



BRIGHTON AND HOVE FOOD STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT NOVEMBER 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Priority Actions | 3 |
| Aim 1 - Champion healthy sustainable food | 4 |
| • Whole School Food Approach | 5 |
| Aim 2- Take a preventative approach to food poverty | 7 |
| Aim 3 - Nourish a vibrant, diverse and skilled community food Sector | 8 |
| Aim 4 - Improve sustainability and security in urban, rural and marine food production | 9 |
| • Edible Brighton and Hove | 10 |
| Aim 5 - Encourage a vibrant and sustainable food economy | 12 |
| Aim 6 - Transform catering and procurement | 13 |
| • The climate and nature friendly plate | 14 |
| Aim 7 - Become a food use, not a food waste, city | 15 |
| Aim 8 - Ensure healthy, sustainable, fair food is embedded in policy and planning, and has a high profile right across the city | 16 |



Priority Actions

The 6 priority actions of the city's food strategy are based on the data/evidence and what people have told us. But they are also actions that can have the most impact - by reducing food inequality, improving people's consumption of healthy, affordable food, boosting our local food economy, improving our city's environmental footprint and reducing food waste.



Aim 1 - Champion Healthy, Sustainable Food

Breastfeeding

Latest breastfeeding data (2023-2024) shows 75.4% of babies (partially) breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks. This is more than 20% above national average of 52.7%.

Restricting advertising of HFSS foods

As of October 2025, BHCC's new contract with Bower Media will cease to promote foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) on any advertising infrastructure owned by the council (bus stops, lamp posts and seafront hoardings). The new contract will be enforced by the relevant responsible directors. Research conducted by BHFP's community researchers into public attitudes on advertising the Healthy Start scheme on bus stops in Brighton and Hove can be found [here](#).

Whole School Food Approach

Work started this year with the establishment of a multi-agency working group and the development of a WSFA vision to engage school leaders. This was presented to the city's school governors network for input. The group are developing a survey for schools to baseline current progress and to help define priorities the schools wish to take forward.

Following the launch of the food strategy, we secured funding from [Littletums](#) children's caterer for 5 school edible gardens and have launched a [city-wide campaign](#) to set up more.

School farm visits continue, prioritising schools in the most disadvantaged areas. Ten schools have taken part, with students learning firsthand the farm to fork journey of many everyday foods and connect in a meaningful way to the local landscape.

TastEd sessions have run in 15 nurseries and are now being rolled out to primary schools with 8 schools completing training and 6 more lined up for November. TastEd provides lively and fun introductions to healthy fruit and vegetables and toothbrushing which builds good habits and is free for families. Schools are being offered £100 to buy food for these sessions.

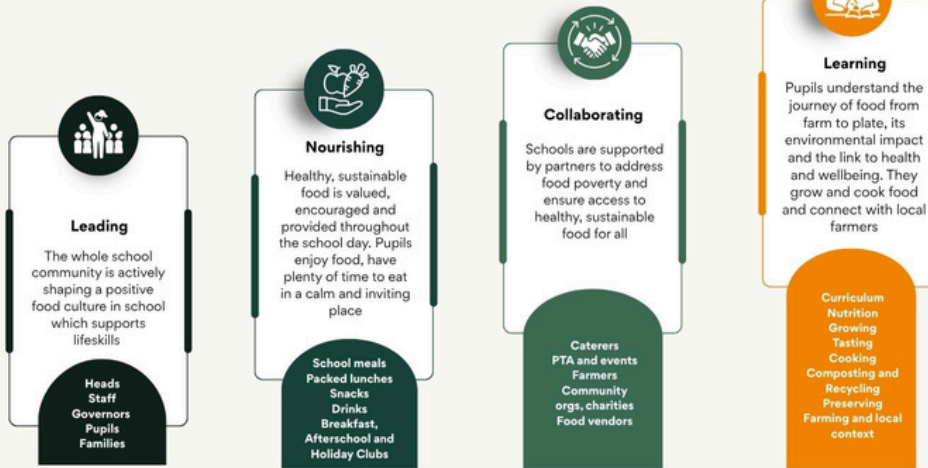
Seven schools have trained School Food Ambassadors to get students more involved in shaping school food with 3 more interested. Eleven schools took part in the Healthy Choice Breakfast Club with more launching in the coming weeks. Three school will take part in Veg Power's Boosting Beans campaign.

The Food Strategy Expert Panel are invited to suggest what healthy food campaigns could be promoted for free / low-cost on advertising voidage (when advertising slots are not booked). For example, ReLondon ran a [campaign](#) to promote Olio, the food sharing app.

WHOLE SCHOOL FOOD APPROACH

Whole School Food Approach

The whole school community fosters a culture of healthy, sustainable food for all. Empowering pupils to grow, cook and care for themselves and their world



A third of children leaving primary school are overweight, rising to half in some schools in less affluent neighbourhoods. Too many children go to school hungry, while parents told us their children are bombarded with junk food adverts. Our vision is for the whole school community - headteachers, governors, staff, parents and carers - “to foster a culture of healthy, sustainable food for all. Empowering pupils to grow, cook and care for themselves and their world.”

10 schools

Took part in Farm School, connecting children to local farms and farmers

5 edible school gardens funded

27 schools said they want school gardens but don't have the resources. So we launched a campaign to get the city working together to help set up more.

15 nurseries and 8 primary schools

Completed training in TastEd providing lively and fun introductions to healthy fruit and vegetables

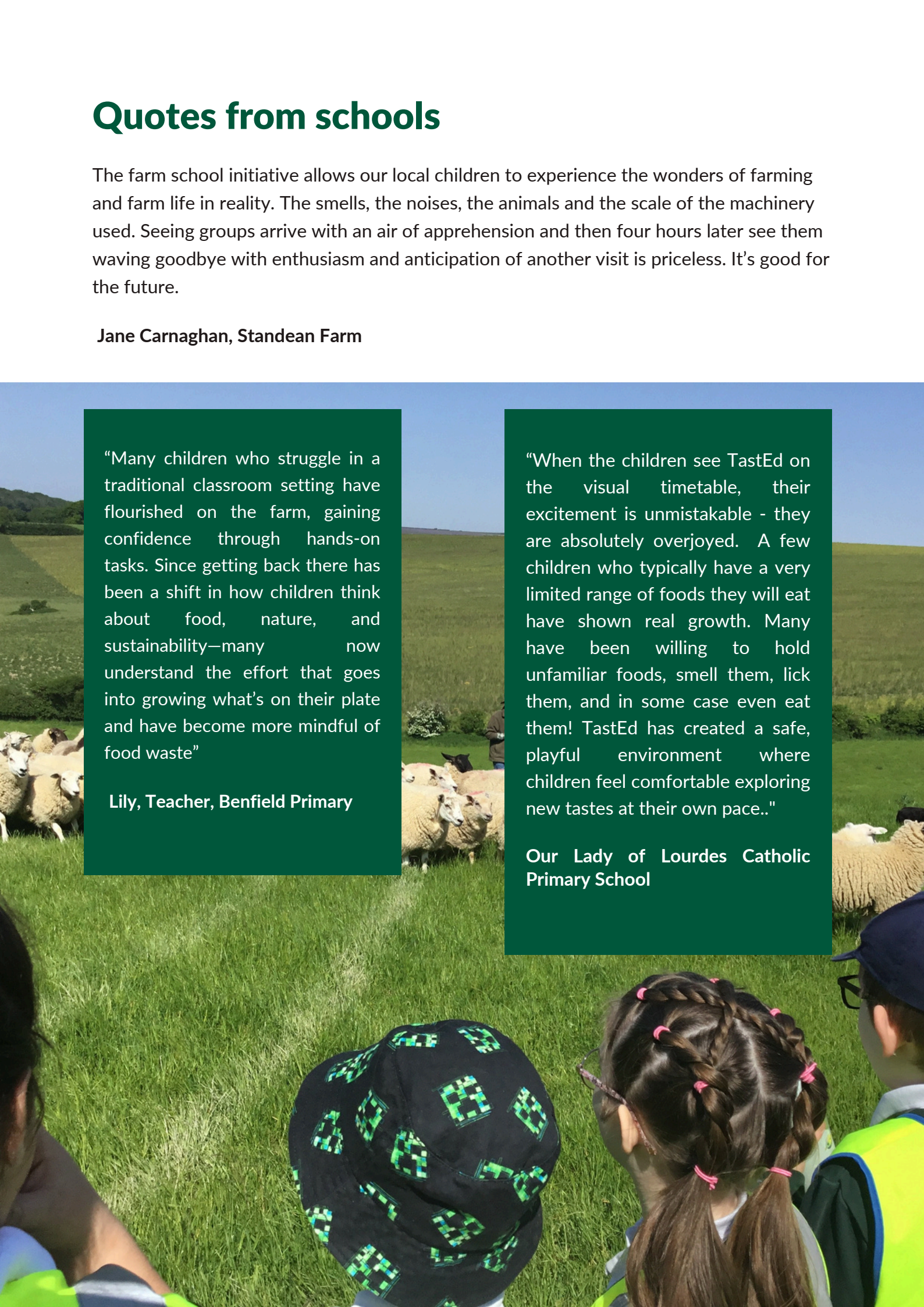
7 schools

Trained food ambassadors to get students involved in shaping school food

Quotes from schools

The farm school initiative allows our local children to experience the wonders of farming and farm life in reality. The smells, the noises, the animals and the scale of the machinery used. Seeing groups arrive with an air of apprehension and then four hours later see them waving goodbye with enthusiasm and anticipation of another visit is priceless. It's good for the future.

Jane Carnaghan, Standean Farm

The background image shows a lush green farm landscape under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, the backs of several children are visible as they look towards a group of sheep. One child is wearing a black bucket hat with a green and white checkered pattern. Another child has their hair in two braids with pink hair ties. A third child is wearing a bright yellow high-visibility vest. In the middle ground, a group of sheep is gathered, and a person in a dark jacket is partially visible among them. The overall scene is bright and sunny, capturing a moment of a farm school visit.

“Many children who struggle in a traditional classroom setting have flourished on the farm, gaining confidence through hands-on tasks. Since getting back there has been a shift in how children think about food, nature, and sustainability—many now understand the effort that goes into growing what’s on their plate and have become more mindful of food waste”

Lily, Teacher, Benfield Primary

“When the children see TastEd on the visual timetable, their excitement is unmistakable - they are absolutely overjoyed. A few children who typically have a very limited range of foods they will eat have shown real growth. Many have been willing to hold unfamiliar foods, smell them, lick them, and in some cases even eat them! TastEd has created a safe, playful environment where children feel comfortable exploring new tastes at their own pace..”

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School



Aim 2 – Take a preventative upstream approach to food poverty and ensure equal access to healthy food

BHCC has worked hard to increase take up of Free School Meals from 56% – 58% and in June, the Government announced the expansion of FSM to all families on universal credit starting in the 2026 school year.

Public health has given budgets to a number of schools to help them address food poverty and are using LIFT data to target residents eligible for Healthy Start.

BHFP published the Beyond Food Banks consultation report and action plan and we are seeing more collaboration between food banks, with 2 transitioning to affordable food schemes and one food bank closing due to a more preventative approach. Others are implementing cafes, drop in advice and other wrap around services.

BHFP has been working with partners to develop a citywide food buying / storage hub and to streamline referrals (in partnership with CAB and Trussell Trust). We are developing more wrap-around support and pathways out of poverty through the Advice partnership.

The latest emergency food network survey has shown a slight decrease in food bank use.

We are working with academics and activists to get nation-wide support for a campaign to end food banks and have formed a group of food partnerships who are working to be food bank free cities.





Aim 3 - Nourish a vibrant, diverse and skilled community food sector

Be the city that cooks and eats together

BHFP's Community Kitchen continues to provide community cookery classes where everyone can cook, learn new skills and enjoy food together. There are 36 hot meal projects across the city from the Real Junk Food Project's cafes to seniors lunch clubs, offering people the opportunity to eat low cost healthy meals while reducing social isolation.

For example, in Hollingdean, the Trussell Trust food bank has closed, transitioning into the St Richard's Community Support Cafe. The cafe offers holistic support, connection, and care, as well as a small emergency food provision for those in urgent need

Sussex Surplus are piloting communal dining events - [Together at the Table](#) - inspired by projects like The Long Table in Stroud and Absalon in Copenhagen.

Aim 4 - Improve sustainability and security in urban, rural and marine food production

Develop Edible Brighton and Hove

A multi-agency working group has been set up to drive this work forward. BHCC passed a Right To Grow motion and the city is part of an EU Horizon bid, which if successful will fund a council officer to administer the RTG process. The Allotment Improvement plan is in place and work continues to let plots, establish starter / micro beds, composting hubs and to have a community-run plot on every allotment site. Lower Roedale site ran an open day with opportunities to visit plots and learn skills such as flowers for pollinators, preserving food and planting dead hedges.

The University of Sussex created the [Sussex Forest Food Garden](#) on the Falmer campus. Perennial edible planting landscapes have been established in Hollingdean, Preston Park and Saunders Park and new edible gardens have been established in Whitehawk and Stanmer Park. Open gardens / harvest events are being planned to inspire more people to grow food, feeding into Seedy Sunday. BHFP ran a sustainable income generation webinar for existing community projects.

Work continues to agree a Beacon Farm, with Stanmer Park being the most promising site. This ambition has been written into the new farm plan, ready for when the current tenancy comes up for renewal.

The [Mile Oak Road housing development](#) offers a unique opportunity to pilot an "edible neighbourhood". As part of the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme, it will integrate green community spaces to promote sustainable urban food growing systems and community wellbeing. Officers have been working collaboratively with teams across the council and external partners to shape the plan, drawing on previous experience and lessons learnt. The project is currently at design stage, assessing technical and financial considerations, and its approach is expected to inform at least two further projects in the pipeline.



Implement a landscape scale model for climate and nature friendly agriculture

Two plots of land in Ovingdean and Woodingdean have been identified as suitable for market gardens for new entrant growers. BHFP is now working with the tenant farmers and BHCC on a land-sharing process

Plans are in development for farmer-led training on reducing chemical inputs and helping them promote their businesses through social media

Develop the infrastructure, supply chains etc. to support a local, regenerative food system.

Sussex Grazed, conservation-grazed meat box scheme is expanding, winning awards and is demonstrating how to connect people with local farmers and produce.

Work to protect or replace the county's only small abattoir is building momentum, although abattoir and cattle market remain at risk.

The Sussex Twinning project, delivered in collaboration with Wealden Food Partnership and Good Food East Sussex, reinforced the idea that "traditional" public procurement routes can be difficult to influence. It highlighted alternative routes such as breakfast clubs and student unions as a promising option for introducing organisations to local procurement. Littleturns childrens caterer is now buying sustainably managed venison from Chefs Farms.

BHFP has been exploring how to bring more locally caught fish into the local supply chain in collaboration with the Plymouth fish finger project.



AIM 5 – ENCOURAGE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD ECONOMY

Encourage and incentivise food businesses to improve sustainability

More than 50 restaurants and hospitality businesses have used Restaurants Brighton's Sustainability Toolkit to evaluate where they are on their sustainability journey. The toolkit includes inspiring case studies on saving energy, water, reducing waste, retaining staff and buying local. RB are exploring how to embed this work more widely, for example into the city's circular economy work.



Provide relevant skills and support for local SME food businesses

The Business and IP Centre (BIPC) based at Jubilee Library has been running business support workshops and 1:1 sessions for catering and hospitality businesses for the past year covering understanding your customers, menu development, sales, margins and profitability.

BHFP is working on a round table event on food sector skills for 2026. This will be done in partnership with Brighton Chamber, the University of Sussex, Brighton MET, Plumpton College, Brighton's Good Food Procurement Group (GFPG) and a Circular Food Forum (to be established). The Roundtable could link in with Plumpton College's new 'Food for Thought' Series.



AIM 6 - TRANSFORM CATERING AND PROCUREMENT

All caterers to...

...provide at least one dish on the daily menu which is healthy, low cost and environmentally sustainable and branded in such a way as to be recognisable across the city

BHFP developed a draft checklist for caterers and hospitality businesses (see next page) to nudge them to put climate and nature friendly dishes on the menu. This is being reviewed by restaurants and caterers before branding and wider communications.

To add more fibre, primary school meals have introduced a new wholegrain bagel, use mostly whole wheat pasta. Caterlink has introduced fruit pizza, bread making, and invited reception parents to lunch in 5 schools which is a good opportunity for parents to see what their children eat.

...reduce consumption of meat by 30% and ensure all meat served conforms to UK animal welfare standards

Primary school meals have increased meat free days and reduced the meat in their Bolognese by 10%, replacing this with lentils to see how well it is received. Three schools have signed up to Veg Power's boosting beans campaign.

...take action to reduce-redirect-recycle food waste and packaging and measure progress annually

The primary school meals contract introduced KS1 and KS2 portion sizes and a development chef to improve meals and reduce food waste.



THE CLIMATE AND NATURE FRIENDLY PLATE



Make plants the star of the plate



Use local, seasonal, fresh ingredients



Use less and better animal protein



Protect biodiversity & ecosystems



Minimise food waste



Use resources efficiently



Employ ethical business practices



Be transparent & engage customers

[Eat-Lancet Commission's 2.0 report](#), released in October 2025, stated that The Planetary Health Diet could prevent 15 million people dying prematurely each year, reduce emissions by over a third and lower the amount people spend on food. It recommends a diet rich in fruit, veg, nuts, legumes and wholegrains with modest meat, fish, dairy and poultry.

AIM 7 – BECOME A FOOD USE NOT A FOOD WASTE CITY



Expand food waste collection and recycling service to all schools in the city.

The council has developed a food waste collection service via Veolia for schools and businesses and are working across environment and education staff to promote this to schools.

Through the Food Use Places project, BHFP have developed an offer for schools that want to compost their food waste. We are currently gaging interest and working with a handful of schools.



Implement a domestic food waste collection and recycling service in the city.

Food waste collections have started in the North and East of the city and will be rolled out to the rest of the city by March 2026.

Collaborate with citizens, community groups and schools to reduce food & packaging waste.

In Summer 2025, the Food Use Places project celebrated its first year of a four-year lottery climate action-funded project. Through 16 partner organisations, the project is engaging local people who do not typically engage with the climate change agenda.

- 3451 individuals reached through initiatives such as local composting, serving surplus meals, food waste audits, and bins with clear signage
- Ten schools and 562 children engaged with the Eat Smart School programme, on average reducing food waste by 30% in schools
- More than 400 volunteers participated, the equivalent of >12,500 hrs paid staff time
- Our collective action diverted 1,230 tonnes of food from the waste stream into meals and high quality compost for growing food.



There are 57 Community Composting schemes serving 1400 households. Last year we composted 175 tonnes of food waste, and are projected to compost 200 tonnes this year (equivalent to 20 bin lorries of food that would have been incinerated).

AIM 8 – ENSURE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, FAIR FOOD IS EMBEDDED IN POLICY AND PLANNING, AND HAS A HIGH PROFILE RIGHT ACROSS THE CITY.

Deliver a Regional Food Plan in collaboration with neighbouring authorities

Greater Brighton Food Plan Task & Finish Group continues to support this work until a Sussex Food Board is established. The Alliance for Sussex Food Partnerships are developing a Sussex-wide food plan in preparation for Sussex devolution.

Maintain the city’s whole food systems approach

BHFP will work with the Sustainable Food Places team on the next steps for Gold Food Cities and how to maintain Gold status. Income secured for food partnership from various grants.

Food is embedded in Climate Action and Circular Economy Plans and work to be followed up with Net Zero Lead on green finance and investment opportunities.

