

the new optimistsforum

scenario planning: food futures for birmingham



food & cities: birmingham 2050

A CITY IS MORE THAN A PLACE IN SPACE; IT IS A DRAMA IN TIME

what's happening

The New Optimists Forum is creating scenarios, food futures for Birmingham 2050, through facilitated events with regional scientists under the guidance of Warwick Business School.

There is live social media reporting of each event. This, plus transcripts of the conversations, are analysed by a researcher, and by Aston University's Centre for Forensic Linguistics.

We've completed the divergent phase of the scenario project with scientists and key decision-makers. This has gained wide coverage, influential interest, several spin-off activities and five reports.

The second, convergent phase of the scenario planning begins this month.

Invited stakeholders will review draft scenarios this autumn, with publication planned for December followed by a large-scale public event in early 2013.

our sponsors

We're grateful for the generous support of a growing number of organisations for the Forum.

the impact of the forum to april 2012

- ◆ Food policy is on the agenda for Birmingham's long-term strategic planning.
- ◆ We submitted a response to the draft SPD put out for public consultation by the Sustainability Team at Birmingham City Council.
- ◆ Professor Jim Parle and Kate Cooper met with Head of Parks Darren Share in early April to establish his support for a pan-city project *Growing Birmingham* to promote and coordinate community food growing.
- ◆ Three researchers: Matthew Green (economics), Nicci MacLeod (linguistics) and Ellie Richards (politics) are providing analysis of data. Warwick Crop Centre MSc postgrads' dissertations are also contributing to our work.
- ◆ We're also exploring working with the Birmingham Leadership Foundation to engage their youngsters in Forum activities, notably to help organise and facilitate the proposed large-scale event in early 2013 (see next).
- ◆ We're working to design and deliver a national event, held in Birmingham, in 2013, with a working title: *Feeding Birmingham: The Challenge Facing Megacities*.
- ◆ Kate Cooper's summary of the APPG on Agroecology in December was the first in the public domain, gained wide coverage as an "excellent report".
- ◆ Richard Burden MP wrote to Sainsbury's Justin King on food poverty/deserts in Birmingham; Kate Cooper met Warner Budgens, in touch with Waitrose.
- ◆ Links: Forum for the Future, Soil Association, Food Matters, Incredible Edible, Sustainability, OpenStreetMap, Harper Adams University College, UCB, et al.



april-december forum activities

updates & info at www.newoptimists.com

April-July

The second, convergent part of the scenario planning process.

23 May 2012

Kate Cooper leads a seminar hosted by Warwick Crop Centre, of scientists and social scientists on feeding supercities and large conurbations.

11 June 2012

Dinner discussion: the impact of the semantic web on the food supply chain, in collaboration with the EU-funded Smart AgriFood Project.

May-June 2012 (date tbd)

Dinner discussion: the impact of the city being wholly/partially self-sufficient

in heat and energy generation through realisation of the EBRI potential.

July-August-September

First draft scenarios completed. Planning detail begun for 2013 event/s.

September-December 2012

Second draft scenarios submitted to sponsors and the wider public.