



Dear Planning Team at BHCC

Food Partnership response to City Plan.

The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership is a not for profit membership organisation that is working for a healthy, sustainable, fair food system for the city. We currently have more than 1000 individual members, as well as partners including local businesses, statutory agencies and more than 100 community food projects that are committed to working with us to achieve this vision.

The Food Partnership welcomes much of this City Plan and recognises that it takes measures to support local and sustainable food in the planning system. This is a really positive step that will enable the city to continue to lead the way in the UK in the approach that we are taking to achieving a better food system for the future as set out in Spade to Spoon: Digging Deeper 2012. Whilst we think the plan is strong on supporting food growing at home and in communities we feel that more emphasis could be placed on the wider infrastructure support needed for an integrated food systems planning approach.

P17 2.3

One of the key challenges that the city and therefore its plan needs to address is how the city will feed itself. The current food system is insecure and unsustainable contributing to chronic disease, creating huge amounts of waste, impacting on transport and depleting biodiversity. With 26% of the ecological footprint of the city relating to food (Best Food Forward A One Planet Framework for Brighton & Hove 2011), increased volatility in the global food supply chain and a growing population taking an integrated 'food system' approach to planning will be essential if one planet ambitions are to be achieved.

The way we produce, consume and dispose of food causes, but is also impacted by, climate change. Food security is a concern at global and local levels. 'Foodprinting' (ecological footprinting of the city's food system) shows on current consumption patterns we need approx 70,000 hectares of productive agricultural land (ie 1/3 of west Sussex), 3/4 million barrels of oil, almost 625 million tonnes of fresh water & this system generates an estimated ½ million tonnes of GHGs each year

In the key bullet points that describe a sustainable city there is reference to the key systems of transport, energy and carbon reduction. We would ask that food is included as a bullet point in section 2.3 outlining a sustainable city to demonstrate the priority Brighton & Hove is giving to a food systems planning approach as reflected in the recently agreed food strategy.

Theories of food system¹ planning suggest that small cities with a rural hinterland (in our case including the sea) are ideally placed to develop innovative solutions to the problems created by our globalised food system in a future that faces climate change, an increasing burden on the health system due to diet related ill health, global uncertainties in food supply and rising costs of oil.

Areas of the food systems approach that may have implications for the City Plan include:

¹ All the activities and infrastructure involved in feeding a population: growing, harvesting, processing, packing, transporting, marketing, consuming and disposing of food and food related items. It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each of these stages as well as waste management activities

Food waste systems:

Closing the loop – treating food waste as a resource for energy and food production
 Reducing waste throughout the food system including in homes, businesses and during production.

Ecological service systems

Food production methods that conserve ground water quality
 Good management of soil
 Biodiversity – food production in ways that protects biodiversity and managing biodiversity within food species

Farming / production

Innovation in food production – aquaponics, vertical cultivation, mushrooms cultivated on waste materials, vermiculture and Anerobic Digestion – testing and encouraging innovation and technology whilst reducing reliance on chemical inputs

Transport

Food transport accounts of about 12% of the UKs total GHG emissions and for 25% of the distance travelled by lorries. Consumers drive a further 12 billion miles each year to buy food. Transport systems and planning will need to be integrated into a food system to minimise the CO2 impact of getting food from plot to plate.

Local food processing infrastructure

Shortening supply chains – with increasing oil prices and volatility in the global supply chain for food cities will need to build resilience in their food supply chains
 Set up a local food distribution centre
 Establish facilities from which major catering contracts (NHS, Schools, Community meals) can be processed and delivered
 Invest in micro processing to add value to local produce

Deliver a strong local economy

Cafes, restaurants and hotels significant employer for the city and are a key component of the tourism spend - work with local food businesses to achieve high standards of sustainability, generate employment and become an internationally recognized destination for sustainable food. Working with education providers, local farms, community cafes and businesses to provide learning, volunteering, work experience, careers advice and apprenticeships to give people skills to work in a sustainable food system/ support to set up social enterprises.

City assets

Our city is bounded by the sea and South Downs National Park, amazing natural resources which this work will reconnect city dwellers to. A coastal community, our marine eco-system is a high priority & sustainable fish will be a key component of our sustainable food system.

I recognise that this is not clear cut but food systems planning is an emerging area which we would like Brighton & Hove to be at the forefront of. We are already being cited by academics as a leader in how we are using our city's policy and planning systems. If any of the above principles can be captured in the City Plan that would allow us to develop this work up to 2030.

We also have a couple of specific points on the text:

P18 A reduction in car use of 10-20%

Food shopping generates a vast number of trips: shopping (for both food and non-food items) is said to be the most frequent reason to travel in the UK with each household making approx 200 shopping trips per year. As a

result car based trips account for nearly half of all vehicle kilometres related to the transport of food. Yet this issues is frequently ignored in planning (From A to B a snapshot of the UK food distribution system, Food Ethics Council 2009). We would like to see greater reference to this issue in the transport sections of the plan

P21 In talking about a 'healthy city' consideration should be made to mental wellbeing and preventing ill health

P41 (and various other places)

You say the development should aim to be zero carbon and through creative landscaping solutions (including features such as green walls) should contribute to Biodiversity Action Plan Objectives, green infrastructure and wider landscaping enhancements.

We would like to see specific mention of food growing opportunities (as outlined in the Planning Advice Note on Food Growing) adding to this sentence which appears in multiple places in the document eg zero carbon and through creative landscaping solutions (including features such as green walls) should contribute to Biodiversity Action Plan Objectives, green infrastructure, integrate food growing options and wider landscaping enhancements.

We welcome the support given throughout the document to space for food growing at home and in communities building on the success for the Planning Advisory Note on Food Growing. We would like to see an extension of this Advisory Note to include retrofits and encouraging innovative use of roof spaces, glasshouses, vertical growing, aquaponics, hydroponics and vermiculture (learning from pioneering work in New York and other North American cities).

P67 DA7

Welcome the specific mention of space for food growing in the site.

We support the explicit mention of the role of sustainable food production on the urban fringe (p94) and recommend that in order to achieve this a mapping exercise of land suitable for food production balanced against other ecosystems and leisure needs to undertaken. We also welcome the recognition that planning should allow for farm diversification as this will be a key component of any re-localising / reducing the environment footprint of food production on the urban fringe and farmed downland.

We would however urge that the Downland Initiative is revisited and refreshed in order to develop a vision and action plan for the sustainable future of the farmland owned by the council to fit in with UNESCO Biosphere Reserve principles.

Stanmer Park and Farm

(p98) As the document mentions this is a major resource for the city. The park is home to the only certified organic land in the city and its role as a home for growing projects should not be overlooked. The site has the potential to be a location for small scale food processing and education (for example juicing of fruit from Stanmer orchards) as part of a vision of a self sustaining estate. We would like to see reference to the suitability of the Park for sustainable and appropriate enterprise with reference to local food production and woodland management and protection of its role in organic food production.

P103 – there are now 20 community composting sites across the city. Community composting should be encouraged everywhere not just those wards mentioned. You may want to add a statement that community composting should be run in accordance with the Environment Agency legislation in this area.

P133 We would like to see the provision of space / facilities for food growing (eg orchards, allotments, community gardens and composting) included in the infrastructure supported by CIL. The introduction in 2011 of the Planning Advice Note on Food Growing demonstrates how developers can address provision of space for food growing on or off site. Where development is taking place in high density areas the provision of space for food growing off site this could be a very important use of CIL.

P176

CP18 – could you please add a specific mention of orchards and community food spaces in point 5.

P177

4.183 We are very interested in the concept of a 'Care Farm' but are not aware of this initiative – please let me know who is leading on this work.

Allotments

(p167) With high demand for allotment (2000 plus residents on waiting lists) the need to identify new sites for allotments should be included in addition to safeguarding current provision. As many people in the city live in homes without access to outside space this demand is likely to increase. This also, in part, explains why despite our number of plots per head being in line with national guidance we still have so many people on the waiting list. The health and social benefits of allotment gardening, the costs benefits of growing your own food and the environmental impact of extremely low food miles means that allotment gardening cuts across many of the key city wide policy themes. As such an essential component of the city's ambition to grow more of its own food as expressed in the Food Strategy we believe that intentions towards allotment provision should have a specific mention within the plan

Thank you for taking time to read this response and do get in touch if you have any questions.

Best wishes

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