

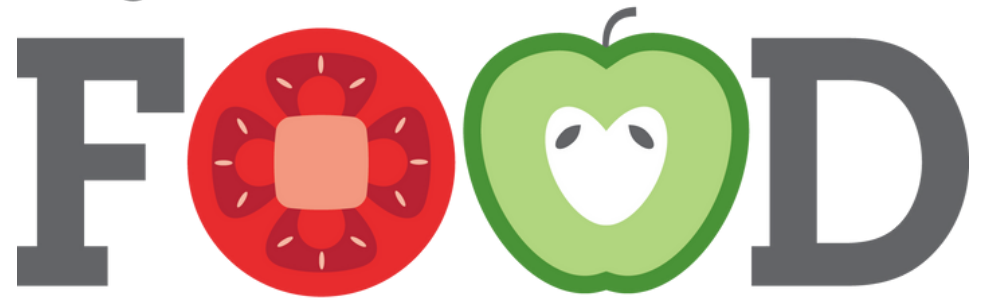
2

0

2

2

Brighton & Hove



Partnership

Impact Report

September 2021 - September 2022

Brighton & Hove Food Partnership: our vision is healthy, sustainable, and fair food for all

In this report, we explore our impact over the last twelve months (from September to September, when our annual AGMS take place) and demonstrate what can be achieved by working as a food partnership across the city's food system.

Food can mean lots of different things to lots of different people, depending on which perspective you approach it from. To understand this, it is important to work with food across the whole food system: from food growers, to retailers, to food bank users, to consumers, and everyone else in-between.

Working as a food partnership means doing exactly that: bringing together a range of partners and perspectives from across a city (or area), to understand food in its all complexity. In working as a food partnership, we aim to transform our food system in a way that benefits everyone, and particularly those who are experiencing poor health, poverty, exclusion and isolation.

Because we work with projects and people from every corner of our city's food system, our organisation may seem varied and complex. However, our aims are simple – they are to **connect**, **inspire**, **champion**, **influence**, **lead** and **care** for everyone involved in creating a healthy and sustainable food system in Brighton & Hove.



Connect
To be a hub and network builder.



Lead
To operate at a strategic level.



Champion
To champion and support community-led food projects



Influence
To influence behaviour in large organisations.



Inspire
To inspire, support and encourage people to adopt healthier, more sustainable diets and lifestyles.



Care
To be a well-run organisation with happy and motivated staff and volunteers.



CONNECT

As part of the Green Wellbeing Alliance Project, we have helped connect over 781 people across Sussex with complex needs to nature. We've piloted a new project, 'Soil in the City', which gave 96 users of affordable food projects the opportunity to spend a wellbeing day at Rock Farm – a working market garden, community space and horticultural therapy project.

Our Community Kitchen acts as a gateway to our work for people across the city, with each session (be it a private group event, commercial class, or community class) opening with some information about the work and campaigning we do. We had more than 2,000 visitors to the Community Kitchen last year, and enjoyed more than 3,500 healthy & sustainable meals at our shared dining table.

We continue to convene the city's Emergency Food Network (EFN) and Affordable Food Network (AFN), holding regular meetings for the 40 Emergency + Affordable Food Providers across the network to share learnings, resources and support. The network acts as a mechanism to transmit information between the grassroots organisations across the EFN and the local authority.



Similarly, we continue to convene quarterly meetings for the Surplus Food Network, made up of 7 surplus food organisations across the city. We also convene a network for members of the 'Stammer Wellbeing Gardens', a collection of 13 community food and wellbeing projects that have plots at Stammer Wellbeing Gardens, a 4-acre plot in Stammer Park that we manage.

Our social media and newsletter continue to reach 150,000 people yearly across the city, acting as an important platform for raising awareness for our campaigns around the Cost of Living Crisis, Food Waste and the government Food Strategy.

INSPIRE

Our community cookery courses were attended by over 240 adults who face barriers to cooking, helping them to adopt healthier, more sustainable diets and lifestyles. 25% of attendees from our community courses increased the amount of meals they cooked from scratch, with 42% of attendees reporting throwing away less food after attending a course.



Feedback from a recent 5-week long course for people with serious mental health issues reported that 71% of participants reported an increased vegetable uptake after the course, whilst 86% felt more willing to try new foods. One participant noted how 'I've learnt so much, about foods nutrition and different ways to use food, it's given me confidence to try new things'. We developed three new courses in response to the Cost of Living Crisis: batch cooking, low energy cooking, and 'Food Use Fridays'

For those not able to come to the Community Kitchen, we distributed 3131 'In the Bag' recipe kits over the last year. These are kits with ingredients, a simple recipe, and kids activities for families accessing emergency food. Feedback has shown that these kits have helped encourage both children and adults in households to get involved with cooking.

Our gardening projects inspire people to make long-lasting change. Our 'Good to Grow' course helps vulnerable elderly people connect with the wellbeing benefits of gardening, with one attendee now looking into starting a new gardening group with the BMECP. 95% of participants who attended a Green Wellbeing Alliance gardening group felt their wellbeing had improved, with 71% saying their social networks increased after attending.

Through our citywide food use campaign, we educate people about the environmental impact of wasting food and encourage people to waste less food and save money through food use recipes and tips and by encouraging people to share meals and donate their surplus. We reach people through social media, workshops, talks, and more.

CHAMPION

As part of the Big Lottery Funding 'Climate Action Fund', we have developed a new project called 'Food Use Places'. The involves working with thirteen community food projects across the city, encouraging them to waste less food. The project is just beginning, but we have so far carried out 20 food waste audits amongst community food projects, providing an overview of their food use patterns with the eventual goal of helping them access compost tumblers, and have helped 2 projects install compost tumblers in their kitchens.

With a team of committed volunteers, we have helped transform overgrown and unused land in our Stanmer Park that is now getting used to produce food which goes on to be cooked in our Community Kitchen. Our woodland and quiet gardens have been booked over 320 times in the last year, providing a quiet outdoor space for forest schools, therapists, and community food groups to convene.



Our community compost schemes continue to flourish, with 6 new schemes opening across the city in the last year. We have released a 'Community Composting 101' webinar and created an accompanying video explaining the process of setting up community composting to a national audience, whilst locally helping over 1000 residents across the city compost their food waste across 47 compost schemes. It is estimated that at least 160 tonnes of food waste have been diverted from landfill in doing so.

The Affordable Food Projects model has been a success, with 4 more schemes opening up over the last year, meaning there are now 10 across the city. These projects offer an alternative model to food banks, and provide up to 483 meals a week. Our Emergency Food Network email group has nearly 200 members, and works as a platform for sharing resources and opportunities. As part of this work, we hold an annual facilitated session for the network to reflect, review and look forward in order to strengthen the work.

INFLUENCE

We are part of the UKRI FoodSEqual 5-year project, working towards the 'co-production of healthy sustainable food systems for disadvantaged communities'

We are working with a large consortium of universities, industry partners and other stakeholders to influence the local and national food system by amplifying the voices of those in less affluent areas in our city. In this first phase of the project we have recruited, trained and deployed a remarkable team of community researchers. Their work will feed directly into this national food systems project, strengthening qualitative evidence informed policy mechanisms.

We have worked with Brighton & Hove City Council consulting them on food policy around emergency food, raising awareness with decision makers of the problems that are happening on the ground and influencing decision making around emergency food and the cost of living. During the pandemic we established a 'food cell' within the council, which was joined by council staff who worked in different departments such as public health, adult social care, children's centres, school meals etc.



Whilst the Covid nature of this work is coming to an end, the cell was so successful that we carry on using it today, and within it are looking at how we can work strategically across welfare support to bring people from energy, food, and money advice together to find ways of working together that better support the community. Our pandemic/cost-of-living food response is being used as a national case study of good crisis management through Sustain and Sustainable Food Place.

LEAD

The Cost of Living crisis has plummeted many people in the city into food precarity. We have played an important role in understanding the extent of food poverty within our city, by conducting a survey across the Emergency Food Network, revealing worrying trends such as the fact that 69% of people relying on affordable and emergency food in our city are doing so indefinitely, as opposed to 27% last year. This is happening whilst 70% of providers have reported a decrease in their donations. The results of this survey will be shared with the council, to shape their future food poverty policies.



We produced a statement of serious concern that was sent to parliament, asking the government to enact 12 action points to address the immediacy of food poverty. This statement highlighted the concerns and demands of the city's Emergency Food Network.

The statement was signed by 44 Emergency Food organisations across the city, bringing demands from the grassroots level to national and local policymaker

We were part of the consultation process for the National Food Strategy in 2019-2021, and recently released a national statement in response to the Government Food Strategy white paper released in 2022. In this statement we advocate for a Food Partnership in every area, highlighting the importance of Food Partnerships and their whole systems approach. We continue to highlight the importance of food strategies and partnerships nationally, but also internationally, through our involvement in the Edible Cities Network where we have given webinars and produced factsheets about our model of working.

CARE

Our work is made possible by our incredible staff and volunteer team, whom we celebrate wherever possible, be it through volunteer parties or by featuring them on our social media channels. To celebrate the 150+ regular volunteers that support our work, we held a celebratory volunteers picnic at Preston Park, giving volunteers from across all our projects the chance to meet one another, as well as a kitchen volunteers' party.

We had our first ever social work intern join us for six months, who was mentored by a staff member who was undertaking Social Work mentoring training. We took on two paid University of Sussex interns, providing fairly paid opportunities to work in the third sector. Our carefully trained FoodSEqual community research team engages with people in less affluent areas to listen to opinions, experiences, aspirations and ideas around food. Engagement takes place via workshops/focus groups, in person surveying, community events and more.



Brighton & Hove Food Partnership Impact report

info@bhfood.org.uk
www.bhfood.org.uk
01273 234810

Soil and the City Project:

180 members of the city's Affordable Food Projects have been given the opportunity to spend a wellbeing day on Rock Farm – a working market garden, community space, and horticultural therapy project.



Flavour Packs

Surplus Food Network:

The Surplus Food Network intercepted 1309 tonnes of waste, **feeding over 5870 people.** Some of this food goes towards creating our Flavour Packs (dehydrated mixed vegetable meal kits)



Community Kitchen:

Our community cookery courses are for vulnerable adults and children/ young people. Evaluation shows positive impact on trying new foods, vegetable consumption and cooking at home.

“I've learnt so much about foods, nutrition and different ways to use food, it's given me the confidence to try new things”.



Community Food Growing:

We have over 50 regular participants at our food growing groups, with resoundingly positive feedback from attendees

“every week when I leave I smile from ear to ear”.



Cost of Living Crisis:

We brought the concerns and demands of the city's Emergency Food Network to Parliament, producing a nationally-circulated statement of serious concern asking the government to enact 12 action points to address the immediacy of food poverty. Our annual emergency food survey shows there are **over 5100 people each week relying on food support** in the city with 63% of them needing indefinite support.



FoodSEqual:

We have trained three community researchers who engage with people in less affluent areas of Brighton & Hove to listen to their opinions, experiences, aspirations and ideas around food, amplifying the voices of those less heard.



Brighton & Hove
FOOD
Partnership



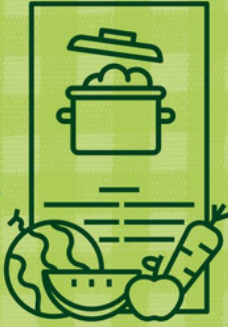
Join the conversation.
Follow @btnhovefood



For over fifteen years we have been at the forefront of the now global Sustainable Food Places movement. We believe that good food is a right for all and demonstrate how taking a food approach can bring power and energy to communities and help build a healthier, more sustainable future.

Weekly Recipe Kits

We distributed **3131** 'In the Bag' Ingredients & recipe kits to families accessing emergency food.



Community compost scheme

Community Composting

We opened **6 new schemes** last year. **47 community composting schemes** enable 1000+ residents to compost their food, which diverts **2500 tonnes of food waste** and saves **250kg CO2** per year.

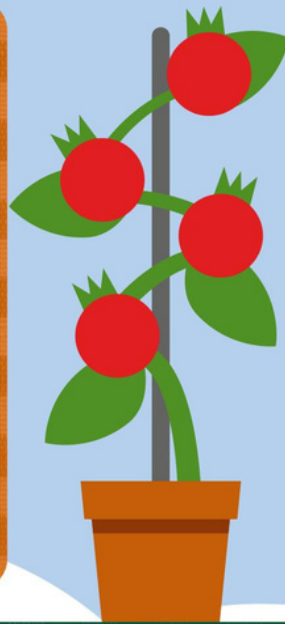


Wellbeing in Nature

Our gardening courses provide spaces of inspiration and support. **95% of participants who attended a Green Wellbeing Alliance gardening group felt their wellbeing improved.**

“it was the only positive reason I had to leave the refuge and now I feel confident enough to join a community garden”

Participant



Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens

Our woodland and quiet gardens have been booked **over 320 times**, providing a quiet outdoor space for forest schools, support groups, and community food groups. With a team of dedicated volunteers we have transformed overgrown and unused land in Stanmer Park to grow food, which is used in our Community Kitchen.



In the Bag Kits

Volunteers

Involved in gardening, composting, cooking, governance and emergency food distribution – **over 150 volunteers support our work each year.** Thank you.



Volunteers at Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens





Slow cookers for our 'low, slow, and no energy' cooking course



Baking in the kitchen



Fresh veg picked at Saunders Park garden



BHPF staff team on a wellbeing day at Waterhall



Waterhall Golf Course - now used as an outdoor space



Dinner shared at our beloved kitchen table



Soil in the City visit



New compost scheme opened