

Arun and Chichester Food Forum March 2nd 2022



WHAT IS THE ARUN AND CHICHESTER FOOD PARTNERSHIP?

The Arun and Chichester Food Partnership is a collaborative network of cross-sector partners in the local food system working to make good food accessible to all throughout Arun and Chichester.

THE PARTNERSHIP HAS A VISION FOR ARUN AND CHICHESTER FOR:

- ✓ No one to go hungry.
- ✓ Everyone to have access to good quality food.
- ✓ People to grow, share and learn together to create skilled, fulfilled and nourished communities.
- ✓ A real commitment to reduce the environmental impact of food production, procurement, consumption and waste.



Firstly, a big thank you to everyone who attended our first food forum. In total we had 32 attendees registering, representing a range of organisations across sectors, including 21 attendees currently involved in a community food projects. We are particularly grateful to all participants for openly sharing their perspectives, knowledge and experiences to help us tackle issues around food together in Arun and Chichester

The presentations can be watched [here](#), including the wonderful overview by our keynote speaker Sustainable Food Place's Callum Etches in which he discussed what we mean by a food systems approach, why it is important when exploring approaches to tackling food insecurity and the role food partnerships can play in bringing about positive change.

Some of our key take-aways from the day were

- There is a clear need and desire to work in partnership to improve access to good food for Arun and Chichester - we need to take a joined-up approach when looking to improve our local food system.
- A wealth of community provision exists in the area which can be built upon to support a stronger network as our community faces growing pressures. We can learn from each other and share best practice and resources where possible.
- There is a need to focus on the root causes of food insecurity and use preventative approaches where possible.
- The importance of involving people with lived experience.

Reflection on outcomes and next steps

- Local networking groups are being established; please get in touch with us if you have not already been connected and wish to join a local network.

- We'd love you to [sign up to the newsletter](#) and follow the Food Partnership on [Twitter](#). Please tag us or share any information you would like us to promote via these channels and let us know if you want to be featured in a future edition of the newsletter e.g. to highlight any events or appeals.
- We see all community projects and organisations which support people to grow, cook and/or access food as part of this partnership. We want you to be as involved as you would like to be, so please get in touch with any feedback, ideas, issues or support needs foodpartnership@arunchichestercab.org.uk

Breakout topics

We had some particularly great discussion in the break-out rooms around our three key topics. This has provided us with a lot of learning, and we are looking forward to having more conversations around how we can work together on these areas.

Strengths and weaknesses of our local food system

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are passionate about food • Local food producers • Active Voluntary and Community Sector • Role of UK Harvest in distributing surplus across the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for more resources – funding and space • Questions around sustainability of some models – including a reliance on individuals • Low pay in the horticultural/agricultural sector

How can we respond to the growing pressures on our local communities?

- Need to reduce stigma – make people aware they are not alone and meet people where they already are: e.g. schools, nurseries, mental health orgs – taking away barriers wherever possible.
- Role of preventative support with finances and budgeting
- Need to improve access to affordable food – including addressing travel barriers.
- Role of alternative models: Gleaning, community pantries and pay-what-you-feel.
- Connect those “at top of ladder” with those who are struggling. Involve those that don’t struggle e.g. families and local food businesses.

How accessible is sustainable food?

- High levels of household food waste.
- Perception of sustainable food as elitist and inaccessible to some.
- Barriers to growing food – time, skills.
- Role for education around food system.
- Lots of work already happening e.g. UK Harvest cookery courses and Crimsham Farm polytunnels and plans to work with colleges. Opportunity to develop work and link organisations together.
- Range of possible models: Zero waste shops, food co-ops, seed swaps, veg box schemes, community gardens and garden sharing.