



Partnering with London Gateway

August 2020

What would a partner mean to Fish Local?

We would like to initiate a year-long pilot. This will establish a foundation for a long-term project, working to dive deeper into the project aims to show the usefulness of supporting the industry in key areas while establishing performance indicators along the way. Our current goal is to make Fish Local an established and integral part of the fishing industry delivering a lasting legacy while consistently improving relationships and mitigating impact. By measuring this usefulness across Kent and Essex we can start to better understand Fish Local's potential to scale across multiple locations.

Whilst Fish Local has been looking at multiple funding streams, such as the recent government DSSS scheme, it is keen to establish a long-term partnership that can offer consistency and support. Fish Local is due to run out of financial support in September.

What are we aiming for?

- Upskill and support the local seafood sector in promoting the fish caught by local fishing boats while increasing the sales of sustainable local fish stocks
- Incentivise sustainable fisheries management and conservation
- Promote a low carbon-miles supply chain
- Break down barriers between the consumer and buying fish, helping people be more confident in handling and cooking local fish
- Celebrate and raise awareness of the world-class local seafood produce, the fishers and sellers that work in our region and educate the consumer

How do we get there?

Doing the basics

The Fish Local platform requires regular input to maintain and grow the community and the connection between the fishers, suppliers, producers, and consumers.

Engagement is critical with a focus on peer-to-peer interactions

The platform needs to keep active and current. This requires editorial support for the social media channels, general content delivery and PR support keeping the project relevant and nimble. It needs to gather data and real world intel to maintain its ground-up, 'for the industry, by the industry' approach.

Fish Local needs to keep in contact with the industry as well as managing partnering stakeholders while feeding into the project board.

What can be done to add value right now?

Fish Local was created at pace and on a tight budget. Six months on, there are areas that can be developed to improve how users might interact with the platform. We can take what we have learned, as well as input from the project board to explore certain areas.

- Review website functionality (the supplier finder is a good example of this)
- Refine the Fish Local social media accounts (Industry only social groups for example)
- Grow face to face relationships with the industry
- Develop PR opportunities and follow up on our current successes
- Gather intel from fishermen and fishmongers, looking at what we can do to help and where to focus

Painting the bigger picture

The strength in the Fish Local brand is having a recognisable, trusted, industry focused platform from which to develop possible step changes in the industry. This would be done by creating specific campaigns with specific outcomes. A Strategy devised by combining the desires of the industry with the experience of expert-led stakeholders with focused and achievable outcomes. Positively disrupting values and attitudes where we can. Each project should be able to show whether or not it could have long-term impact. A number of the Fish Local aims are aligned with a wider Zeitgeist which we can use to add value to our projects. Having a brand to identify with these outcomes as a marque for support of industry values is a valuable addition. Think Fresh, Shop Smart, Fish Local.

Each individual project, just as with Fish Local as a whole, will be evaluated against its data and organic response and its usefulness reported to the project board.

Projects would be individually conceived and budgeted.

Some routes to outcomes

Reducing carbon-miles in the supply chain by increasing local fish sales in restaurants by linking and promoting the local fishers and their catch

Positively disrupting the supply chain is key. It is important to mention that this is not to be at the expense of the markets, or the use of non-local products. However, there is a fantastic supply from the inshore fleet that would normally be going abroad, soon to be levied, and can be redirected with little effect on the current ecosystem. All aspects of the supplier market can be utilised to do this. Whether it's fine dining taking local lobster and Dover sole or it's mackerel being sold on the quayside there are many opportunities to connect. We can improve the margin for the fishers and the suppliers and quality for the consumers. Using seasonal fish encourages sustainability.

Improving awareness of fishmongers on the high street and availability of local seafood

As well as social media there is an opportunity to physically cross promote the high street. Having posters and leaflets in related shops such as greengrocers. Getting shop owners to encourage local shoppers to have fish with their veg and vice versa. Having recipe cards, or QR codes to scan with instructions and ingredients lists. Local targeted direct mail campaigns to get local shoppers to engage with the high street.

Upskilling suppliers to harness new market opportunities and how to deliver to those markets

Helping with social media: Take 2-4 local businesses (split evenly between Kent and Essex) through a 3-week, helping hand program to raise their social media presence and increase sales.

Helping with local advertising: Take 2-4 local businesses (split evenly between Kent and Essex) through a 6 week, local promotions program to raise their presence in the local community and increase sales.

Concentrate on cheap low-cost physical promotion focused in a 5 mile radius of their shop.

Taking the outcomes of these initial projects to evaluate the impact on the industry.

This can form the basis for a scalable long term support network.

Appeal to a younger generation of buyer and supplier, highlighting opportunities to new generations of fishers and suppliers

Using social media to implement a growth market based on a modern supply chain that is simple to facilitate will show an emerging generation that the fishing industry is open to change in a way that suits a differently minded consumer.

Creating a trail of custody, improve transparency in the supply chain and align with new consumer ideals

Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of product origin. The extent that local fish is being transported to markets only for it to travel again to a supplier is little known. The quality and variety of what is being landed locally is often understated.

We want to let the consumer know that their seafood has been locally caught and that buying it is supporting their community. The ground up approach allows us to physically connect the supply chain and give them the tools to prime the consumer. Using boat numbers on social media and in restaurants and fishmongers can trace their fish all the way through the chain. With such a short supply chain, it will not only promote the benefits of fresh local produce but allow the consumer to take ownership and engage. They could even tweet their appreciation directly to the fisher.

Infrastructure

Project board

Essential to Fish Local's success is its connection to the industry. A strong community and its relationships will help to focus goals and feel that all pushing in the same direction.

Possible board members:

- London Gateway
- KEIFCA
- Leigh-on-sea Fishermen – Andrew Rattley
- Whitstable/ Thanet Fishermen – John Nicholls
- Whitstable/ Thanet Fishermen – Merlin Jackson
- Thames Estuary Partnership
- Band *Agency*

The project board will look to support on strategy and use of budget. They would also support on creating performance indicators and establishing project successes against them.

Project Officer

Whilst *Band Agency* and KEIFCA can create and line manage workflow, there is enough work managing the integral parts of Fish Local to create a full-time role. We have seen that where we have had a KEIFCA officer working with *Band Agency* consistently there was greatly improved organic growth on the platform.

At present the fishing industry primarily uses three forms of communication, phone calls/face to face chats, WhatsApp and Facebook. While some members of the industry are great at using and promoting their businesses on social media, there are other sections of the industry for whom this is a significant barrier. Creating a project officer post that runs the day to day aspects of the project and is the face of the project will help reach out and support these people and businesses and help them access the possibilities and opportunities of targeted social media promotion.

A communications focused role within the IFCA would blend the ability to manage the platforms whilst getting to know the industry individuals and the finer points of engaging with that group.

Project delivery

Band Agency would provide delivery of marketing, communication, PR and strategy support. With a strong track record of delivering market strategy and execution into wide range of businesses, they have already delivered Fish Local to a high standard, showing a committed approach to creating a long-term outcome for Fish Local campaign. *Band Agency* have worked along-side KEIFCA on the creation and execution from the campaign inception.

Rolling Fish Local costs

Description	Unit	Total for Year
Campaign Officer, including recruitment, laptop, mileage PPE etc. (would reduce in year two)	Salary range of £27,000-£32,000	£51,000
Partnership management fee (An example from Thames Estuary Partnership)	15% of total	£19,740
Band <i>Agency</i> retainer	£3,300/month	£39,600
Initial PR launch	£3,500	£3,500
PR retainer	£2,500/month	£27,500
Month-on-month hosting	£250/month	£3,000
Platform development	£8,000	£8,000
Total		£151,340

Costs are indicative at the moment but will be refined and detailed should the project progress.

Providing for growth

We would look to work with London Gateway to establish a budget for the targeted campaigns. There is obviously a sliding scale of opportunities depending on the support available. Alongside gearing up our partnership we would suggest the key stakeholders begin to establish project opportunities, their desired outcomes and assign budgets.

If London Gateway has an interest in becoming the primary financial partner with Fish Local, you might consider what budget you would feel you can invest beyond the basic costs.

Moving forward, the cumulative impact of marine construction projects has become an increasing issue in the outer Thames and in the inshore environment. Fish Local can in some ways act to mitigate and offset the impact of these by increasing value and sales of locally caught fish. Building such an approach could help create better long-term relationships between different marine sectors. This, as with all of the individual projects, is an opportunity to seek match funding.

There is the possibility Fish Local can become an independent Community Interest Company. In the meanwhile, KEIFCA are well placed to own the project in its early phases. They are accountable, established, regulated and have worked on other projects in a similar style. They are a great inroad to the industry and well placed to add the project officer to their staff. They also have an existing and highly functioning relationship with Band Agency. We would also have the option of a board member, such as Thames Estuary Partnership who would, for a management fee, be happy to employ a staff member. Each option has its merits with structure and ownership forming part of the initial strategy.