



Climate Action Fund Project Report

Year 1 (April 24 - May 25)



Partnership vision

We're called Food Use Places. Together we intend to minimise food's impact on our climate through the creation of a new norm – a food use mind set.

To achieve our transformation, we've created a place-based alliance of 16 organisations that brings together circular economy and assets-based community development approaches to minimise food and packaging waste. We will:

- Engage new audiences in climate action focusing on groups that are currently under-represented in this agenda.
- Harness the power that is in communities, with children & young people, older people, people from different ethnic and social backgrounds all part of this movement for change.
- Develop food use confidence. Individuals and organisations will gain skills to buy, store, prepare, cook and dispose of food in ways that minimise the impact on the climate.
- Use circular economy thinking to create new products with social and environmental value. These could include a surplus food café that brings people together to combat loneliness; or the creation of nutrient-rich compost from community-run tumblers to support biodiversity and local food growing.

No one entity can transform a system, so we are drawing in the expertise of community organisations, anchor institutions (eg schools, universities and the local authority) and local business. We want others to replicate the approach and will share what we learn locally and nationally. Our experience so far has shown us that we are collectively greater than the sum of our parts. Together we can create a revolution and become a place that champions food use to tackle food waste.

Acronyms are used in this report for partners. Full names and websites are listed on page 8.

Workstreams



Food use places



Communities make compost



Inspiring the next generation



Surplus food redistribution



Circular economy approach



Communications & knowledge exchange

Year 1 Impact

This year, thanks to funding from the Climate Action Fund we made an impact on both the community and the climate. We embedded the Food Use Places approach in six community venues, reaching over 3400 people, including those from diverse audiences and ran over 100 behaviour change workshops. We also had a local launch of the Eat Smart School programme. Initiatives such as local composting, serving surplus meals, food waste audits, and bins with clear signage have helped divert waste from incineration/landfill. This has driven lasting climate benefits. Shifting habits takes time, but ongoing engagement has built trust.

Our collective action means that 1230 tonnes of food that could have ended up in the waste stream has instead been used to make meals and compost - Food Use rather than Food Waste.

3451
individuals reached



1018 tonnes of
surplus food
redistributed



>12,500 hrs
paid staff time



>400
volunteers



Tumblers composting
36.3 tonnes food
waste per yr



16 partners



1230 tonnes
total food
'used not wasted'



10 schools &
526 children
involved



Infographics showing the progress of data are measured against project key performance indicators and span the full 4-year period (2024–2028), unless otherwise specified.



Food Use Places

Encouraging behaviour change to reduce food waste at home and in community venues.

Community venues underwent significant changes through embedding the Food Use Places approach. Year 1 saw RJFP, Old Boat, SCDA, Sussex Surplus @ BELTA, Community Kitchen, and Hop 50+ audit their food waste and recycling and co-develop activity plans with their community members. Plans were structured around our Food Use Confidence Dial Framework. Community venues built on existing trusted relationships, through WhatsApp, texts, and e-newsletters.

Activities focused on wards with high levels of poverty—Whitehawk & Marina, Hangleton & Knoll, Moulsecomb & Bevendean and Newhaven North/South.

6/10 community venues adopted FUP approach



Case Study - Embedding Food Use Places in the popular Old Boat Corner Community Centre

“This year, by engaging local people, with two team members to lead the project and >40 volunteers, new passions have ignited, local bonds have grown, and challenges are solved quickly and creatively, such as building a system for veg gluts. Inspired by training with local compost expert, we developed food use advocates who manage the compost system and track all food waste. This has produced a ton of compost for our orchard and community garden. To reach all centre users, not just food project participants, we trained the wider team in composting using our popular 'Fact or Fiction' quiz. Long-term changes include a switch to organic tea bags, a reusable cup discount, clear bin signage encouraging better waste habits, and continuing to share homemade surplus ready meals.” - Reyna, CEO



Community Engagement Events

Partners held public events to engage their communities in the project. These included HKYP's Big Munch picnics, MFG's open day, the Bevy's plant sale, surplus-focused supper clubs, and community centre family fun days.



Hop 50+ 's multi-week sessions with older people were effective in building trust and deeper engagement.

**33 public events
attended by
2153 people**



Workshops

Multi-week workshops targeted communities facing disadvantage, including Old Boat's International Women's group, young people at HKYP, older people at the Hop50+ and SCDA's community supermarket customers. Other workshops included cook-ups, gleaning and farm visits, including sessions targeted at people with learning disabilities, refugees and asylum seekers, people living with dementia and their carers, and neuro-diverse young people.

Training

Training was tailored to meet the needs of staff and volunteers. Training aimed to help them to share the food waste reduction messages and lead groups and sessions safely. Courses topics included cookery leader training, preserving/fermenting techniques, Level 2 Food Safety and 'How to talk about food and climate change'.

**445 people took part
in 114 workshops**



**79 people engaged
in training**



"Cooking whilst trying to use everything up has made me a better and more confident cook." - Participant Community Cook-up

**8 Community Kitchen
Cook-ups**



- 80 attendees
- 74% people felt more confident in cookery skills
- 75% learnt a tip they would use at home



"I never thought to think about the energy it takes to make a new product."


- Young Person at HKYP Big Munch

Communities make compost


By working with schools and community venues, we helped them find the best option for composting - be that a wooden box or tumbler. We saw new-found passions and pride in composting at community venues. Composting on-site made this action visible. Groups used the compost they made to grow food, eg, in herb beds, which also reduced the need to buy plastic-wrapped produce. We tested the compost from our tumblers, which showed we are making living soil with high levels of microbes.



Compost tumblers are located in these wards: Regency, Patcham & Hollingbury, Newhaven North, Moulsecomb & Bevendean, and Whitehawk

93/120 people trained in composting 

14/25 community locations with tumblers 

2/6 schools with new onsite composting 

Community Composting

Community Composting was match funded by BHCC this schemes enables people without gardens to compost.



Case study - FareShare Sussex & Surrey and Nurture Through Nature

FSSS now transports its unusable surplus by e-bike to a local community garden (NTN), to compost in a Ridan. Food grown is given to food banks.

“The project has helped us embed a new system, where we now compost our food waste locally. Before we were paying to send it to Essex thus incurring food miles on our food waste.” - FareShare Sussex & Surrey

Community Composting in 2024 

- 770 wheelie bins worth of food waste diverted from incineration
- 54 schemes
- 125 volunteer monitors
- 1200 households involved
- 174.7 tonnes of food waste composted



Inspiring the next generation

Eat Smart School Programme

RJFP began delivery of the Eat Smart School programme, which involves 6 weeks of engagement with children, teachers, and caterers to reduce food waste. It starts with a food waste audit, which is reinforced by workshops and training passionate children as Food Waste Warriors. After 2 weeks, the audit is repeated to showcase impact.



Moulsecomb Forest Garden Open day

After school club

Brighton Table Tennis Club and Real Junk Food Project engaged children entitled to a free school meal in weekly after-school clubs, where they play table tennis, cook, eat food, and learn about climate-positive actions through food waste reduction and packaging awareness.

**24 children/week
at after school club**



**272 children from 7 schools
took part in food waste
cooking lessons (CK & MFG)**

**1/12 schools engaged in
Eat Smart**



210 children engaged



**16/100 school
waste warriors**



Case Study - Moulsecomb Primary - Eat Smart Action

65% of the pupils receive free school meals. Food Waste changes included putting compost containers in the lunch hall, displaying food waste posters made by the children, an interactive assembly on the audit results, waste warrior stickers, changes to portion sizes, and a 5-minute warning bell to reduce rushing to eat before end of break. By the 2nd audit, there was a 24.39 kg reduction in food waste, equating to 94 less meals going into the bin each week and 33% less plate waste. If maintained, £3,671 would be saved each year.



Children engaged in an interactive learning experience by composting break-time fruit.



Surplus food redistribution

The 8 groups involved in the Surplus Food Network (SFN) met 3 times. Groups sourced food from all parts of the food system (farm, wholesale and retail) and either used it to make meals or redistributed it to over 50 community food projects (including food banks, affordable shops and meal projects).

The network helps groups to collaborate. A shared WhatsApp group is used to notify each other about available food.

1018 tonnes of surplus food redistributed



A circular economy approach

Redistributed food is used to make shared meals eaten in community settings. These help combat loneliness and bring together people from different backgrounds.

Extending Shelf Life of fresh produce

The nature of surplus means there are often gluts. Food Use Places partners are dehydrating, fermenting and freezing this food to create new products.

1/2 new products developed and produced at scale



1796 people/week ate meals made using rescued food



"Cooking nutritious meals using surplus food sparked conversations around climate change with those who may not typically identify with environmental movements." - SCDA



The Community Kitchen turned gluts of fresh veg into long life dried mixed veg packs that were given out to people experiencing food poverty.



Sussex Surplus installed an autoclave machine to create long-life soup from surplus produce gleaned from local farms.



Communications & knowledge exchange

To highlight the project in action, we produced two videos. Partner updates and success stories were shared via websites, newsletters, posters, YouTube, and social media. BHFP published four blogs. Media coverage included a radio segment on BBC Radio Sussex. The 'Love Your Living Soil' event attracted 50 people to learn about composting to create healthy soil. 53 stakeholders attended the project launch event. We hosted visitors from Birmingham and Newcastle to learn about our composting

approach. Partners collaborated with organisations, including Southern Water (sharing water saving tips at events), Recorra (info on recycling), B&H City Council (school meals, waste team and Our Planet schools worker), the Co-op supermarket, and the Compost Club.

Over 100,000 people reached through all partner social media



[Watch the Sussex Surplus gleaning & soup making video](#)



[Watch Moulsecomb Forest Garden Open Day video](#)

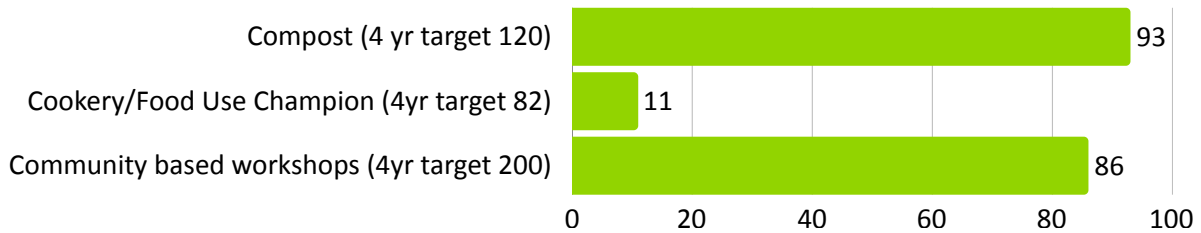
Partner list / websites

- [Brighton and Hove Food Partnership \(BHFP\)](#) - the managing partners
- [Brighton Table Tennis Club \(BTTC\)](#)
- [East Brighton Food Co-op \(EBFC\)](#)
- [FareShare Sussex & Surrey \(FSSS\)](#)
- [Food Rise \(formerly Feedback\) / Sussex Surplus \(SS\)](#)
- [Food Matters \(FM\)](#)
- [Hangleton & Knoll Youth Project \(HKYP\)](#)
- [Hop 50+/Impact](#)
- [Nurture Through Nature \(NTN\)](#)
- [Moulsecomb Forest Garden \(MFG\)](#)
- [Old Boat Corner Community Association \(OBCC\)](#)
- [Real Junk Food Project \(JFFP\)](#)
- [Sussex Community Development Association \(SCDA\)](#)
- [The Bevy](#)
- [The Community Kitchen \(CK\)](#)
- [Whitehawk Community Food Project \(WCFP\)](#)

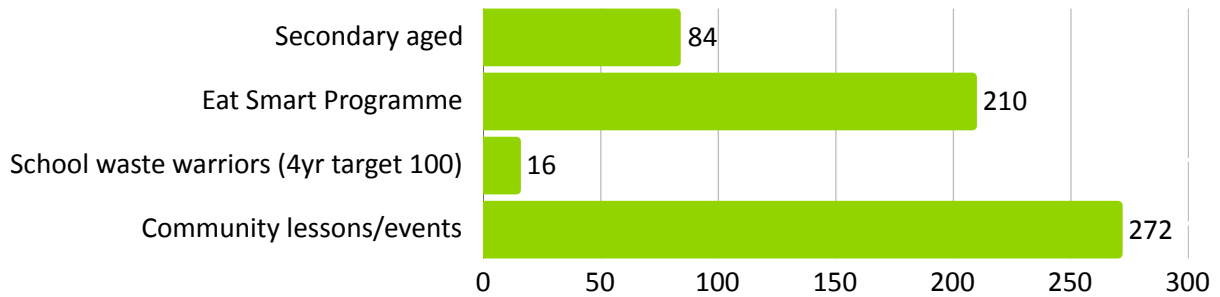
[Click here for further info about partners](#)

KPI trackers - Year 1

Adults trained

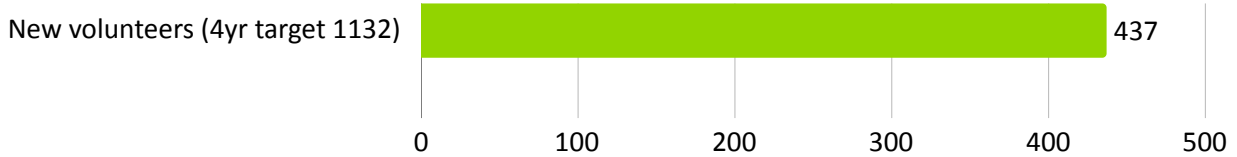


Children and young people engaged



Volunteers

New volunteers were onboarded in roles involving composting, redistributing surplus, and growing food.



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Visit: www.bhfood.org.uk/food-use-places

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