



# IMPACT REPORT 2025

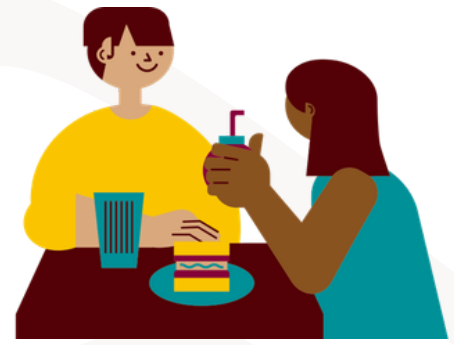


BRIGHTON & HOVE  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERSHIP

# OUR 2025 IN NUMBERS

We believe that food is better shared and the best ideas come when you connect over food. Across our work this year we met

**6,890** people face-to-face.



**67%** of participants at multi-week cookery and outdoor wellbeing being groups report 'feeling happier' since participating.



50 food projects make up the Emergency Food Network. Collectively, they support people in food poverty each week.

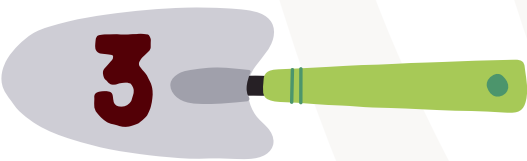


29 community garden groups were supported with training, action learning and mentoring.



3,270 people cooked with us at the Community Kitchen.

Classes covered **80** topics including low-energy cooking, baking, and flavours from across the world.



3 regular gardening groups at Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens, Saunders Park, and Preston Park Demo Garden.

We took over organising Seedy Sunday - a well-loved event attended by

**2,500** people.



12,170 volunteers supported our events and projects, contributing

**12,170** volunteer hours!

# OUR 2025 IN NUMBERS



4 new community compost sites were opened, bringing the total to **58** schemes with **1,400** households making nutrient-rich compost for use in local growing.



5 new 'hot' compost tumblers were installed in community venues/ growing projects, totalling **16** tumbler locations.



9 community 'plots' (from forest schools to allotments) are based in Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens.



720 people helped shape our work through focus groups and surveys.

1 new 5-year citywide food strategy was launched.



**BRIGHTON & HOVE FOOD PARTNERSHIP**

1 new logo / rebrand. Thank you We Are Tilt for your beautiful work!

In one year, we

## DOUBLED

the number of people visiting the Clubhouse for events ranging from farming conferences and away days to yoga retreats and memorials. This year **2,500** people attended **137** events.



**254** meat box orders were placed through our Sussex Grazed scheme, supporting **4** local farms and **3** deer managers. This totals over **£13,000** given to local businesses.



A reach of

## 30,000

people across our social media platforms and newsletters.





**Brighton & Hove Food Partnership - Using the power of food to improve health and wellbeing, act on the nature and climate emergency, address inequalities and create lasting community connections.**

For over two decades, we've **helped people to enjoy cooking, grow food, eat healthier diets and waste less food.** We prioritise working with people experiencing marginalisation, isolation, poor health and other life challenges.

**We are a hub for information, inspiration and connection.** We support grassroots community food projects including gardens, shared meals, food banks, shops, surplus food redistributors and composters. We work with independent food retailers, farmers and large-scale caterers.

**Our community-based interventions underpin our broader mission:** addressing systemic food issues and advocating for a healthy, sustainable, and fair food system as set out in the city's food strategy and action plan. We understand that transforming a system involves working across a range of sectors and scales, and all our work intertwines and has overlaps and connections at its heart.

We use participative methods to shape projects, services, and policy work, ensuring diverse voices are included. We act on feedback and offer service users opportunities to volunteer, co-deliver, and collaborate. We recognise time is precious and offer thank you vouchers for participation.

**Our values under-pin all our work:**

- We welcome diversity and are non-judgemental respecting different viewpoints and experiences.
- We are professional, hard-working with a can-do attitude.
- We believe:
  - food has the power to bring about change.
  - that everyone should have access to healthy affordable food.
  - food is better shared and work better delivered in partnership.
  - in lunch breaks!

# CHANGING LIVES THROUGH FOOD AND CONNECTION

We believe that people shouldn't have to struggle with food insecurity, isolation or poor mental health because systems have failed them. We believe people of all ages should be given hands-on opportunities to learn more about food. That's why we create spaces where people can cook, grow, discover and connect.

Some of our most inspiring work happens in the Community Kitchen and our gardens, where someone who's been struggling finds their confidence again. We don't just teach people how to cook, eat healthier diets and grow food. We give them a space to belong, connect, and believe in themselves. Time and again, we see this power ripple outward as many of our participants go on to volunteer for us or other local food projects.

Sharing a new-found confidence:

“ I started coming to community classes because mentally I needed it. Getting back into the kitchen to cook helped me meet people and regain my confidence. To go from that to now running my own cookery sessions is amazing. ”

- Sam, Community Kitchen participant and now volunteer



# COMMUNITY WORK HIGHLIGHTS

## Growing New Roots

Nature-based wellbeing course that supports people with mental health challenges to improve wellbeing through outdoor activities.

- **42 people** attended our 8-week programme.
- On completion, all of them said **they plan to spend more time outdoors**.
- **87%** of people improved their Wellbeing Score (using Short Warwick Edinburgh Scale).

Finding purpose and belonging:

“ Regularly attending these outdoor wellbeing sessions has had a significant impact on my mental wellbeing. They’ve helped me reduce my anxiety and increase confidence around social interactions. It has given me a sense of purpose and belonging. ”

- Holly, Growing New Roots participant

## Time for Tea

Thriving in a safe space:

“ I can't cook much at home anymore – I burnt myself recently and I'm worried it might happen again. Being able to have the space to cook safely is wonderful. I love to cook – and it's allowing me to meet some new people ”

- Katie, Time for Tea participant

The Community Kitchen's joyful cook and eat group for people living with dementia.

- When funding from the NHS ended, we sought support from individuals and local businesses. Thanks to their generosity we held **26 Time for Tea sessions**.
- Participants report Time for Tea enabled them to make new friends and find support from others going through similar issues.
- **Dementia allyship**. By sharing their positive experiences of the group with their own networks our volunteers help challenge the fear and stereotypes that surround dementia.



## Our Community Gardens

At Saunders Park, Preston Park and Stanmer Park we offer opportunities for people to get involved in food growing, to connect to others and protect biodiversity.

- We planted **115 pollinator-friendly edible plants** and trained **15 people** in food forest management.
- We created a new food growing space (Wild View) and **hosted 122 events** at Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens.
- **351 primary school pupils** from **6 schools** attended curriculum-linked outdoor learning sessions at Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens.

“ The children really benefitted from having hands on opportunities to explore the topics we had looked at in Science. Many children talked about the trip to Stanmer Park as the best part of the year. Thank you Fonthill Foundation ”

- Talia Wiseman, Teacher at Bevendean Primary School

## SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY COOKERY CLASSES AT THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN

At Community Kitchen sessions participants get involved in preparing a healthy meal. We share tasty recipes and tips for keeping healthy and happy when time is short and money tight. We offer discounted hire for small community organisations to use our space for their own events.

**150 people** attended community cookery classes, **210 children** from **7 local primary schools** learnt to cook with us, **78 low income families** came to **11 Holiday Activity Fund sessions** and **26 community groups** used the space.

**2/3rds of community participants** report they are cooking more from scratch 3-6 months after attending a course.



# WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

We champion and support the work of local food projects. We facilitate collaboration because complex social and environmental challenges cannot be solved by single organisations acting alone. By partnering with these community rooted groups we reach more people.

The networks we run build trust, support learning and innovation and help prevent duplication. We provide groups with training, mentoring and investment.

We act as the lead partner for funding passing grants to smaller organisations.

In the 2024/25 financial year, we distributed **£200,543** to partner organisations.

## The Emergency Food Network

The Emergency Food Network (EFN) brings together **over 50 food projects across 60+ locations**. These food banks, affordable shops and meal providers support people facing food poverty. We facilitate peer learning, link groups to related services (such as advice) and support them on themes like referrals, fundraising and inclusive service delivery. Collectively we campaign to end food poverty.

“ I just want to thank you for the support you give - especially to smaller projects ”

- Brighton Light Trust  
EFN member

## Community Composting

Run in partnership with Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC), this scheme enables people without gardens to turn their fruit and veg scraps into nutrient-rich compost for local growing spaces. **136 volunteers ran 58 schemes enabling 1,400 households to divert 200 tonnes of food waste from incineration.**

“ I love being part of an approach that reduces carbon emissions, creates local connections and makes climate-positive action visible. ”

- Compost Monitor

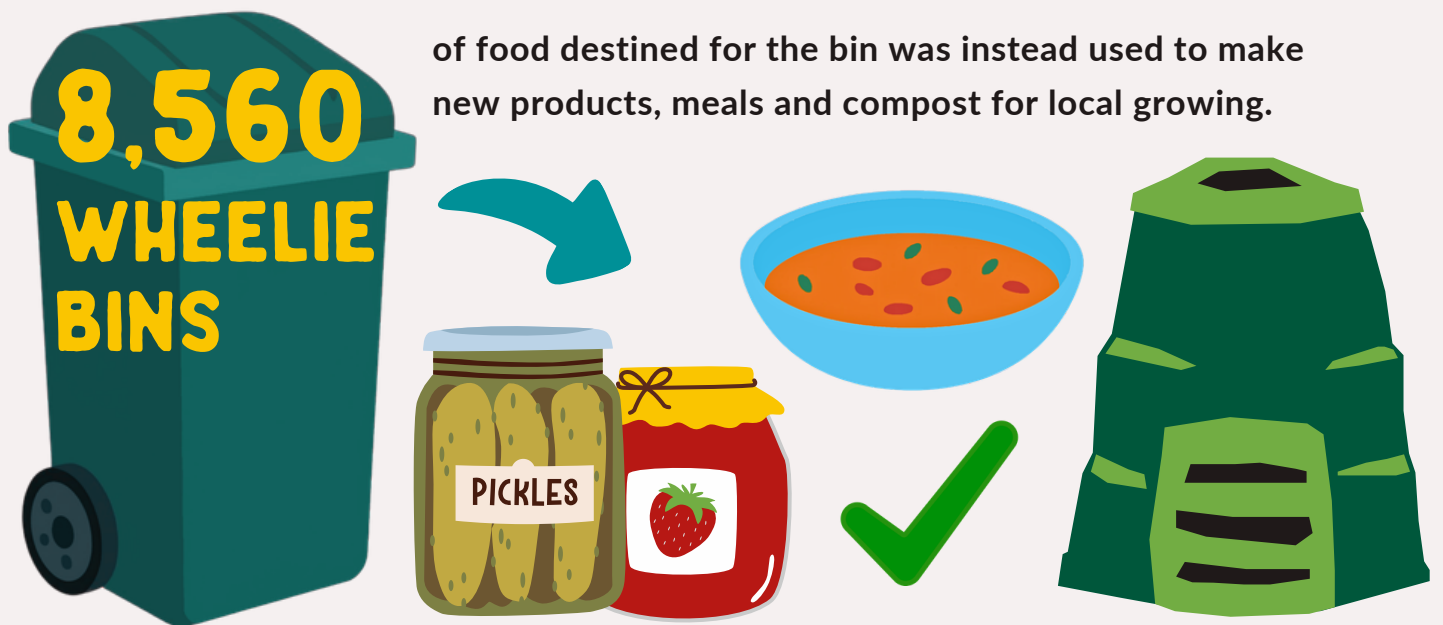
# FOOD USE PLACES – THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Funded by the National Lottery Climate Action Fund, Food Use Places is a partnership led by Brighton & Hove Food Partnership. We are flipping the way we think about food waste. Instead of treating it as a problem, we focus on better ways to use food and what we can do to make a difference.

We use circular economy thinking to create new products with social and environmental value, such as surplus food cafés that bring people together to combat loneliness, and the creation of nutrient-rich compost from community-run tumblers to support biodiversity and local food growing.

Trusted local community venues are the heart of this work proving that when you meet people where they already go you can engage more people in climate action.

Food Use Places demonstrates how when **16 organisations work together across Brighton and Sussex**, small actions add up to significant impact. Collective action means that:



# FOOD USE PLACES – THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Food Use Places worked with **10 schools** and **526 children** to inspire the next generation of waste warriors through cookery lessons at the Community Kitchen and Eat Smart schools run by The Real Junk Food Project. This in school programme of work engages pupils to take part in hands-on food waste audits, classroom workshops and assemblies. Pupils are trained as Food Waste Warriors working with their peers to reduce waste at lunchtimes.

**800 volunteers** are the heart of the partnership.

Reasons given for volunteering:

- 80%+ to support others / give back
- 70% to reduce food waste
- 65% to feel part of a community
- 55% to help the environment

(Total responses 248)



“ You think you are doing it to help others, then you realise how much it benefits you too ”

“ This isn't just about food waste. It is about showing that local partnerships can tackle global problems. To help others replicate we share what we learn locally and nationally ”

- Meli Stanley, FUP Project Manager



# HOW OUR POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS ARE CHANGING BRIGHTON AND HOVE'S FOOD SYSTEM

Food poverty, diet-related ill health and unsustainable food systems need long-term policies that drive action and lasting change. That's why we work at a strategic level, bringing the local authority, businesses, schools and communities together to tackle root causes – through evidence-based solutions. First published in 2006, we use a [cross-sector food strategy and action plan approach](#) to articulate our vision, priorities and partnership working.

Policy work can feel slow. Changing the behaviour of large organisations takes time. **But this is how we address problems, not just relieve symptoms.** None of this happens by accident – it happens because we look at the big picture, bring people together, listen to those who know the problems best. We push for change that lasts not just the quick wins. That is systems change.



I'm delighted that, by working with the Food Partnership the city now has an updated plan that identifies priorities and sets out clear actions to move towards our vision of a healthier future where everyone has the opportunity to access affordable, healthy food from sustainable sources and which treats those who produce it fairly.



- Councillor Mitchie Alexander,  
Cabinet advisor for Community  
Engagement, Food Insecurity and  
Allotments, Brighton and Hove  
City Council

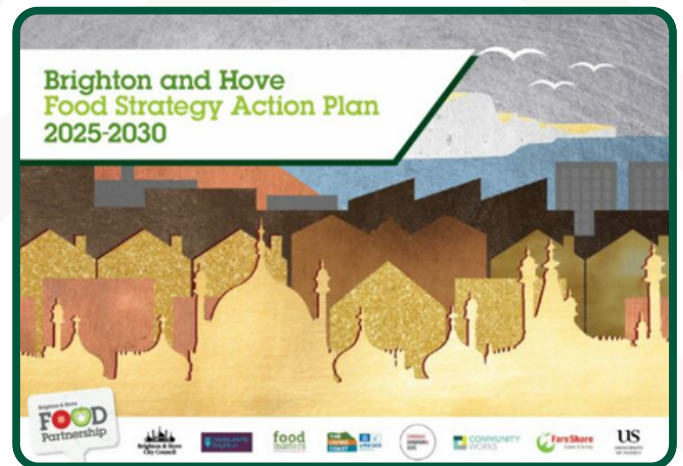


# POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS HIGHLIGHTS

## Food Strategy Action Plan

Updated after a year-long dialogue with 250 local people and organisations, we've set out a plan for the next 5 years of food system change.

- **Evidence-based, identifies priority actions** including how we'll end the need for food banks, grow more food and harness the power of public sector procurement.
- **Shaped by a range of local voices** including secondary school students, public health experts, farmers and food bank users.
- **By providing leadership and co-ordinating and connecting** different food systems actors BHFP builds momentum and actions have greater impact and reach.



## Edible Brighton and Hove

“ The volunteers absolutely loved the training day, they came back absolutely buzzing with new knowledge and skills and they really liked meeting the volunteers from the other gardens, they felt connected to something bigger than just our project ”

- Rosie, Saunders Park Edible Garden lead

We aim to increase food grown in the city, secure land and develop skills and confidence for communities to grow their own.

- Brighton and Hove City Council passed 'Right to Grow' motion committing to supporting food growing on their land.
- Cultivate Project. We worked with **9 food growing spaces**, organised **24 events**, trained **138 volunteers** and supported **3,320 people** to get involved.
- Supported BHCC to pilot integrating an 'edible neighbourhood' as part of a new housing development (Mile Oak Road) and worked with **2 local farmers** to develop plans for market gardens.



## Connecting local farms to local plates

Work to shorten food supply chains and get more sustainable, seasonal, local produce into businesses and schools.

- **200 households** buying conservation-grazed Sussex meat through Sussex Grazed.
- Sustainable local venison served in nursery meals by Chefs Farms.
- Expanded local food supply in partnership with Restaurants Brighton, University of Sussex, and Plumpton and Brighton MET colleges.

“ Working with Sussex Grazed has helped me immensely; it boosted my confidence and clarified my direction was worthwhile. Working with them helped me connect with customers and showed me new ways to sell. ”

- Ben Mark, The Deer Project\*

## SPOTLIGHT: PARTNERSHIP WORK TO INTRODUCE A WHOLE SCHOOL FOOD APPROACH

Aim: To improve school food education, culture and increase access to healthy and sustainable food.

- Multi-agency group established to oversee this programme, co-ordinating measures by partners to reduce food waste, introduce school food ambassadors and create edible gardens.
- The TastEd programme delivered in schools encouraged children to try more veg (Public Health Brighton).
- **3,423 children** and **9 farms** were involved in the Changing Chalk Farm School project between 2022-2026 (BHCC Property Team).

“ I’m grateful our school sustainability work aligns with BHFPs whole-city approach. Their expertise supports schools with gardening networks, local funding, composting and a whole-school approach to food. Together, governors, teachers and pupils feel part of city-wide change. ”

- Katie Eberstein, Our City Our World Programme Manager, BHCC

\*Direct sales of venison from deer management undertaken for biodiversity conservation.

Across our social media platforms and newsletters we have a reach of nearly **30,000 people**.

- **124,000 people** visited our website **30% of web visitors** from the city accessed Emergency Food Services pages showing the vital role we play in signposting to help.
- We took part in **6 radio/media interviews**.
- We made **10 videos** to promote and highlight the impact of our work.
- We presented about our work at **50 events/** webinars and conferences.



**Thank you to everyone involved.** None of this would be possible without the hard work of our amazing team of staff, board members, freelancers and volunteers. Thank you to our funders and partner organisations from the statutory, business and community sector for your ongoing support.

**To help us continue our work you can:**

- [Hire one of our outdoor spaces or our Clubhouse at Waterhall for your event.](#)
- [Take part in a cookery class at the Community Kitchen or come along to one of our events](#)
- [Volunteer, donate and/or sign up to our newsletter](#)



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**FOOD**  
PARTNERSHIP



@btnkitchen  
@btnhovefood



01273 234 810  
[info@bhfood.org.uk](mailto:info@bhfood.org.uk)  
[www.bhfood.org.uk](http://www.bhfood.org.uk)