Childhood Obesity Opportunity Spaces:
Where are there opportunities to impact the local food environment?

THEME 5: INCLUSIVE REGENERATION
5 opportunity platforms for interventions

1. Environmental Nudges
2. Healthy Headspace
3. Creatures of Habit
4. Social Influencers
5. Inclusive Regeneration
5. Inclusive Regeneration
The big challenge

As areas regenerate, new food options are starting to enter previously obesogenic environments. However these new entrants often appear alien to local families because they feel they are not for people like them.
How might we remove families’ anxieties about trying new food experiences?

How might we create more affordable opportunities for families to try new foods?

How might we give parents greater certainty about how much new food costs?

How might we safeguard diverse local food cultures?

How might we strengthen people’s influence over their local food environment?

Opportunity overview

5A
Trying new food

5B
Affordable new

5C
Cost certainty

5D
Safeguard diversity

5E
Local influence

Lowering barriers to trying new things

Working with existing communities
Opportunity 5A: Trying new food

**Design brief:**
How might we remove families’ anxieties about trying new food experiences?

**What we heard:**
- Families find the familiar comforting. Buying and eating unfamiliar foods from unfamiliar shops can prompt feelings of anxiety.
- This anxiety often stems from the fear that they either won’t like it, or they will do something wrong. Families therefore stick with what they know.
- Community organisations already have trusting relationships with families. They are therefore well placed to be the ones to ‘handhold’ families through new food experiences.

**Relevant settings:**
- Street
- Home
Opportunity 5A: Trying new food

Examples:

Going together

At a youth centre in Bermondsey, volunteers sometimes take children to a dessert parlour for a milkshake when there is something sensitive that the child wants to talk about.

For the community

In Hackney, Well Street Kitchen - a trendy new cafe - lets a local charity run a homework club from the cafe one day a week as the owner wants the cafe to feel part of the community.

Go to where the families are

Last year a Lambeth based charity used to deliver by bike free healthy food to parents waiting outside the school gates at St George's primary school in Battersea.
Opportunity 5B: Affordable new foods

Design brief: How might we create more affordable opportunities for families to try new foods?

What we heard:

Regeneration is changing the local food environment and new kinds of food are entering the area.

Families often avoid trying new food because of the costs attached: the cost of purchasing the food and the potential cost of wasted food if it is unliked.

Healthy food businesses have many strategies for giving out tasters, but these are often not aimed at low-income customers.

Relevant settings:

STREET

HOME
Opportunity 5B: Affordable new

Examples:

**Providing discounts**
Shopmium is a popular cashback app that offers discounts on groceries. Some parents use the app to try healthier products without the risk of paying full price and not liking it.

**Free giveaways**
Bounce protein balls often do free giveaways to passersby at London Bridge station, and some of the families in our research had tried them as a result.

**Taste tests**
The Asda superstore at Clapham Junction has taste test stands which are very popular with children (and parents!); parents noted that children would often try foods at these stands they wouldn’t eat if it was their parent giving it to them.
## Opportunity 5C: Cost certainty

**Design brief:**
How might we give parents greater certainty about how much new food costs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we heard:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A big barrier to buying new foods or going to a new grocery shop is the loss of certainty about how much it will cost.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents want to know exactly how much their shopping basket is before they reach checkout to avoid going over budget or the embarrassment of not being able to pay.</td>
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<td>Buying the same foods from the same shops reduces the risk of getting a nasty surprise at the till.</td>
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**Relevant settings:**
- STREET
- HOME
Opportunity 5C: Cost certainty

Examples:

Even parents who do not grocery shop online use supermarket shopping apps e.g. parents will create shopping lists in the app to work out how much their basket will cost before they shop - or use it while shopping as a calculator. Other parents prefer to bring along a calculator and tot up their shopping as they go.

One of the reasons parents do not like buying loose fruit and veg is that they are less certain as to how much it will cost versus a ready packaged version - even if it means they end up spending more.
Opportunity 5D: Safeguard diversity

**Design brief:**
How might we safeguard diverse local food cultures?

**What we heard:**

Food is a big part of people’s social and cultural identities.

Families feel that they belong in the area when they see their culture reflected in the shops around them.

If those shops leave the area because of regeneration, families find it harder to make cultural foods. And they risk losing their sense of belonging.

**Relevant settings:**

- **STREET**
- **HOME**
Opportunity 5D: Safeguard diversity

Examples:

**Making it mainstream**

Families from minority ethnic backgrounds like the fact that many supermarkets now sell a more diverse range of foods from different cultures. However because the same foods can be bought from markets for less, the families think the products are targeted at others.

**Caters for all**

This shop on Wandsworth Road looks like a Chinese grocery shop but actually caters for a range of cultures. Afro-Caribbean families in the area rely on it for foods such as yams.

**Everything you need**

Brixton and Peckham are famous across London or a wide range of authentic, affordable and good quality products for Afro-Caribbean cultures. Families travel long distances to access these essential products.
Opportunity 5E: Local influence

Design brief: How might we strengthen people’s influence over their local food environment?

What we heard:

Many food businesses like traditional caffs and fish & chip shops have been around for a long time and contribute to the cultural fabric of the local area.

Local families have strong attachments to these food businesses and are unnerved if these businesses close due to regeneration.

Involving families in planning changes to the food environment could help ensure that the future mix meets the needs of all the community.

Relevant settings:

STREET

HOME
Opportunity 5E: Local influence

Examples:

Co-designing with residents

At the research findings workshop, participants noted that British Land and Southwark Council were consulting well with local residents on the Canada Water regeneration, using co-design principles with local communities around plans to develop a new town centre at Canada Water.

Inviting feedback

The Great Weight Debate was a London wide campaign to raise awareness about child obesity and have a conversation with Londoners about ideas for how children and families can lead healthier lives. Engagement channels included events, newsletters, advertising, TV and radio and social media.
Thank you

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Product design for social change