



# CIVIL FOOD RESILIENCE CASE STUDY 3: BRIGHTON & SUSSEX

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BRIGHTON & HOVE  
**FOOD**  
PARTNERSHIP

The Brighton and Hove Food Partnership is long established and embedded in the community. It has led with one of the earliest food strategies in the Sustainable Food Places network and its longevity and partnership position with the Council have allowed it to make significant impact across the food system. An 'Expert Panel' oversees the food strategy, including people from the council, businesses and the voluntary sector.

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## Approach

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Brighton and Hove Food Partnership has been doing a significant amount of work to build food system resilience since its inception, but notes that food security and resilience lens is useful to get city and county leaders to take the issue a more seriously.

The Pandemic prompted the inclusion of food issues on the local risk register, and a requirement to continually review food insecurity through a specially established Food Insecurity Group.

### **Emergency Food Aid:**

The Partnership supports food banks and emergency food services. It also hosts an online resource map and shares information on where people can access emergency food across the city. The partnership's Beyond Food Banks initiative aims to reduce the need for food banks and provide pathways out of poverty.

### **Edible Brighton and Hove:**

This project involves efforts to increase land for food growing, with the development of edible neighbourhoods, land sharing and turning public spaces into community gardens. This serves to shorten food supply chains and address food poverty and insecurity.

## Procurement:

B&HFP are working to advance local procurement, such as getting local venison into school meals, and are advocating for higher procurement standards.

## Supporting 'Local':

'The Sussex Six' campaign is about getting food businesses to buy or stock six local Sussex products. This requires a communications approach from the partnership and with the support of the council to reinforce the value for the businesses.

Supporting local sustainable farming projects has boosted their success. The Partnership has a local suppliers list which it shares and promotes to businesses and consumers.

## Challenges

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Neither the Sussex Region nor the City Local Resilience Forum (LRF) have been forthcoming in their engagement with the Partnership. Due to funding cuts, only statutory services are now included in the risk register. It has been difficult to get more proactive mitigating actions considered, and to get actions that look more widely than household food insecurity/inequality (e.g. supply chain disruption, climate risks etc.).

Shifting public procurement contracts to include more local food has been difficult, as universities, schools and colleges, are mostly contracted with big companies like Compass and Chartwells catering. These large companies are difficult to engage with.

Council cuts have impacted many opportunities: eg: the Council is not willing to pay for marketing support for the 'Sussex Six' campaign, which may limit its impact. It has also been difficult to maintain connections with supporters and officers within the council because of roles being cut.

## Opportunities

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The new head of the Cabinet Office is interested in public sector procurement and its links to the LRF.

An avenue when engaging with the council is to leverage Soil Association Food for Life catering standards for better public procurement (currently at Silver certification).

Conversations have begun with the local business forum to discuss how to promote food skills as a part of their skills development approach.

The food partnerships across Sussex are working together more closely and developing a regional food plan. This would offer a lever and opportunity to integrate initiatives and lobby politicians for food resilience planning and action.

The Food Partnership is actively working with Partner organisations like Sussex Surplus who work closely with the public through a community kitchen model. Seed funding to support local projects is important to ensure a diverse, resilient community food fabric.

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