



# LIFT and sustainability:

## Cornwall Food Production Unit, Redruth, Cornwall

DELIVERING A FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE INCOME FOR GENERATIONS

### Profile

People's idea of sustainability often stops at windmills and solar panels, but in Cornwall, Community 1st Cornwall, the county's LIFTCo, is working in partnership with The Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust to develop a scheme that will revolutionise the way meals are provided for the healthcare community for many years to come.

The £4.6m food production unit stands as an exemplar of exactly what is possible within the LIFT programme when you have a strong vision and effective partnership across primary and acute care.

This innovative development also demonstrates the breadth of activities LIFT can participate in and successfully deliver, highlighting that LIFT is not just about GP and primary care services re-provision, but about the overall regeneration and improvement of the county's health and social care and support services infrastructure.



### **Delivering for the Community**

The current kitchen at The Royal Cornwall Hospital was built to cater for a considerably smaller number of patients than it now provides for, restricting any possibility to support further growth in productivity.

With such large numbers being catered for, much of the raw ingredients have traditionally been brought in from outside the county increasing the carbon footprint of the food miles and restricting the input from local suppliers. In addition, to prepare the food across the county, around 60 chefs and assistants are currently working across different sites in Cornwall. The development of the new food production unit will reduce the travelling time and distance for many.

Much of the value of the food production unit, opening in Spring 2008, lays in the benefits it offers to the local community. The development will increase the range of locally sourced produce and provide facilities to process vegetables straight from the farmer. This strengthens links with smaller, local suppliers, including organic producers, to offer seasonal produce on hospital menus and cater for increases in demand.

### **Partnership in Action**

Planning for the food production unit started as early as 2001 with the Cornwall Food Programme (CFP) when a 9-month feasibility study focusing on 'Local food for local people' was carried out. This was commissioned by NHS Trusts within Cornwall and was supported by European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) funding. The study focused on the future of healthcare catering within Cornwall whilst, at the same time, examining methodology of future working practices, the benefits to Cornwall and the positive impact upon social, physical and economical health to the region.

The study concluded that the best option was to build a Cornwall Food Production Unit (CFPU) on a brown field site with provision for expansion to take into account future growth. At the core of the development is funding of almost £2 million from the Objective One European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), and the Department of the Environment, Food

and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) fund for the capital build. This could not have been achieved without the widespread support of the development's stakeholders and partners.

The support of the Objective One investment programme provided a window of opportunity for the local NHS to establish Cornwall as an innovator and leader in a national context. This was backed by all local NHS Trust Chief Executives and Boards and the Cornwall food programme has been given pilot project status by the NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency (PASA) and is regarded as the lead project within the UK under DEFRA's Public Sector Sustainable Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI).

### **Building for the Future**

- A state-of-the-art food production facility
- Increased capacity to cater for increases in demand
- All possible resources including raw ingredients and staff sourced locally
- Increased income for local food producers
- Greater community sustainability
- A reduced carbon footprint with less logistical travel

### **Building for the Future**

The food production unit will not only improve the local healthcare infrastructure, but stimulate and regenerate the local economy for many farmers and other producers of raw food material.

But healthcare need only be the start. Many privately run food production units are operating in a multitude of markets, outside of health. With this in mind, the LIFT developed food production unit, once fully operational, could diversify outside of health – increasing productivity and greater wealth for the local population.

### **For further information please contact:**

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