐ We teach cooking We teach budgeting
- ☐ We provide information about affordable places to shop locally
- ☐ We cook and serve a regular meal for community members to enjoy together We teach how to grow
- ☐ your own food
- ☐ We have an affordable veggie box scheme We have a low cost
- ☐ food co-op
- ☐ We sell low-cost meals Not applicable
- ☐ Other (please specify)

14. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about emergency food relief and/or food insecurity in Clarence? The stories and local context you share help us to better understand the current issues. Or perhaps you have an idea or solution to share. Please do so in the box below

15. Please provide a name and email contact for your agency so we can share the results of the survey with you

Name

Email Address

Thank you very much for taking the time to provide your valuable input. From the project team we really appreciate it and the great work you do in our community. We look forward to sharing the survey results and meeting with you in person in the near future to hear directly about your experience and ideas.



## Appendix 2 Tasmanian Food Security Coalition membership and key activities<sup>59</sup>

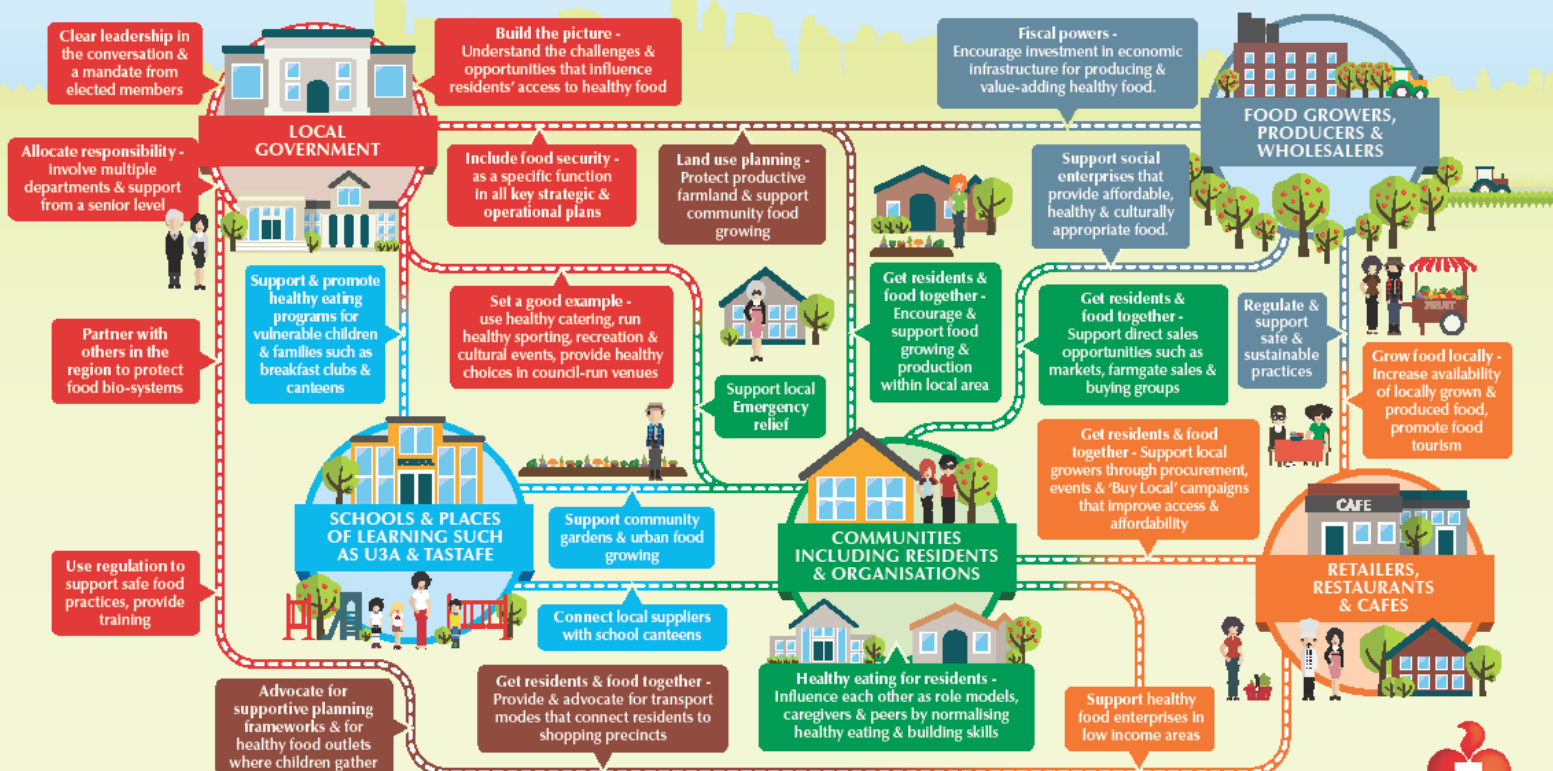
ORGANISATION	PILLARS OF FOOD SECURITY		
	AVAILABILITY What food is available where you live and work?	ACCESS For example - can you afford to buy food and get to where it is sold?	UTILISATION Do you have the skills to cook and grow affordable healthy food?
<a href="#">Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania</a>	Provide ER; run shops and veg box programs; grow food in community gardens. Advocate for improved availability	Provide low priced food in local neighbourhoods and delivery services; EFR; Advocate for improved access to healthy food in communities	Deliver cooking, food growing and budgeting skill building opportunities
<a href="#">School Food Matters</a> (formerly Tasmanian School Canteen Association)	Work with school canteens to ensure well priced healthy food is for sale in schools across Tasmania. Links the Well Fed Tasmania Food Truck with food education in schools and training of canteen managers	Supports canteen managers to provide low-cost healthy meals in schools across Tasmania	Build skills in school canteen managers so they can provide well priced healthy food accreditation system
<a href="#">Loaves and Fishes</a>	Provides rescued healthy food and meals to service providers/agencies and schools.	Provides meals, value added products and fresh foods are low cost or no cost to community organisations across Tasmania	Builds skills in young people through its kitchen training program
<a href="#">24 Carrot Gardens</a>	Provides food and meals through the kitchen garden program for participating students	Production and distribution of fresh produce through participating schools and Bridgewater community.	Builds skills in school aged children and parents on cooking and growing food
<a href="#">Eat Well Tasmania</a>	Promotes seasonal food that is available in communities across Tasmania through social media and the We Eat Local App	Promotes local seasonal food that is good value so shoppers can make healthy affordable choices	Encourages Tasmanians to eat seasonal food via social media recipes, shareable online resources such as a seasonal guide
<a href="#">Local Government Association of Tasmania</a>	LGAT works with local government to increase their understanding of how governments can influence health and wellbeing through food environments	LGAT works with local governments to support them to understand their role in supporting their community's health and wellbeing	The sector provides small scale grants for programs that build skills in community members

<sup>59</sup> Please note Families Tasmania (including Family Food Patch peer education program) was previously included in the Tasmanian Food Security Coalition but the entity ceased to operate in October 2023



<a href="#">University of Tasmania</a>	Conducts research to understand the pillars of food security and how they impact Tasmanians	Conducts research to understand the pillars of food security and how they impact Tasmanians	Conducts research to understand the pillars of food security and how they impact Tasmanians
<a href="#">TasCOSS</a>	Advocates for equitable availability of healthy food	Advocates for equitable access to healthy food	Advocates for individuals and households to be empowered and skilled; conducts research

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



## CLARENCE COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY SERVICE MAP AS AT APRIL 2024



### Breakfast program

- All primary schools (except Lauderdale)
- Risdon Vale Neighbourhood House
- Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre



### School Lunch Program (funded by Tasmanian Government)

- Clarendon Vale Primary School
- Rokeby Primary School
- Warrane Primary School

### Lunch Packs

- Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre



### Emergency Food Relief

(food pantry, parcels, meals and/or vouchers)

- All Neighbourhood Centres
- Salvos
- Vinnies



### Low cost ready to heat and eat meals

- Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre
- Clarence Plains Food Hub
- Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre

For more detailed information see

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

<https://askizzy.org.au/>



### Food Vans (providing a meal and some emergency food relief)

- Louis' Van (Vinnies)



### Community Cooking programs

- Clarendon Vale Child and Family Centre
- All Neighbourhood Houses



### Food Coop

- Clarence Plains Food Hub



### Community Gardens

- Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre
- Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre
- Warrane Mornington Neighbourhood Centre



### Shared Community Lunches (free or low cost)

- All Neighbourhood Centres



### Agency Food Distribution Organisations

- Loaves and Fishes Tasmania
- Foodbank Tasmania

### CONTACT LOCAL AGENCIES FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT THEIR SERVICES INCLUDING ELIGIBILITY

#### Neighbourhood Centres

- Clarendon Vale 6247 8163
- Risdon Vale 6243 5742
- Rokeby 6200 8540
- Warrane 6244 6346

#### Others

- Clarence Plains Food Coop – 6247 8163
- Clarendon Vale Child and Family Centre – 6246 6444
- Salvation Army (Salvos) – 6282 1200
- St Vincents (Vinnies) – 6234 4244

Clarence City Council Community Wellbeing Team – 6217 9500

Current Tasmanian Government Strategies – [Food Relief to Food Resilience](#) and [Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan](#)

