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Spade to Spoon: digging deeper

A food strategy for Brighton and Hove 2012 - 2017

Introduction

Spade to Spoon: Digging Deeper sets out a vision for the city's food system, one that is healthy, sustainable and fair. It provides a set of aims that the food strategy will work towards and outlines a five year action plan for partners. It shows how a focus on food can help achieve the city's social, health, economic and environmental priorities. There is a role for everyone – including the city council and health authorities, food producers, retailers and caterers, community and voluntary groups, schools and colleges, and not least the residents of Brighton & Hove.

Spade to Spoon is in four parts



Spade to Spoon: digging deeper takes an integrated, cross sectoral approach to food, which links initiatives within public health, environmental sustainability, community development, education, agriculture, cultural and economic development, waste management, urban planning and tourism.

In the spirit of other strategies and plans, *Spade to Spoon: digging deeper* has been developed in the belief that by working in partnership across the community we can better address the problems we face. As the consultation process for this strategy refresh has shown, there is no shortage of ideas, and Brighton & Hove has already demonstrated that it is an ideal environment in which to support innovation.

This strategy has been written at a time of financial uncertainty for all the partners involved. The statutory, commercial and community /voluntary sectors all report that resources for work will be tight

for the foreseeable future. *Spade to Spoon* sets out a programme of work that provides true value when measured against a range of economic, social, environmental and health criteria.

Food is often central to life's positive and enjoyable experiences. It can provide a focus to bring together communities and provide opportunities for adults and children to learn about a range of interconnected environmental and health issues. The spirit of this strategy is to harness our collective power, to find effective solutions to the challenges that face us and be inspired to take action at all levels.

This document is a refresh of *Spade to Spoon: Making the Connections*. In 2006 it was one of the first citywide food strategies to be published in the UK. 90% of the actions identified five years ago have been achieved, the importance of our food system is recognized at a strategic level and connections have been made between diverse sectors. Having a food strategy has really made things start to happen, but we cannot afford to stop now. Now is the time to dig deeper and be bold if we are to face the challenge of creating a more localised food system for the future that is far more sustainable – economically, environmentally and socially.

DRAFT

DEFINITIONS

There is no legal definition of '**sustainable food**,' although some aspects, such as the terms 'organic' or 'Fairtrade', are clearly defined. A working definition is that sustainable food should be produced, processed, traded and disposed of in ways that:

- contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods – both in the UK and, in the case of imported products, in producer countries;
- protect the diversity of both plants and animals (and the welfare of farmed and wild species), and avoid damaging natural resources and contributing to climate change;
- provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products, and educational opportunities.

A **healthy diet** is one that helps maintain or improve health. It is important for reducing many chronic health risks, such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and cancer. A healthy diet needs to have a balance of essential macronutrients (fats, proteins, and carbohydrates), and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). Nutrients can be obtained from many different foods, so there are numerous diets that may be considered healthy.

The term **food system** includes all processes and infrastructure involved in feeding a population: growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related items. It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each of these steps. Food security (ensuring food availability and access) is underpinned by food systems (food availability and access). Food systems also contribute to a range of other socioeconomic and environmental issues. Understanding of how food systems operate also needs consideration of the financing of the activities within the system. Nationally recognition is increasingly being given to the importance of food system planning as an approach.

Food poverty means that an individual or household isn't able to obtain healthy, nutritious food, or can't access the food they would like to eat. Despite the increasing choice and affordability of food in the UK, many people eat what they can afford, not what they want. This often results in people eating poor diets, which can contribute to heart disease, obesity, diabetes and cancer, as well as inadequate levels of many vitamins and minerals. Obesity is now a sign of poverty in rich countries, as hunger is in poor countries. Food poverty and economic poverty are linked. Rent, fuel bills, tax and debts are fixed costs; food is the 'flexible' budget item, and families and individuals pay the price. Poor children suffer from lower nutrient intake, poor dietary patterns, hunger, lower fruit and vegetable consumption and problems accessing food in school holidays. Around 4 million people in the UK are estimated to suffer from food poverty (Food Ethics Council).

Understanding the food system

Like air, water and shelter, food is an essential part of our everyday lives. It sustains us, is part of our culture and enjoyment, and provides livelihoods for many. Yet the complex web that is the modern food system often leaves us disconnected from how and where our food is produced and the impacts it has for our health, the environment, our economy and the lives of those working in the food chain.

The current global food system is unsustainable. Our diets are contributing to chronic diseases. Production practices and food waste create huge environmental impacts, contribute to climate change and damage eco systems. Finite natural resources such as soil and water are becoming depleted. Food prices are rising and becoming increasingly unstable. Many farmers struggle to get a fair return for their work. The average age of farmers in the UK is nearly 60 and yet people wanting to enter farming (especially here in the South East) find the costs of starting prohibitive. Food supply chains are often dependent on low wages, poor working conditions and migrant labour. The majority of decisions and profits from the UK's food system are taken by a handful of very large companies, leaving consumers and producers disconnected from each other.

Our food systems rely heavily on expensive fossil fuels - for fertilizers, food processing, packaging and to transport food all over the world. With food prices closely linked to the costs of oil, our current food system won't be able to deliver cheap food for ever.

But it's not all bad news Brighton & Hove is leading the way nationally and internationally in the approach we are taking to setting out a strategic framework for sustainable food work that unites different sectors and is driven forward through its Food Partnership.

Healthy, sustainable communities require healthy, sustainable food systems. In Brighton & Hove our initial food strategy and action plan agreed in 2006, *Spade to Spoon* has already made a huge difference. We have developed sophisticated and robust partnerships that are delivering better services for residents and a whole range of organisations, including the City Council, NHS Brighton & Hove, community and voluntary organisations, schools, colleges and universities, individuals, farmers and businesses are working together to encourage a healthy, sustainable and vibrant food culture in the city.

For example, community based cookery and nutrition programmes are addressing health inequalities associated with poor diets; we have a 'one stop shop' healthy weight referral service; all of our schools have achieved healthy school status and have a whole school policy on food; we are the first place in the UK to introduce guidance for planners on including food growing in developments; we have introduced a Healthy Choice Award for restaurants, nurseries and care

homes; an ambitious urban food growing programme (Harvest Brighton & Hove) is getting people growing food, sharing skills and finding more space for food growing; we have started composting on a community level and run a love food: hate waste community education programme; and a vibrant network of more than 100 food projects across the city are providing education, opportunities to participate in community activity and access to healthy, sustainable food.



Food is increasingly being recognized as an important tool by which to achieve a broad range of economic, social and environmental targets and a number of key citywide policy documents now consider the role of food work and food planning. *Insert list in appendix*

Action on food is helping the city to achieve many of the ambitions set out in the sustainable communities' strategy.

Localising our food system as part of a sustainable system

This food strategy attempts to find ways in which we can localise our food production and increase consumption of food produced from within a 30 mile radius as part of a sustainable food system. It recognises that the distance travelled by food isn't the only measure of its sustainability, and other factors such as the energy intensiveness of production and storage are crucial factors.

“Our food distribution infrastructure cements production, consumption and trading practices that destroy the environment, harm animals and are deeply unjust. The problems with products that have long supply chains include their contribution to climate change, compromised animal welfare standards, and a deeper industrialisation of food and food culture. But efforts to shorten ‘food miles’ can neglect the social and economic benefits associated with trade in food, especially for developing countries. And while consumers are rediscovering local, seasonal produce, they still want diversity and choice. The relationship between food and sustainable development is complex, and ‘food miles’ is a just one variable. Others include workers’ health, community well-being and rural development. However ‘food miles’ is important as it captures a wide range of concerns about our food system.” Food Ethics Council (ref)

Research conducted in 2011 for the *Feeding Brighton & Hove* report helps underpin this strategy. This research aims to understand where our food is coming from, how much is currently produced and processed within the city and local area, and how much of what we need to feed the city we can really produce locally. The report states

“The figures speak for themselves with our current diet, Brighton & Hove would need 70,000 hectares of farm land to feed ourselves - that is eight time the size of Brighton & Hove, a third of the area of West Sussex. Of course, there is room for improvement, and this dramatic portrait is based on current consumption patterns, diets rich in meat and dairy produce, high in empty calories (i.e. alcohol beverages, sugary drinks and sweets) and out of season fruits and vegetables. What is clear is that we will only ever be able to produce a small amount of our food requirements from our locality, but we need to understand what the potential is and what we should be aiming to achieve, and how we can encourage local farmers and producers to grow more of what they can for the city. We also need to be looking at how we can start to change consumption patterns so that they reflect a more sustainable way of eating. Brighton & Hove will probably never become an agricultural superpower, but that’s not our aim. The challenge resides in mixing the successful service and tourist industry of our city with an improved network of local farmers, distributors and retailers. That’s the only way our food system can make sense again at all levels“ (ref)

So whilst the Food Strategy looks at how to increase local food production, it is also about implementing a range of sustainable food behaviours such as use of fair trade produce, organic and other environmentally sensitive methods of production, animal welfare standards, changed dietary behaviours and reduced food waste.

Local issues: local outcomes – how the food strategy fits

In order to achieve the vision of a healthy and sustainable food system the food strategy sets out a programme of work against 9 key aims. The aims are long term and are the areas for change that we should focus on achieving in the medium term. For each of these aims there are a series of objectives outlined on [p20](#) to which we will work over the next 5 years.

Fig ?? Nine Aims of the Food Strategy



Locally many of the challenges we face as a city – poverty, health inequalities, economic development, climate change and waste – have a food dimension. Establishing a sustainable local food system in a global economy may seem a daunting task, because of the huge changes that will need to take place on a national and global level but there is action that we can take as a city. For all nine aims we will act locally on those components that we can influence whilst lobbying at a national and international level for other improvements.

Work towards these aims will also help to achieve a number of the high level, city wide social, economic and environmental outcomes that the members of the Local Strategic Partnership have committed to, as expressed in the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the NHS Strategic Commissioning Plan, the reducing inequalities strategy and the city's Corporate Plan. As part of the process of refreshing this strategy, *Spade to Spoon* has been

set against these outcomes to demonstrate how food work contributes and to help inform commissioning decisions in the future.

Citywide priority outcomes that action on food will help achieve.

Reducing health inequalities and addressing long standing public health issues

Reducing the city's ecological footprint

Reducing GHG emissions / Living within environmental limits

A low waste city

Sustainable economic growth

Reducing inequalities and ending child poverty

Increasing participation in community activity

Reducing health inequalities and addressing long standing public health issues (diet-related ill health)

An overabundance of cheap food of low nutritional quality is causing diet-related ill health, a major contributor to the difference in life expectancy of 10 years between the most and least affluent wards of the city. Many adults don't have the skills and confidence to shop for ingredients and cook healthy, affordable meals from scratch relying instead on cheap highly processed foods. There are many areas of the city without access to places selling fresh ingredients within walking distance.

In Brighton & Hove approximately 43,600 adults are obese and about 6,400 morbidly obese. This is estimated to have cost the NHS in Brighton & Hove £78.1 million in 2010¹. Poor diet is also associated with many causes of premature death and life limiting illness such as diabetes, heart disease, strokes and cancers. Good nutrition is also vital in recovery from treatment for major diseases and in living with long term conditions.

The Food Strategy sets out ways to support residents to achieve healthy lifestyles that will help prevent obesity and other diet-related ill health. It recommends a 'life stages' approach to delivering weight management interventions for people above their ideal weight.

30% of children in Year 6 (10-11 yrs old) are obese or overweight². Yet thanks to a locally designed child obesity strategy, Brighton & Hove is one of the few places in the country where childhood

¹ LI public health date

² National Childhood Measurement Programme 2010

obesity levels stabilised in 2010. We need to build on the success of this partnership approach that brings together schools, the hospital dietetics department, the public health team, the Food Partnership's community nutrition team, Albion in the Community (the charitable arm of Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club), the community sector and other health workers to offer both prevention and intervention measures for children and young people.

Poor educational attainment at secondary level and high levels of mental ill health in the city are issues of concern identified by Brighton & Hove's Joint Strategic Needs assessment³. There is clear evidence that good nutrition is linked to educational attainment and behaviour in children and young people. Good nutrition is also linked to mental health and wellbeing through both its contribution to preventing ill health and as an element of recovery from mental illness.

We are a young city and our students at schools, colleges and universities are the consumers of the future. This strategy advocates for experiential food education (hands on cooking and growing) alongside education about healthy and sustainable diets to equip our young people to make confident food choices now and when they become adults.

The Food Strategy aims to give residents the skills and confidence to make healthy and sustainable food choices. It highlights the importance of ensuring services are targeted where they are most needed, including recommending a piece of work to identify gaps in support for adults with learning difficulties around food including healthy weight advice, growing and cooking skills. It also identifies the need for more work to support people living with long term conditions such as diabetes and HIV/AIDS with nutritional advice.

The Food Strategy also highlights the responsibility of organisations that serve food to vulnerable people to ensure that food is of a universally high standard of sustainability and is nutritious. As part of the Food Strategy, Brighton & Hove City council have committed to looking at procurement practices and using the Healthy Choice Award as a tool to embed healthy options in appropriate services procured by them. The Healthy Choice Award will be extended to more care homes across the city and integrated into the work of all early years settings as a component of the Healthy Early Years programme. The Food Partnership will develop additional sustainability criteria to be used alongside the Healthy Choice Award. Public institutions have the opportunity to show leadership in food procurement and it is the intention to set up a working group for statutory agencies to come together to work on policies and practices. The city's Universities, Sussex Partnership Trust and the school meals service have already started work on introducing minimum buying standards for food and this work will be built on.

³ Brighton and Hove City Wide Needs Assessment Programme, Health and wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2011) <http://www.brightonandhovepct.nhs.uk/about/improving/jsna/>

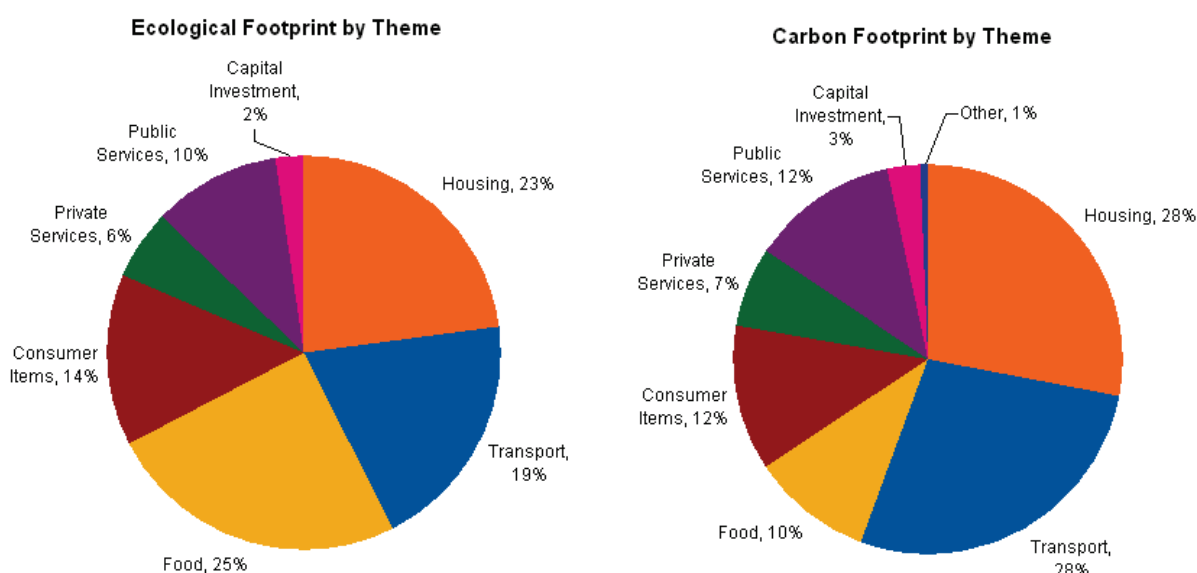
Reducing the city's ecological footprint

- Reducing the city's Green House Gas (GHG) emissions
- Living within environmental limits
- A low waste city

The City's Strategic Partnership has chosen the Ecological Footprint as its headline sustainability indicator for Brighton & Hove. The key overarching goal is to ensure that Brighton & Hove can exist within its ecological means. That is, there is a balance between what the environment can provide and what people consume.

Figure ??? Brighton & Hove's Ecological / Carbon Footprint

25% of the city's ecological footprint is related to food.



The City Sustainability Partnership has prioritised food as one of the key areas for focus in reducing the ecological footprint. The target is for a 53% reduction in the food footprint of the city by 2050.⁴

The good news is that food that is good for the planet is also good for us and making small changes to the way we eat can make a big difference. The Food Strategy aims to increase understanding of the environmental impacts of our food system and communicate where dietary changes by individuals and changes to food served in schools, hospitals, in workplaces, restaurants and hotels will have the most benefit for the environment and for health. This includes:

⁴ Best Food Forward, A One Planet Framework for Brighton & Hove, Adopted by CSP 2011

- reducing overconsumption particularly of foods high in empty calories (i.e. alcoholic beverages, sugary drinks and sweets)⁵.
- eating less processed foods (preparing more meals 'from scratch')
- reducing food waste (throughout the food chain)
- reduction in consumption of meat and dairy (particularly grain-fed cattle)
- eating seasonally
- reducing food miles both those travelled to buy food and the distance food travels from 'field to shop'
- choosing organic and other methods of farming that reduce fertilizer / pesticide use.

Achieving a 53% reduction in our city's ecological food footprint will require reductions in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions associated with the food system as well as action to ensure that our food system respects broader environmental limits, both here and abroad.

Reducing the city's Green House Gas (GHG) emissions

- **Food transport**
- **Farming practices**
- **Meat and dairy consumption**

The Sustainable Communities' Strategy commits Brighton & Hove to reducing its GHG impacts by 42% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050⁶. A reduction in the emissions related to food is a key component in any attempt to meet this target. Carbon emissions from food processing, refrigeration and transport account for 10% of the city's carbon footprint (see fig xx). But carbon dioxide is not the only greenhouse gas. The most significant impacts from the food system are the release of methane and nitrous oxide – two very powerful greenhouse gases – mainly from meat and dairy production and from fertilizer use in agriculture. Food waste is also a significant contributor. The processing and transport of edible food that goes to waste accounts for around 3% of UK's GHG emissions (ref WRAP) and that's not counting the methane emissions over and above this impact from the 7 million tonnes of food waste that ends up in landfill each year.⁷

Reducing these emissions will require different parts of the food system to collaborate and to focus on the areas where they can have most impact. The work on a One Planet Living framework will drive this forward.

Food transport and GHG emissions.

⁵ The UN Food and Agriculture organisation reports that we each consume around 3,500 calories per day in the UK which is 1000 above recommended amount

⁶ Brighton & Hove Sustainable Communities Strategy, reduction from the 2005 baseline of 5.7 tonnes per person

⁷ [Food Ethics Council \(2009\) Waste: dishing the dirt, Food Ethics Magazine Vol 3 and WRAP \(2009\) Household food and drink waste in the UK](#)

Understanding the GHG emissions in the food system requires a life cycle assessment of products and not just a measure of total distance travelled but food transport is still a big issue accounting for about 12% of the UK's total GHG Emissions. According to research by the Food Ethics Council food accounts for 25% of the distance travelled by lorries in the UK and 12 billion miles are driven a year by consumers to buy food.

Locally we should aim to reduce the number of journeys that customers drive by car to buy food; local transport plans will need clear policies on public transport, positioning of bus stops, appropriate timetabling and location of cycle racks to facilitate sustainable transport to food outlets. Producers and retailers should provide efficient delivery services to homes or bulk drop offs at food co-ops, preferably using vehicles powered by green electricity or recycled cooking oils. There could be combining of delivery by local producers and more retailer co-operation. For local growers there is even potential value in using return journeys taking compostable materials back to farms.

Farming practices Brighton & Hove City Council, which owns 11,000 hectares of farm land surrounding the city, has committed to developing a sustainable vision for the farmland it owns. With agricultural inputs and farming methods the largest source of GHG emissions in the food system, encouraging the farms owned by the city council and those in the local area to adopt environmentally sustainable practices will be a key component of meeting emissions targets.

Meat and dairy consumption Animal products account for just under a third of nutritional intake in the UK. However, their consumption is responsible for nearly twice that share of emissions, and 58% of UK emissions from consumption of food arise from meat and dairy (ref). This is a challenging issue not least because it is an emotive one that includes questioning customs and habits around food (meat based meals) that have a strong cultural element. There is also a strong lobby from the meat industry and concern from meat and dairy producers. The messages are not clearcut as different animal products have different impacts, with the most concerning being cattle fed on grain or soya (especially if land has been cleared to plant this feed).

However dietary substitutions could also have important consequences – say for fish stocks or land clearance for increased soya consumption. The overall message is that reducing meat and dairy consumption offers large reductions in total GHG emissions, yet care is needed in translating this finding into policy or consumer advice⁸ (ref MLFW report). The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership will work on a communications and education campaign. This will focus on the benefits of enjoying seasonal variations in vegetables and fruit, and treating meat as a high quality item to be consumed in lower quantities for the health of residents, the benefit to their wallets and the health of the planet.

⁸ Making Local Food Work

Living within environmental limits

The city is in a unique position as the owner of 11,000 hectares of farmland, most of it now in the South Downs national park. But our beautiful Downlands are chalky and the soil is only suitable for certain crops and livestock grazing. If the ambitions of the national park for conserving natural assets, increasing access and protecting bio-diversity are to be realised, farmers will need support to diversify. Stanmer Park is a wonderful asset and the location of productive orchards and the only certified organic land in the city, which could become a focus for education about sustainability. The city's application to become a UN Biosphere Reserve offers enormous potential to bring together work to integrate food, biodiversity, water quality measures and landscape heritage making the most of our position between the sea and the Downs.

The city's compact, urban location is also a challenge and citywide strategies to improve our food system will require intelligent land-use planning. The City Plan (being completed in early 2012) offers an opportunity to support a sustainable food systems planning approach, to recognise the importance of land for food growing, to provide space for food infrastructure and to emphasise the importance of urban design that encourages healthy behaviours.

Mapping of land as an asset – under the localism agenda, local authorities are encouraged to map any of their assets that could be suitable for community ownership. The Food Strategy recommends that land suitable for small scale food growing (including livestock) is mapped (alongside other open space, landscape and biodiversity needs) so that communities are aware of potential sites in order that they can come forward with proposals (as in the case of buildings).

Role of catering Measures taken by organisations procuring large quantities of food can have a big impact, for example by using products that specify minimum welfare standards such as cage free birds, or red tractor will make a big difference for animals in the food system. Using organic or other measures of environmental stewardship and reducing soya based products will also help protect ecosystems. A 'local fish plan' will help us make better use of the sustainable fish caught off our coast.

A low waste city

One of the most obvious ways to reduce the impact of the food system on the environment is to reduce the amount of food that is wasted at all stages of the system. Throwing away uneaten food wastes all of the water, energy, natural and human resources that have gone into production. If it ends up in landfill, food waste produces the powerful greenhouse gas, methane, and lechate, a toxic sludge. In Brighton & Hove 35% of what households throw away is food waste, most of which could have been eaten costing an average household £420 a year (£680 for families). Research by the

national organisation Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has demonstrated that the environmental impact of avoidable household food waste is around 17 million tonnes of CO₂e equivalent to the emissions of 1 in 5 cars on UK roads (WRAP 2011)⁹

A 2011 WRAP (ref) report looks at the water footprint of avoidable food waste and calculates this at 243 litres per person per day, approximately one and a half times the daily average water use in the UK. A quarter of this water represents water used to grow and process food here in the UK and the rest is abroad. Significant products in terms of food waste and impact on both water and carbon footprints are milk, beef, poultry, coffee and rice.

Restaurants, cafes, pubs, hotels and fast food chains are coming under scrutiny for the amount of food they waste. Statistics shows that nationally the hospitality sector produces 600,000 tonnes of food waste every year, two thirds of which could have been eaten if it had been better portioned, managed stored and/or prepared (ref). Here in Brighton & Hove with our high number of restaurants and hotels there is the potential for businesses to save money and for us to have a significant impact on waste by focusing on this area. . The Food Strategy recommends that we should look to find ways to sell food in the city that doesn't meet the cosmetic standards set by supermarkets in order to reduce waste in the system.

Reducing avoidable food waste and increasing composting at home, at work, in schools and communities is a priority for this strategy.

Sustainable economic growth

The city is looking for ways to grow its economy sustainably and the food system has the potential to be populated by more successful, innovative food businesses that could further contribute to local wealth creation and employment.

Local producers

The 400 cafes and restaurants (most of them independent businesses), with thousands of residents and visitors using them. Although we have several very highly thought of sustainable cafes and restaurants, we have a low profile for local food compared to other similar towns and cities. This may, in part, be due to the low number of small scale local producers especially when compared to other areas of the South East such as Hampshire and Oxfordshire. Reasons for this include the pressure on land use for housing and recreation (eg golf courses and horse livery) and the high cost of land.

⁹WRAP, New estimates for household food and drink waste in the UK, November 2011

As a 2011 report by Food Matter's (REF) on the potential for community support agriculture in the city states:

“Between the small-scale community growing projects within the city and the farms on the urban fringe, the traditional middle layer of smallholdings, market gardens and horticulture holdings have almost completely disappeared from the local food system within Brighton & Hove. Traditionally these would have been the means by which local produce reached local consumers through markets and small local shops. The local food sector is relatively small within the City, particularly in comparison to other areas of the country.”

LOCAL SUPPLY CHAINS TO BRIGHTON & HOVE

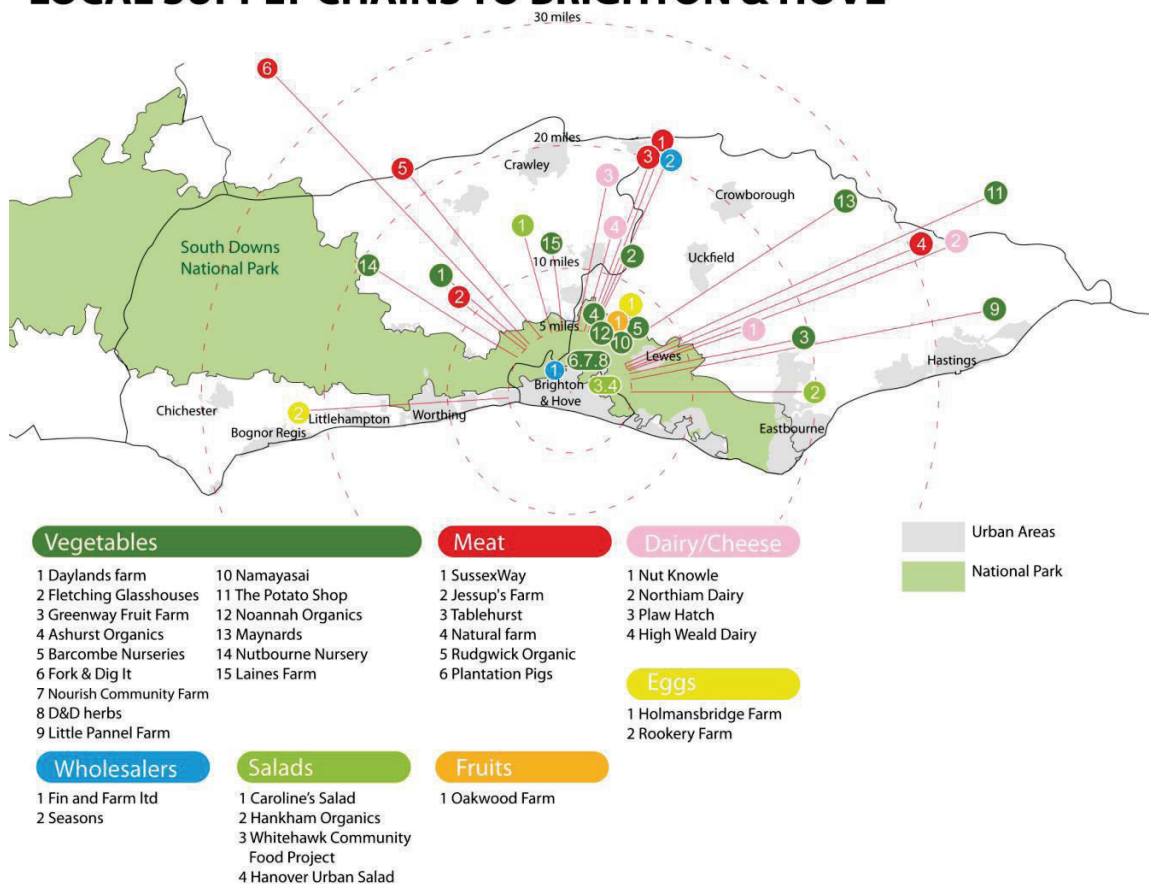


Image: Food Matters, CSA report, 2011 (ref)

The *Food Strategy* will support local growers to increase their market share of locally produced / sustainable food, for example by supplying the city's hotels and restaurants. There is also more potential for small scale growers and community projects to co-operate in encouraging more people eating affordable local food.

Food infrastructure

The infrastructure supporting the local food supply chain in the area is not as advanced as in some regions where work has been undertaken to develop local distribution centres, establish co-operative wholesalers etc. Currently there is only a small amount of food processing in the city. The Food Strategy aims to explore how better food infrastructure could mean more food produced and consumed locally. For example, it has been estimated that 36% of the bread we eat could be made from wheat currently being grown on the farmland around Brighton & Hove, but because we do not have milling facilities it is sold into the global market (Feeding Brighton & Hove report).

Several miles down the coast in the Chichester plain, within a 30 mile radius of Brighton and Hove, 10% of the UK's protected crop production takes place. However, practically none of the tomatoes, salads, aubergines and other crops produced in the massive glasshouses are sold directly to the city. Lamb from the South Downs is available in supermarkets nationally, having travelled miles to be slaughtered in Wales but can't be found on the menus of many local restaurants. There is clearly potential for us to get more meat reared on the city's land into the city, more fruit and vegetables from the South East region and to eat more sustainable fish caught off the coast. More of the nearby farms could produce for the local rather than global market, and sites such as Stanmer Organics could produce more fresh produce. The redevelopment of the Open Market also offers the city an opportunity to put the sale of healthy, sustainable, affordable food at its heart.

Employment

The food system is already a significant employer in the city and food processing has been identified as a potential growth sector (ref the 2009 Business Retention and Inward Investment strategy). The Food Strategy recommends that support should be explicitly available for social enterprises that wish to open up in the city's food economy to help them get started, in an environment dominated by the very large multi-national organisations.

Investment opportunities should be made visible for entrepreneurs who wish to start sustainable food businesses in the city (similar to the way the city is being promoted for digital and environmental business start-up). Local business, local employment, local money rings true for the food sector too - every £10 spent on a vegetable box scheme generates approximately £24 for the local economy compared to only £14 when spent in a supermarket¹⁰

Brighton & Hove's employment and skills strategy (2011) (add ref) offers the context for an ambition to support the development of a skilled workforce for sustainable food businesses. The Food Strategy advocates working with schools and colleges to ensure that we have a local workforce with

¹⁰ Plugging the leaks (New Economics Foundation 2002)

the necessary skills. The potential for including sustainable food processing as part of a proposed eco tech business park and on other mixed used developments is exciting.

Throughout the consultation on this strategy there has been much debate on the role of supermarkets. They are significant employers in the city (approx 3000 jobs) and provide convenient shopping for most people. They also have the ability to make large scale differences when it comes to sustainability issues, for example Co-op and Sainsbury's now only stock fair trade bananas.

However, there has been considerable concern expressed by residents that too many branches of the 'big four' are opening up in the city. The Food Strategy aims to support alternative models of retail to operate alongside traditional supermarkets (including shops, markets and delivery), to safeguard retail diversity, to maintain the unique character of our shopping streets and offer alternatives where money spent by local people on food contributes to the local economy. This is difficult where planning regulations do not allow for limits on types of premises, and in an economic climate where shop owners would rather have the security of a large multi-national occupier of their premises. We are not the only city in the UK grappling with this issue and will look to other places for information and ideas.

The review of the city's economic strategy, the development of an investment portfolio for the city and the production of a sustainable strategy for the city's farmland offer the ideal opportunities to look at some of these issues.

Reducing inequalities / ending child poverty

This strategy is being produced in a time of financial uncertainty where household incomes are going down and prices (including food prices) are going up. More households are living in, or close to, poverty and a concern raised often during the strategy consultation has been about the increase in numbers of people experiencing food poverty (see definition p?).

We don't know how many people in Brighton & Hove are living in food poverty because although food poverty and financial poverty are linked other factors (including access to shops selling fresh ingredients and skills in cooking and shopping) play a part, not everyone on low incomes experiences food poverty.

We do know that according to 2009 child poverty figures there are 10,785 children living in poverty (22% of all children), that in 2011 16.8 % of our primary and nursery pupils (2,936) and 15.7% (1,924) of our secondary pupils are eligible for free school meals. We live in a city with high rents and lower than average wages and there are many single person households reliant on benefits. We also know that older people in particular are finding the inflationary costs of food and fuel

challenging. The number of households living in fuel poverty (ref) has increased over the last three years. *It is estimated that around 12 per cent of our households were living in fuel poverty in 2006 – do we have more up to date figures?..*

A key objective of *Spade to Spoon* (starting in 2012) is to undertake research into how food poverty is experienced in the city and what can be done to address this form of social injustice in the medium and long term. The Food Strategy recommends that work on minimising the impacts of fuel poverty and food poverty should be brought together, as too often the choice is between the food bill and the fuel bill, and that explicit reference should be made to food poverty issues in the child poverty strategy

Any discussion around food poverty leads to consideration of food pricing and a challenge at the heart of the food strategy. Food has become progressively relatively cheaper, but the current food system disguises costs (externalities) that show up elsewhere, high healthcare costs, environmental damage and costs to rural economies. If the true cost of producing food is to be reflected in pricing then it is only going to become more expensive. Also, as already highlighted, the costs of the inputs for the current agriculture system, such as fertilizer, fuel and foods are increasing. Farmers will need to be able to pass on these costs or go out of business.

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) on the strategy took time to consider this point. The long term answer is for incomes to increase, not food prices to decrease. In the short term the Food Strategy recommends actions to help ensure that individuals have the skills to shop and cook to make the most of their food budgets and be aware of which 'cheap' products are nutritionally very low value. Seasonal food is usually cheaper, wasting less food saves money and eating less meat makes budgets go further. Schemes such as Healthy Start vouchers, breakfast clubs and the opportunities provided by food projects will be supported and promoted. Work on debt advice and food poverty needs to be better linked.

Increasing participation in community activity

One way to improve access to sustainable, affordable food for residents across the city is for more people to be engaged in community food work.

According to the Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2011 looking at the subject of resilience, the only area where we score the lowest rating of 'red' is Belonging. Research shows that when there are high levels of involvement in civil society, and where people feel part of local decision making, there is a greater sense of belonging. Initiatives which help communities to embrace diversity by establishing horizontal and vertical links within and between communities also create a sense of belonging. Volunteering is another excellent means of fostering this aspect of resilience. As

*young adults in particular do not feel this sense of belonging, there is scope for local universities to engage more with third sector organisations in order to achieve this.*¹¹

This strategy aims to be rooted in the participation of all sectors of the community, to reflect the social diversity of the city and to celebrate the part food plays in the community and culture of the city. The Food Strategy encourages opportunities to share and celebrate good food for people of all ages across the city. It prioritises community food work to improve access to sustainable, affordable food for residents across the city. Food projects also play a role in education, in community cohesion, in reducing anti social behaviour and in providing opportunities for physical activity.

We already have a vibrant network of more than 100 community food projects in the city including. cookery groups, lunch clubs, growing spaces and food co-ops (see www.xxxxxx for full list). The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership is actively promoting more opportunities for volunteers to get involved with food projects and supports projects through its Good Food Grant's scheme. An independent evaluation in 2011 of the last five years of this scheme demonstrated the considerable impact food projects funded by the scheme have had in their communities and highlighted the ways in which these small grants resulted in value considerably higher than the cash amounts given.

Harvest Brighton & Hove¹² has worked closely with BHCC and other landowners to establish processes by which local residents can apply to run growing projects on land around housing or other underused land using 'meanwhile leases'. This not only gives people the opportunity to take part in food growing close to where they live but also reduces pressure on allotment waiting lists by finding alternative land spaces. Harvest Brighton & Hove is also supporting the development of a community orchard, community supported agriculture projects on the urban fringe and helping more schools to establish or develop food growing areas. Within the city boundary there are a surprising number of potential plots that could be used for growing. The Food Strategy aims for a mapping exercise to be undertaken where land for suitable for food growing is identified alongside other land use pressures.

Spade to Spoon has been formally adopted by:

FP/ FM/ BHCC/ NHS / Uni / CVSF /

INCLUDE SOMEWHERE A WHO IS WHO DIRECTORY

¹¹ Director of Public Health for Brighton & Hove Annual Report, 2011

¹² Harvest Brighton & Hove is a partnership project which aims to get the city growing more food www.harvest-bh.org.uk

Key aims and objectives

Each of the objectives outlined below is represented in the detailed action plan and all actions have named partner against them who has committed to taking forward work on that action. The Food Partnership will continue to take responsibility for driving forward the delivery of the strategy and action plan and reporting back to all partners on progress annually.

AIM 1

People in Brighton & Hove eat a healthier and more sustainable diet

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Deliver education initiatives across all sections of the community to promote healthy and sustainable food choices and inspire people to make them
- 1.2 Deliver an 'all life stages' approach to preventing and reducing obesity and other diet-related diseases in adults and children
- 1.3 Deliver a co-ordinated weight management service for adults and children above an ideal weight driven by a clear care pathway, co-ordinated referral system and robust evaluation.
- 1.4 Ensure that adults have the skills and confidence to cook from scratch
- 1.5 Support existing community food initiatives and increase the number of projects working in deprived communities and with groups that experience disadvantage
- 1.6 Support schools to take a whole school approach to food and to put an emphasis on practical food experiences (including cooking skills and food growing) and to educate about food and food choices
- 1.7 Extend the use of the Healthy Choice Award and develop additional sustainability criteria

AIM 2

There is improved access for all residents to nutritious, safe, affordable, sustainable food in culturally acceptable ways.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Ensure that people are well-served for outlets selling affordable fresh produce within walking distance
- 2.2 Increase citywide availability of and accessibility to food produced using sustainable methods
- 2.3 Ensure that nutrition services and food projects are delivered within neighbourhoods and in partnership with community groups.
- 2.4 Improve understanding about the issue of food poverty in the city; establish baseline data and agree an action plan
- 2.5 Ensure that food work is appropriate to cultural diets
- 2.6 Create healthier environments where walking and cycling for food shopping are encouraged
- 2.7 Support community food growing as part of healthy neighbourhoods

AIM 3

Develop a vibrant sustainable food economy that includes a range of thriving local businesses, local production and local employment opportunities.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Raise the profile of sustainable food to residents and visitors to the city
- 3.2 Support food businesses that operate as (or want to establish) social enterprises
- 3.3 Expand and develop markets for local produce
- 3.4 Support local growers by increasing the overall market share for local, sustainable produce
- 3.5 Safeguard the diversity of food retail (including shops, markets and other delivery methods)
- 3.6 Increase employment opportunities in the sustainable food sector and support the development of a skilled workforce for this
- 3.7 Ensure that the redeveloped Open Market operates as a space where a cross section of the community is able to access healthy, sustainable, affordable food

AIM 4

Introduce food procurement policies and practices within organisations that are models of health, ethical and environmental responsibility

Key Objectives

- 4.1 Increase the number of public institutions serving healthy food.
- 4.2 Set up a working group to look at procurement issues (cross-organisation) learning from good practice elsewhere in the country
- 4.3 Introduce purchasing policies that encourage environmental sustainability, local sourcing, animal welfare and fair trade.
- 4.4 Celebrate successful policies and publicise to customers what has been achieved.

AIM 5

More food consumed in the city is grown, produced and processed locally using methods that protect bio-diversity and enhance the environment

Key Objectives

- 5.1 Increase the amount of land available for food growing – on allotments, in communities and on the urban fringe
- 5.2 Support and encourage residents who wish to grow their own, and foster skills and confidence so more residents are engaged in food-growing.
- 5.3 Build and strengthen the infrastructure needed to support local food systems.
- 5.4 Develop a vision for the sustainable future of farmland owned by the city council
- 5.5 Develop a local fish plan to promote and support local, sustainably caught fish
- 5.6 Implement Sussex Food Hub / CSA report recommendations in order to get more locally produced food into the city's cafes and restaurants
- 5.7 Support the projects in Stanmer Park in their development and role as small scale food growers on the boundary of the national park.

AIM 6

A low waste city where waste generated by the food system is reduced, redistributed (reused) and recycled.

Targeting across domestic, statutory and commercial waste streams.

Key Objectives

- 6.1 Minimise the amount of avoidable food waste through education, awareness-raising and network-building
- 6.2 Reduce the amount of packaging relating to food that is thrown away and increase recycling of food packaging
- 6.3 Treat unavoidable food waste as a resource (e.g. promoting composting, vermiculture and anaerobic digestion)

AIM 7

Local and sustainable food is promoted and celebrated by residents and visitors

Key Objectives

- 7.1 Increase the amount and visibility of fair-trade food in the city
- 7.2 Increase the connections between city residents and local farms and food producers
- 7.3 Celebrate the cultural diversity of food across the city
- 7.4 Increase awareness of opportunities to buy sustainable food
- 7.5 Make local and sustainable food visible across the city through events, festivals, markets etc

AIM 8

There is high quality information, support and training available on sustainable food and nutrition issues; networking opportunities, exist to encourage links between sectors and build skills and capacity.

Key Objectives

- 8.1 Support and develop the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership as the mechanism to achieve this aim
- 8.2 Partnership work is encouraged to build skills and capacity and to encourage links between diverse sectors
- 8.3 Create a 'food centre' providing a focus for food work (including office space, meeting rooms, community kitchen and training facilities)
- 8.4 Opportunities for training and learning on sustainable food and nutrition issues are provided.
- 8.5 Provide networking opportunities for the exchange of information, support and advice on food and nutrition issues

AIM 9

Policy and planning decisions within the city take into account food issues and the city is engaged with campaigns being run on a national level

Key Objectives

- 9.1 Ensure that the *Food Strategy* is widely publicised and adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership and other decision-making bodies
- 9.2 Research/data gathering on food issues and attitudes is undertaken and this is used as an evidence base to inform the city's policy and planning decisions
- 9.3 Incorporate consideration of food issues into city-wide plans and strategies
- 9.4 The city's planning processes take into account food issues
- 9.5 Brighton & Hove's experiences of food work are shared nationally and we take part in national campaigns

Section ?? action plan