

SFP Bronze and Silver Awards Application Form 2024

This form is for completing an SFP Bronze or Silver Award application. **If you are considering applying for a Gold Award, please contact the SFP team at sfpawards@soilassociation.org to discuss the process.**



Before starting your application, please fully read this form as well as the following documents:

- SFP Awards: Guidance for applicants: [SFP Awards - Guidance for applicants 2024](#).
- SFP Awards: Activity and Impact: [SFP Awards - Activity and Impact 2024](#)

Please do not alter the formatting of this form or redesign it and only return as a Word document not a PDF. This is essential for you application to pass the initial eligibility check.

SECTION 1: Information about your partnership and your place

Please complete the following (*= mandatory):

Name of your partnership*:
Arun and Chichester Food Partnership
Name and contact details of person/people leading on this application*:
Beth Parry / Regi Miesle – hello@arunchifood.org.uk
Geographic region which this award will represent*:
The districts of Arun and Chichester in West Sussex
Award you are applying for*:
Bronze

Please provide us with background information about your place (not scored)*: Advisory word limit: 400 words

This is to help the panel understand the context in which you are working. *You may include (but not limited to): Population and demographic information, location/geography & economic and social challenges.*

ANSWER:

Arun district is in West Sussex, between the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the English Channel. The area to the north of the A27 is predominately rural, and the coastal strip to the south is more built-up and includes the seaside towns of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton. Traditionally tourism has played a significant role in the economy of these seaside settlements, and Bognor Regis is home to a large Butlins resort.

According to the 2019 Indices of Deprivation, Arun ranks as the second most deprived district in West Sussex, ranking 149th out of 317 among lower tier authorities nationwide, and four of the top five most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in West Sussex are in Arun. Two of these are in Bognor (the Marine and Bersted Wards) and two in Littlehampton (Ham and Wick). It is notable that these LSOAs fall within the top ten percent most deprived nationally. Headline data from the West Sussex Community Hub revealed the district with the most requests for emergency support since Covid is Arun, with a significant proportion of requests being for emergency food.

In the west of West Sussex between Surrey and the coast, Chichester district is predominately rural, with much of the northern half falling within the South Downs National Park. The city of Chichester is the largest settlement, and the A27 runs across the south of the district connecting urban settlements outside the SDNP.

Chichester district is relatively affluent, with no LSOAs within the top 20% most deprived. It has three LSOAs within the top 30%, all of which sit within Chichester city. However, there is poverty within the district, and particular challenges which arise from rurality, such as high costs of living including high fuel costs, limited food options in 'food deserts' and the costs and challenges of transportation. Chichester district has low population density, (158 people per km²) with low levels of shop and service provision, as well as transport options, outside of the city of Chichester, compared to Arun (746 people per km².) Data on fuel poverty from 2021 shows that in the Chichester Parliamentary Constituency 9.6% of households are in fuel poverty, compared to 8.4% for the Southeast region.

The populations of Arun and Chichester are growing at above-average rates, about 10% every ten years, with numbers of people aged over 65 growing at twice that rate.

Both districts have significant horticulture and agriculture sectors, along with a fishing industry across the coastal strip. Horticulture, agriculture, fishing, tourism and hospitality industries bring seasonal, insecure and low-paid work. Larger employers include Rolls Royce and University of Chichester.

According to the [2021 Census](#), both Arun and Chichester are about 95% White, with significant numbers of people who are White but not British. 87% of people in Arun and Chichester were born in England. 2.3% of Arun residents and 0.9% of Chichester residents were born in Poland. 1.2% of those in Arun were born in countries that joined the EU between April 2001 and March 2011 (other than Poland, Croatia, Lithuania and Romania).

How have you considered equity, diversity and inclusion in the structure and work of your partnership (not scored)*: ? [Advisory word limit: 300 words](#)

ANSWER:

Our mission statement is working together to make good food accessible to all. For food to be accessible, we believe it needs to be affordable, available, inclusive, safe, convenient and within reach.

The members of our [steering group](#), which includes local government bodies and charities, have strong commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion. Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice currently hosts the Development Officer roles for the Food Partnership and we share their commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, enthusiastically in agreement that *"we recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and accessible"* (Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Equality and Diversity Policy).

We aim to embed the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion across all we do; however we recognise that we have more to do. We have attended the REDI toolkit webinar run by Sustainable Food Places and are in the process of examining how best to integrate the learnings from the toolkit into our work.

Some practical examples of how we consider equity, diversity and inclusion are:

We ensure our grant programmes explicitly address the issues around accessibility of culturally specific foods, which locally, we found these to be cost and availability. We ensured the purchase of culturally specific foods was a priority category on our Food Fund applications. This commitment led to one of our foodbanks being able to buy in additional specialist foods that otherwise they would

have struggled to offer, and a continuation of a pilot cookery project for Afghan refugees. When we hold events, we ensure that the food on offer does not exclude any groups on religious or cultural grounds, and when hiring spaces choose accessible venues. We were successful in securing a wheelchair accessible community allotment plot for our Arun Growing Project from Littlehampton Town Council which has made the project more inclusive.

We are currently undertaking work to identify groups that are disproportionately at risk of food insecurity, and will support local groups to develop responses. For example, it was identified that a military base in Chichester District has significant numbers of Fijian and Nepalese residents. The Food Partnership's local 'Bournes' area group is working to promote the Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice Language Line, so they can access help directly in their first language if preferred. As people with disability and caring responsibilities are disproportionately food insecure, the Food Partnership is supporting partners to develop local responses, including transport and food actions.

SECTION 2: Local food activity and impact

Please read **SFP Awards: Guidance for applicants:** [SFP Awards - Guidance for applicants 2024](#) before completing this section.

Please describe the activity and impact of local food work delivered in your place within the last three years against the relevant key issues (1-6) and action areas (A and B) below.

We advise that you keep answers to within 600 words for each action area (i.e. for each A and B under the key issues). Whilst you won't be penalised for going over this limit, this will help the panel focus on your main achievements. For sections C, 250 words is the mandatory limit.

For Bronze and Silver awards, there are mandatory actions for some key issues. These are laid out in *SFP Awards - Activity and Impact*: [SFP Awards - Activity and Impact.docx](#). This document also provides a broad benchmark for each award, rationale for SFP's inclusion of each key issue, and example actions for each action area.

Only submit additional documents for food action plans and strategies related to Key Issue 1 mandatory criteria. All other additional documents will not be assessed. You may add links to online documents but always check the links and permissions as we will not be requesting changes from you after submission.

Key Issue 1 Mandatory Criteria Checklist

NB failure to provide Key Issue 1, Action area B mandatory criteria will result in rejection at the eligibility stage.

- Bronze applications require a one year action plan
- Silver applications require a three year action plan

1. Have you submitted a current food action plan or food strategy with an action plan?

- Yes

2. How are you evidencing this action plan?

- Attachment as a Word, PFF, Excel document? No
- Link to an only document? Yes
- If a link place here as well under Key Issue 1
- Action Plan link: <https://arunchifood.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ACFP-Good-Food-Strategy-Amended-Oct23.pdf>

3. Has the action plan less than 6 months to run?

- No
- If less than 6 months to run what is happening after the action plan expires? (100 words)

Key Issue 1: Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action

Action area A: Establish a broad, representative, and dynamic local food partnership

The Arun and Chichester Food Partnership has a mission to work together to make good food accessible to all. It has a Steering Group of members representing different local charities, local authorities and community sector groups, created in November 2020. With funding from West Sussex County Council and the district councils, two Development Officers (making up one full-time equivalent post), were hired in June and October 2021. The Development Officers work collaboratively across thematic areas but have a geographical focus on the Arun and Chichester districts respectively. The Steering Group recently moved from monthly virtual meetings to quarterly, with regular thematic working groups to enable more focused delivery of actions as well as inviting wider stakeholders to work collaboratively on specific topics. At the time of writing there are active Schools/Families, Food Security and Community Growing working groups. We also ensure that we meet at least once a year as a group in-person.



The Food Partnership has clear terms of reference and a wide representation of different local authorities, agencies and groups including county and district councils (including Wellbeing, Partnerships and Communities Team and Public Health), housing associations, resident group networks, food banks, food education, small-scale commercial growing, surplus food distribution, our local CVS organisation and Citizens Advice, which currently hosts the development officer roles. Our current co-chairs are from Clarion Futures and Chichester District Council.

Steering Group member organisations



Steering Group member organisations

We hope to continue to widen representation of our Steering Group in the coming year to include more voices from the local food and farming sectors though we have made progress to build relationships with local farms and growers which has led to one commercial grower joining our Steering Group this year.

Beyond the Steering Group and working groups are the local community food networks that have been established in different areas across Arun and Chichester, which are open to organisations and other stakeholders interested in working together to improve food access and participation in their community.

Action area B: Develop, deliver, and monitor a food strategy/action plan

Following a consultation period which included an online survey to all residents, a Virtual Food Forum open to stakeholders in the local food system, a strategy away-day facilitated by Food Matters and a series of participatory appraisal events, the Arun and Chichester Food Partnership produced a [3-year strategy and action plan](#) which focuses on our strategic themes. The creation of the strategy was also supported by a Sustainable Food Places mentor.

The strategic themes are:

- Household food security
- Food that is good for our health
- Food that is good for the planet
- Food that creates, celebrates and reflects our communities
- Food that contributes to a vibrant food economy
- Food that can create resilient local communities

The strategy and action plan, published in 2023, is monitored on a six-monthly basis to assess where we are against timeframe and outcomes. We recognise it is not a static document and will review and amend the action plan to reflect the external and internal changes that naturally occur. We feel the strategy and action plan is ambitious but achievable if we can create the mechanisms for input from a range of different organisations and sectors as the partnership grows, and continue to receive financial help and endorsement from our local authorities.

Before we created our strategy, we produced a Good Food Charter to promote the partnership and our mission and provide some simple changes that people can make at an individual and organisational level. We developed a logo and brand guidelines ahead of this to help create an identity, set up a webpage on our host's website and encouraged our partners to include updates and links about the partnership on their websites and other communications channels. In February 2024 we launched our own website - arunchifood.org.uk - which highlights our main areas of work, the mechanisms for delivering this, and keeps people updated on opportunities, projects and latest connections.

C: Other information: Other activities and context (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

We work with local authority departments to embed improving food issues into their policies and plans. For example, we have been building relationships with Public Health to identify areas of cross-pollination. There is now commitment from the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board to carry out a strategic needs assessment on food and nutrition on a county level to reduce health inequalities and improve access to food. In order to support this work and provide the knowledge and expertise Food Partnerships can provide, WSCC Communities Team has asked us to create a West Sussex Food Partnership network to provide guidance and support to newly forming Food Partnerships as well as create a stronger voice to affect change within the local authority. Additionally, we have joined our 'Local Community Neighbourhood Network' district-level health

partnerships in both districts. As of November 2023, healthy food has been declared one of the three priority areas within the Arun network and we sit on the Healthy Food working group to identify gaps and potential solutions where access to healthy food can reduce health inequalities.

Key Issue 2: Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement

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Action area A: Inspire and engage the public about good food

This year we have created a [new website](#) with lots of information and resources, thereby generating connections and enabling community education on good food. The website is supported by our regular [newsletters](#) and social media pages on [Facebook](#) and [X/Twitter](#), which we use to connect with the community.

We have run webinars and training (some available on [YouTube](#)) about community growing, setting up a community fridge/pantry, the national Healthy Start initiative and learning opportunities on sustainable agriculture through Brinsbury College.

The members of our partnership undertake extensive work to inspire and engage the public about good food. For example, [UKHarvest](#) provides free videos, cookalongs, information at its food hubs. UKHarvest attend the Chichester Farmer's Market with a stand, once a month with information about events, engagement, educational material. They ran a project delivering live cooking demonstrations outside Tesco stores in Chichester, and produced 'Veg while you Wait' videos demonstrating how to use, store and preserve nutritious food. They also run the Shop, Chop and Chat programme, financially supported by Hyde Housing, to help educate residents in assisted living about healthy eating and cooking techniques but fundamentally to create a community and reduce social isolation in these locations.

[Tuppenny Barn](#), a Chichester district horticultural education charity, runs many groups and activities to promote organic horticulture and improve local good food provision. For example, they host events on beekeeping, the magic of compost, open days with tours of the growing space and markets showcasing locally sourced produce, alongside their education and horticultural therapy programmes.

Arun and Chichester District Councils both have wellbeing teams which promote and enable healthy eating. Chichester District Council runs [farmers markets](#), promoting fresh local produce.

The Food Partnership has had a presence at many community events including the Chichester Eco Fair, Bognor Regis Food Festival, Tuppenny Barn Christmas fair, Angmering Produce and Flower show, Angmering Community Fair and Halloween Event, Bersted Community Day, as well as multiple cost-of-living events promoting local good food action. Depending on the type of event, we provide different activities and opportunities to engage, from participatory appraisal consultation to badge-making, cookery demonstrations to kitchen appliance myth busters, and one of our most popular – our 'guess the veg' sensory box guessing game.



Bersted Green Community Day

We ran two Good Food Days in Petworth (one in October 2022 with 34 attendees and one in February 2023 with 20 attendees) which demonstrated how to use fresh, low-cost foods to make healthy meals as well as promoting involvement with Petworth Community Garden. We also hosted a Sidlesham Food & Fun Day where we promoted use of and involvement in an underutilised community orchard and are planning an event this autumn at a community orchard in Littlehampton.

We also attend peer network groups, including West Sussex Mind and Carers Support, to listen, learn and share knowledge. Working with community groups in this way enables us to hear and learn from a variety of different voices in the community in addition to meeting the general public at community events. Our partners and steering group members also do this, for example Chichester District Food Bank has a programme called '[Stand Stronger Together](#)' which provides a weekly drop-in for food bank users to meet, share ideas over a cup of tea and support each other.

Action Area B: Foster food citizenship and a local good food movement

One of our early actions was to run a [consultation](#) to ask residents about what food actions they would like to see and get involved in. The consultation was largely online but we also sent round physical copies to local food providers to share with their attendees. This informed us in our strategic planning and activity, particularly the early identification of increased community growing as a high priority.

In order to mobilise our local communities, we have worked extensively to create local community food networks. We have local groups in Littlehampton, Bognor Regis, Chichester, The Bournes (the corridor from Southbourne to Fishbourne), and Petworth and Northeast Chichester, with a view to creating more as capacity allows and as needed. We also support communities to undertake localised actions in some areas, such as co-organising and delivering the Sidlesham Fun & Food Day. Together with these multi-agency local groups, we are building public awareness of issues and building a local good food movement. The groups foster partnership working, encourage sharing of resources, identify local problems and develop solutions and support the local community food sector.

Alongside our initial webinars on community pantries and [growing projects](#), we have created a [Local Food Action toolkit](#) to inspire the imagination of food citizens, showing them what is

possible and examples which can be followed, alongside some structural and background considerations. This is to be used by residents and groups that are considering ways that they can create and develop food actions, individually or collectively. In this toolkit we showcase a variety of different local projects alongside a detailed menu of proposed community action and what to consider. We are supporting this with a planned series of workshops to help communities envision a better food system and work towards that together.

We have launched a community growing project in Arun, commissioning a community gardener to lead in the development of multiple growing sites, inspiring more people to grow and eat healthy food. To date, the project has reached around 60 individuals across Angmering, Littlehampton and Bognor Regis. Our [Arun Community Growers Facebook group](#) is now at over 100 members and we encourage people to share their own growing journeys as well as keep up-to-date with our latest sessions. To ensure the growing project is accessible to marginalised groups in our communities and reaches people who may be experiencing social isolation, mental health difficulties, low self-esteem and/or difficulties accessing healthy food, we have targeted promotion of the project to community groups. These include Mens Walk Talk (a men's mental health charity), West Sussex Mind, Age UK and social prescribers. In June 2024, together with homeless charity Turning Tides, we held a Grow Club trail where we brought referral partners together to see three of our spaces. We ran a hands-on planting workshop for partners to feel more confident referring people into our sessions. The overall aim is to provide opportunities for the community to come together over growing, harvesting and eating good food, with the structure in place to support those who need a helping hand initially getting involved. Where people are not in a position to join a community space, we go to them to deliver workshops, such a recent [windowbox planting workshop](#) for older residents of a supported living scheme.

We also have a community growing network covering both Arun and Chichester, to enable experienced community growers to share knowledge, skills and assets with each other and people who want to start other local growing sites. We are creating a fliersheet to encourage people to join community growing sites and promote existing ones.

When awarding grants through the Arun and Chichester Winter Food Funds, we have worked with local groups to develop projects that improve food citizenship and build a local good food movement. For example in 2023 we awarded F.E.D. (Food Equitably Distributed) CIC a grant to provide weekly recipe kits for low-income families working with local charity Family Support Work. The families were encouraged to join and actively participate in a Facebook group to show how they got on with the meal kits and get people talking and sharing about their cooking.

Together with This Is Rubbish, this February we hosted an online workshop on food justice for local residents and people working in the community food sector and a subsequent [blog post](#). We will continue engaging the public on the subject of food justice through our planned tailored workshops (mentioned above) and Food Conversations workshops with Sustain.

C: Other information: Other activities and context (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

In February 2023 half term the Food Partnership brought together several organisations to put on an intergenerational community meal and activity morning. The event was organised in partnership with Family Support Work, F.E.D. CIC., Salvation Army, Age UK and West Sussex County Council with advice for attendees available from Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice and

Christians Against Poverty. A sit-down meal for 100 people was provided for free, alongside activities and a hay box cooker workshop delivered by the West Sussex Waste Partnership (mentioned in section 6). Of the 28 who completed the feedback form, 25 rated the event with the highest praise of 'really enjoyable' and the remaining 3 rated it 'quite enjoyable.' 22 out of 25 who completed the question gave the meal the highest praise - 'really good' and 21 out of 23 rated the activities for kids as 'really good.' Of those who attended the workshop, it was rated 'really good' and the information/advice available was rated really good by 16 out of 19 people. This event provided proof of concept of how working with trusted community agents like Family Support Work is key to engaging with residents and tests the community café/canteen model which is something we are aware is a gap in our districts. We also used the event as an opportunity for community consultation which we do at every opportunity to shape our work.



"(the best part was) the community coming together in hard times"

Key Issue 3: Tackling food poverty and diet related ill-health and increasing access to affordable healthy food

NB at Silver we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

Action area A: Tackle food poverty

The Food Partnership prioritises food security; the majority of its Steering Group support people experiencing hardship, including Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice, Stonepillow (a homelessness support charity which includes free food provision), UKHarvest (a surplus food redistribution charity which runs donation-based food hubs and food education), charitable arms of Housing Associations Clarion Futures and Hyde Foundation, both Arun and Chichester District Councils, and West Sussex County Council, which all provide local assistance. This is in addition to the three local Trussell Trust foodbanks also on our Steering Group, and we work closely with other foodbanks and community food providers via our local food networks. West Sussex County Council provide hardship support via the central government Household Support Fund, which includes supermarket vouchers, the Meals on Wheels programme, Free School Meals during termtime along with accompanying vouchers during the holidays and the HAF (Holidays and Activities Fund) programme during the main school holidays.

In addition to providing free or reduced-cost food, our members work collaboratively supporting to address the underlying causes of crisis or long-term food insufficiency. Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice, in partnership with the Trussell Trust foodbanks in Bognor and Chichester, has hired two Foodbank Advisers. UKHarvest community hubs, as well as other pantries and free food providers such as the One Foundation foodbank and Warm Welcome centre, arrange regular visits from agencies to help people to access the help that they need.

Our Food Security Working Group looks at local issues and possible solutions, as well as being a place to share information about existing and developing provision. We are also members of the Arun and Chichester Financial Impact group, another multi-agency partnership looking at the financial impacts of the pandemic and subsequent cost-of-living crisis. Acknowledging the overlaps between our groups, food poverty is now a standing item on the Financial Impact Group agenda.

In 2022 we ran a campaign to promote the uptake of Healthy Start, including the delivery of bitesize training to three organisations, and creation of a [YouTube video](#) covering key information about the scheme. We were successful in ensuring that Healthy Start was covered on the general mandatory benefits training course for local Citizens Advice advisers. We also embedded a questionnaire to prompt advisers to promote Healthy Start to their clients. Of the 2,948 questionnaires completed over the year, 475 said they would follow up with the client with more information and 68 people were identified as eligible and either helped to apply or signposted to apply. Highlighting the importance of the scheme to local authority partners resulted in them funding printed materials which we then distributed to nurseries, food banks and pantries.

Together with Independent Food Aid Network, we created a [“Worrying About Money?”](#) leaflet, an income maximisation and support tool which allows individuals to identify where they are struggling and then direct them to a local specialist who can help. This resource is specifically created to alleviate food poverty by addressing the underlying issues that have created it, in recognition of the maxim that “it’s never just about food.” Available both online and in physical form, we have distributed 20,000 copies and are in the process of updating to print another 10,000. This resource complements the Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice [‘Maximise your Money’ toolkit](#) which includes a section on food which the Food Partnership supported to create. which includes a section on food which the Food Partnership supported to create.

The Partnership creates and maintains information sheets to enable people to access free and low-cost food. These are available on the [‘help and support’ section on our new website](#); the website also includes our [directory](#) map highlighting food provision and other support. The information sheets and [‘Worrying about Money’ leaflets](#) have been used extensively by partners and get regularly shared in Facebook groups when people ask for how to access support.

Since Winter 2022, the Food Partnership has distributed £60,000 of district council funding as small grants to 38 charities and community groups. The Food Partnership designed the criteria and application process and administered the scheme in three rounds. Last winter, with funding from Arun District Council via the Household Support Fund, we were able to reach 1,406 people by funding twelve voluntary sector organisations to provide access to free food to their clients.

Access to food in rural communities has been identified as a problem across the Chichester district and ACFP is exploring solutions in our local food networks. [Chichester District Foodbank](#) have responded to this by providing free home delivery for its food parcels in rural areas. One

Foundation also runs a food bank in the Southbourne area (west of Chichester) and provides deliveries of food parcels, which include fresh food.

Chichester District Food Bank works with all 54 schools in the Chichester District to provide lunch packs to children who qualify for Free School Meals due to low income during the summer, Christmas and Easter holidays.

Action Area B: Promote healthy eating

With representation from both of the districts' Wellbeing Teams on our Steering Group we regularly promote the [Chichester](#) and [Arun](#) Wellbeing services and are able to link them in to other organisations. For example, before the Arun Wellbeing Team began planning in-house cookery sessions, they consulted with the Food Partnership on the best way to do this. We subsequently brought together relevant local organisations that were either delivering or wanting to deliver cookery sessions to help them ensure they were adding value rather than duplicating existing services. This partnership work meant we were able to link them with organisations already offering or willing to offer cookery sessions that are keen to host them.



Petworth Good Food Day Cookery demo

We directly promote healthy eating at our events, including the Petworth Good Food Days (funded by Hyde Foundation) where attendees learned how to make simple, healthy and affordable recipes including vegetarian wraps, houmous and couscous. They were also provided with free slow cookers as part of this project and advice on how to use them.

When administering the Food Funds we prioritised projects that promoted healthy eating, for example through the delivery of cookery sessions and provision of organic veg boxes. One recipient of a winter veg box fed back, *“Even receiving the box made me feel supported and cared for which was comforting... It encouraged me to make some healthy options and be productive in making something from scratch. My 2-year-old son loves the delivery and likes to look through it and me tell him what’s what, making it educational too.”*

A desire to increase access to healthy food was also a key motivator in our decision to establish community food growing activity in Arun, and increase it in Chichester. Initially funded via a local authority health partnership, we wanted to ensure that the physical benefits of keeping active were met alongside the provision of healthy food. With this in mind we have maximised the growing spaces for optimum yields and are actively encouraging participants to harvest and enjoy the produce. As we work more with allotments this year, we will work with plot holders to support growing additional produce to pass on to their local community food provider. We are also working with existing and developing community growing spaces in Chichester district to increase the amount of free, healthy food reaching those who need it. A key example of success is Petworth Community Garden, which is an inspiration to others, with its free lunches as well as distribution of its produce.

To add further value for participants of the growing projects, we have a partnership with local homeless organisation Turning Tides and have been co-running a weekly ‘Grow Club’ in Littlehampton open to their clients and the wider community since last autumn. The next phase

this year is to begin cookery sessions using the harvested produce so we are extending the growing project to cooking and eating with the healthy produce to help boost both life skills and professional skills to support with routes to employment or further training.

UKHarvest rescues large amounts of fresh, perishable fruit, vegetables and more every week. To encourage people to take this away with them at the Community Food Hubs, suggestions and ideas are given on how to use these in person and via their videos, recipes and education programme. They also ran a 'food and fuel' project with schools to educate around how to eat healthily using fuel efficient cooking methods.

West Sussex County Council promote the Veg Power's [Eat Them to Defeat Them](#) campaign, which aims to encourage children (and their families) to eat more vegetables. In 2023, 27,087 pupils and their families were reached across 88 West Sussex Schools who signed up to the campaign, 29 of which were in Arun and Chichester Districts. Data shows that it has a more positive and longer-term effect when children and families take part more than once. Additionally WSCC promote VegPower's [Growing to Love initiative](#) which encourages vegetable consumption amongst children through growing them at school, with seven schools signed up in the Arun and Chichester Districts this year.

WSCC also offer a free digital weight management programme called [Gro Health](#), which provides tailored education, recipes and one-to-one health coaching.

With the Public Health Strategic Needs Assessment taking place on food and nutrition and accompanying Strategic Framework and Community Action Plan, we are optimistic for healthy food to be put in the spotlight going forward and invested in on a countywide level.

C: Other information: Other activities and context (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

In winter 2023-2024 we produced a survey for teachers and other staff working in schools, exploring if and how the cost-of-living crisis is impacting pupils, how common it is for kids to come in to school hungry, and what happens when they do. We wanted to find out what processes were in place or how much was known about the processes, to equip staff to support children and their families. We made the conscious choice to target school staff through word of mouth, community and online networks to get honest and anonymous feedback on the difficulties staff may be facing. We received 43 responses and 18 who provided contact details for us to follow up with to continue the conversation and find out what the gaps in support are and what potential solutions could be. Alarmingly we found out that one third of respondents either didn't know or didn't think their school had a procedure in place, and that many staff would support children out of their own pocket. The next phase of this work is to share the results and meet with schools to identify what support they need and how this could work.

Key Issue 4: Creating a vibrant, prosperous, and diverse sustainable food economy

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Action area A: Put good food enterprise at the heart of local economic development

Arun

Arun District Council's explicit commitment to good food enterprise is minimal in its [Economic Development Strategy](#). Subsequently the Food Partnership submitted a response to the [Arun Local Plan's Direction of Travel document](#) in May 2024 calling on the council to explicitly commit to supporting a sustainable food economy. For example, we asked for ADC to make reference to the need to support the local food sector as well as support the shift towards regenerative farming practices as part of their green enterprise and innovation work.

Support is provided for local businesses through the [Arun Business Partnership](#) which provides networking opportunities alongside annual awards to spotlight business success, with the overall aim to strengthen the local economy. Arundel Town Council run the [Arundel Farmers market](#) which supports and promotes local businesses sell directly to the public.

There is also the Bognor Regis Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) that in addition to general business support, set up the Taste! street food festival that has run for the last two years.

Chichester

Chichester actively supports the local food sector through its [Chichester District's Economic Development Strategy](#) with the aims to: "Develop a co-ordinated approach to engage, support and promote the food and drink sector so that Chichester District is recognised as one of the country's leading food and drink producers," and "Promote the development of key employment and horticultural development sites" and "Provide support to businesses in the sectors of renewables, retrofitting and the circular economy."

CDC's Economic Team run the [Invest Chichester](#) initiative to both support local businesses and attract investment into the area – part of which is supporting businesses transition to net zero. There is also the [Chichester Chamber of Commerce](#) which provide business support alongside the annual Chichester and Bognor Business Awards. Chichester District Council also run the Chichester City [Farmers Market](#) where all stallholders are required to produce their food within 50 miles of Chichester.

West Sussex

WSCC run the [Let's Go! Net Zero](#) initiative. They are holding year-long sector demonstrator events to support West Sussex SME businesses to grow their business sustainably and to work collaboratively for success, for example, to grow local supply chains. The events have so far focussed on food and drink manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, horticulture and regenerative food growing, and support for the wholesale and retail sectors.

WSCC were part of the Low Carbon across the South East (LoCASE) grant programme which provided SME business grants of up to £20,000 for increased resource and energy efficiency, and green business development.

The countywide [Experience West Sussex](#) tourism development partnership supports and promotes local food and drink businesses, the hospitality sector and shopping local. As well as having a public facing website, they have a business support hub with resources, events, funding opportunities and relevant news.

“Food that is good for the local economy” is one of the Food Partnership’s strategic themes, and as a focus under years 2 and 3 of our action plan, we have made progress to engage with more business networks and businesses. We are building relationships with the three councils’ economic teams to create an increasing synergy between their work and ours, as well working more closely with the [West Sussex Growers Association](#) to understand the issues facing the local growing sector.

Following our success of funding a charity to provide organic local veg boxes for the families they support over the winter, we are exploring other initiatives that can strengthen household food security alongside benefitting the local good food economy. We are working with the veg box provider to explore how to ensure lower income households can access their produce, for example, through solidarity boxes, pay-it-forward or accepting Healthy Start payments. The veg box provider is now also a member of the Food Partnership’s steering group.

Action Area B: Promote healthy, sustainable, and independent food businesses to consumers

This February the Partnership launched its new website with a built-in [Community Food Map](#), which includes local food businesses, to highlight where people can buy local, sustainable food. We are working to find and add new local sustainable food businesses and there is a filter to make it easier for people to find them on the map. These include local producers who sell direct to the public, farm shops and delivery schemes, as well as community shops that sell local food. As we build relationships with the local food sector we will add case studies and share relevant events on the website and other communications channels – currently X, Facebook, YouTube and our newsletter.

Alongside our free and low-cost food information sheets we have created a [resource sheet](#) on local box schemes and other direct-to-consumer producers and delivery schemes. This was created with supporting people in rural communities in mind as well as promoting local food businesses.

We have also engaged with our neighbours the [Good Food For East Sussex](#) network and discussed how there is benefit to using the umbrella of ‘Sussex’ rather than West Sussex and East Sussex when promoting our local counties’ combined food offer. We are gathering information to add to a combined Buyers and Suppliers directory for Sussex. We have also recently met with ‘[Sussex Food and Drink](#)’, a Sussex-wide initiative originating in Horsham, West Sussex, who run the ‘Sussex Six’ campaign to get local food businesses to commit to sourcing an additional six items from local producers. They have just been commissioned by Chichester District Council to run a targeted campaign to promote local food businesses in the district.

In November 2023, UKHarvest hosted the first meeting of the new Chichester Food Ecology Strategy Group, bringing together West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council and the Goodwood Estate. So far, the group has been exploring how best to engage small independent business-to-consumer farmers and growers who wish to promote their produce as part of our efforts to boost the local economy.

In 2022 we partnered with Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester and the Bognor Regis BID to promote community food projects, enable residents to consult on our strategy proposal and provide energy and financial support for families alongside offering fun activities for children. This event, named 'Fresh Ideas', was held during the Bognor Regis Taste! Street Food Festival and we were pleased to be able to provide visitors to our pop-up shop a '£1 off' voucher to spend with the independent stall-holders to encourage engagement with us and promote the offerings of the festival.

C: Other information: Other activities and context (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

The newly formed West Sussex Food Partnership Network will enable us to work together towards building a stronger strategic environment for good food enterprise, as well as to have collective influence on plans for local economic development alongside other countywide issues such as procurement and public health. For example, via contributing to a Sussex-wide Buyers and Suppliers directory which we can work on as a county to ensure a wide representation of West Sussex local food producers and retailers.

Key Issue 5: Transforming catering and procurement and revitalising local and sustainable food supply chains

NB at Silver we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

Action area A: Change policy and practice to put good food on people's plates

Understanding the significance that improvements to procurement can have on the overall local food system in terms of health, environment and the economy, a priority for the Food Partnership has been to understand the processes and build relationships with the relevant County Council departments on this. We have met on different occasions with the Head of Catering Procurement and their colleagues at Chartwells, who work with schools around nutrition as part of their social value offer, to understand the opportunities and challenges there may be to improve procurement practices. We recognise the limitations we have had in only representing two districts within the county, and we welcome the opportunity to represent West Sussex as part of the new West Sussex Food Partnership network we have formed. This, alongside the recent decision for a Public Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on food and nutrition, will strengthen our county-wide voice to influence procurement policy and practice more directly.

Earlier this year (2024) we had the opportunity to put forward recommendations towards the County's new Sustainable Procurement Policy sent to the Head of Procurement and Assistant Director of Communities, sharing with them examples of introducing healthy and sustainable food policy and buying standards as they have implemented in [Durham](#) and [Brighton](#).

The council have an [award-winning in-house catering team](#) for SEN schools. The LACA awards judge on examining innovation, management of the service, customer satisfaction, improving uptake and improving a healthy sustainable food offer, among other areas and WSCC won the 'Catering Business of the Year' award in 2022.

[Chartwells](#) has the contract for most West Sussex Schools. They have a nutritionist available to schools, whom we recently met. She goes into schools to encourage children to try different foods as well as providing parent taster events to encourage parents to consider school meals. They cater for special diets, have reduced the sugar in their desserts and use a "nudge" system to encourage better choices. They are committed to using food sourced from within the UK.

The county also has [Fairtrade status](#) since 2017. Being a Fairtrade county is a continuing process of promoting and supporting Fairtrade initiatives by making considered purchasing and procurement choices.

As part of the Sussex Food Partnership network, we have been keeping abreast of developments in the dynamic procurement models with the intention to encourage participation in any regional opportunities that may arise.

Action Area B: Improving connections and collaboration across the local supply chain

The Food Partnership have created local food networks to bring together and support community members and groups. One of the outcomes of our Littlehampton Community Food Network was to establish a new regular supply of surplus food into the town through a partnership between the Littlehampton Lions group and UKHarvest, who have volumes of surplus but not the available personnel and transport to provide the deliveries themselves. The Lions now do a weekly collection from the UKHarvest warehouse in the Chichester district and deliver fresh produce to three to five community groups (depending on availability and volume). We also assist when UKHarvest have an abundance of products through sharing across our networks of food providers who may be able to collect.

We are in the process of developing a shared supplier and buyer directory for the Sussex area with the Good Food East Sussex network to help improve connections and collaboration across the local supply chain. We promoted their recent 'suppliers and buyers' event to our West Sussex contacts and we are working with Wealden Food Partnership to help extend the buyer and supplier network across into West Sussex county. We are also building relationships with the South Downs National Park Authority where we recently provided an introductory briefing document and relevant information update.

We are also helping to promote the '[Sussex Food and Drink](#)' 'Sussex Six' campaign to encourage local food businesses to commit to sourcing an additional six items from local producers with an initial focus on the Chichester District.

The county-run 'Let's Go Net Zero' programme has been successful in improving connections and collaborations, e.g. through its Green Business Champion programme and popular events bringing local producers and suppliers together.

C: Other information: Other activities and context (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

Chichester District is home to one of the UK's largest organic lowland farms – [Home Farm at the Goodwood Estate](#). The Food Partnership visited the farm to meet with their charity the [Goodwood Education Trust \(GET\)](#) to discuss how we can improve connections and collaborations with communities, particularly around the issue of access and affordability for residents. GET provides funded forest school and educational visits for schools with the highest percentage of free school meal eligibility and for ESOL and SEND children; Goodwood also runs initiatives such as the 2-year Culinary Academy training programme to inspire and motivate young people to join the food industry. As noted under section 4b, our Steering Group partner UKHarvest work closely with Goodwood, both ensuring that donated surplus food from their events etc. is distributed across the community as well as working with them as a strategic partner on developing a local food ecology strategy, which is in the early planning stages. Their main patron, the Duchess of Richmond, has taken a specific interest in early years health and nutrition; GET is exploring further ways they can support this, such as vegetable growing patches for the visiting children to work with and food sensory experiences.

Key Issue 6: Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food & farming and an end to food waste

NB at Silver we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

Action area A: Promote sustainable food production and consumption and resource efficiency



In 2022 we signed up to the Food for the Planet Toolkit which kickstarted our engagement with the County Council's Sustainability and Procurement teams. Connecting with them meant as well as promoting the actions in the toolkit, we were able to provide recommendations to Sustainability team's [online hub](#) that has a 'food choices' and 'shop local' section. We also connected to their Waste Prevention team and subsequently worked together with them on different events – one of which was at our intergenerational community diner event in Bognor Regis where their outreach team delivered a workshop on how to make a non-electric haybox cooker (pictured).

In our response to the Arun Local Plan, sustainable food production and resource efficiency was a high priority. For example,

"Suggested inclusions:

- *Prioritise and support sustainable, regenerative farming practices and land use, including Community Supported Agriculture, local veg box schemes and supply chain infrastructure.*
- *Have a robust process to scrutinise applications for Intensive Livestock Units (ILUs) requiring proof that they are meeting the government-set targets to improve biodiversity, air quality and tackle the climate emergency.*
- *Procure and promote the purchase of sustainable local food. For example, providing and following guidance on sustainable fishing.*

- *Supporting communities to engage with their local food system through opportunities to grow, cook and eat together alongside promoting the benefits of sustainable food.*
- *Community composting schemes ahead of compulsory household food waste collection*
- *Consider policies that improve resilience, including promoting water absorption and storage in public and community food growing spaces through management of soil and water systems.”*

Following consultation with the community and a mapping exercise we identified community growing as a priority for the Arun district and subsequently began a community growing project, securing funding via a local health partnership to contract a community gardener to play a leadership role in supporting existing growing spaces and establishing new ones. This project meets several of our objectives including community engagement, providing positive health outcomes and reducing the pressure of food bills, as well as enabling us to promote sustainable food production on a micro scale. As well as providing opportunities for people to join community projects under the instruction of a consistent and supportive gardener, a wider aim is to teach and encourage people to give ‘growing-their-own’ a try at home or as part of a career. We deliver workshops in partnership with other organisations, attend community events and share information on how to get involved.

In addition to this funded project in Arun, we are working across both districts to support new, existing and aspiring community growing projects through the creation of a local growing network where groups come together in person and online, to share updates, knowledge and resources. We also created the [Community Growing Toolkit](#) to support with the setup and ongoing organisation of growing sites and held a webinar that is now available on our [YouTube](#) channel, featuring three local growing projects. We are working with [the Tree Scheme](#) at Chichester District Council to create or extend community orchards, increasing the amount of free, local fruit available in the long term.

On a county level, the Let’s Go Net Zero programme has produced a film series on low carbon business, including an episode on regenerative farming showcasing Trenchmore dairy and cider farm near Horsham. The programme is also running a year-long programme of sector demonstrator events to support West Sussex SME businesses to grow their business sustainably, and to work collaboratively for success e.g. to grow local supply chains. WSCC were recently part of the Low Carbon across the South East (LoCASE) grant programme which provided SME business grants of up to £20,000 for increased resource and energy efficiency, and green business development.

Last year also saw the introduction of the [Planet Protector Challenge](#) which was a school initiative from the West Sussex Waste Education Partnership that engages school children in a range of waste-busting activities including reducing food waste. Currently Arun and Chichester schools are at the top of the scoreboard having won six badges each.

As a Partnership, we also work with local voluntary groups, including Transition Chichester, Chichester Community Development Trust, Eco Rother Action and more which promote more sustainable food and resource efficiency, through a variety of methods including community growing, community meals, promoting plant-based options, food rescue, a community fridge/larder and more.

Action Area B: Reduce, redirect, and recycle food, packaging, and related waste

West Sussex County Council

In April 2019, the [County Council passed a motion](#) pledging to try to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. They provide an update in the [Climate Change Strategy progress report 2021-2023](#):

“Our Catering Services team has removed hundreds of thousands of miles of lorry traffic from our roads as well as reducing on-site school traffic by arranging for canteen waste and recycling to be collected at the same time as other school waste. The project has removed 25,000 school waste collection journeys each year, offered schools greater value for money, and reduced the number of bins on site. We worked in partnership with our catering partner Chartwells to enable schools to switch from daily ‘delivered in hot’ school lunches, to meals cooked on site in kitchen pods. The project has reduced food miles by 120,000 miles per school year. It has also provided an additional 1,900 hours of work per school year for local people, who live close enough to walk to work.”

Chartwells have also now instituted a pre-order system for school meals to reduce waste.

WSSC ran a six-month [food waste minimisation pilot project](#) with food waste redistribution charity [UKHarvest](#) in three locations to encourage people to take advantage of surplus food rescue services and to reduce edible food waste. The pilot was composed of 18 community hub sessions and three education sessions. It prevented 7.8 tonnes of food, with a retail value of £21,600, from going to waste. Due to the success of the pilot, a one-year county-wide programme began in April 2023 and has been extended for a further 12 months. Two of these hubs are in Arun and Chichester (Bognor Regis and Petworth), adding to the nine other Community Hubs UKHarvest run in Chichester District.

The Let's Go! Net Zero programme has run sector demonstrator events for the food and drink manufacturing, horticulture, and advanced engineering sectors, and for retail and wholesale, which have all promoted waste reduction and circular economic principles. They are also running a social media campaign with 'top tips' for industry, including tips on reducing packaging waste.

WSSC run the [Fight Against Food Waste](#) campaign to encourage waste-reducing consumption habits alongside the virtual [Resident Climate Action Hub](#), a space to share ideas and discuss climate related topics.

Arun District Council

The council declared a climate emergency on 15 January 2020 and by pledging to become carbon neutral the council has committed to achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2030. In 2021-2022 ADC ran a food waste collection trial in Littlehampton which proved to be [successful](#), seeing over 86 tonnes of food waste being recycled in the first six months. This wasn't rolled out by the council, and the Arun and Chichester Food Partnership subsequently shared information with the WSSC Waste Team about Community Composting schemes which have worked well in other areas, and included consideration of Community Composting schemes as a recommended inclusion in the Arun Local Plan.

Chichester District Council

CDC declared a climate emergency in 2019 and created their Climate Emergency Action Plan. They launched a new commercial food waste collection service to help businesses across the district reduce their impact on the environment.

Community and Voluntary sector

Chichester is home to food waste and education charity UKHarvest who rescue and redistribute over 600 tonnes of food every year and distribute over 215 tonnes of that to over 20,000 people in the area via their community food hubs and more recently, their Grub Clubs in 10 local schools. The area also benefits from having a FareShare depot in Brighton, covering Sussex and Surrey. They run a weekly collection and delivery route into Arun and Chichester supporting eight community groups in the area. Last year they collected 121 tonnes of food from the Arun and Chichester area, and redistributed 79 tonnes of food into community groups in Arun and Chichester, 40% of which were fruit and vegetables.

Some local projects also make fabulous use of surplus food, creating community meals or making it available for collection in a community fridge. [Littlehampton Community Fridge](#) run sessions for residents to choose a bag of surplus food six days of the week, in addition to their 'on tour' project where they travel to smaller towns and villages weekly. They also recently launched their Second Chance Café, whose menu is sourced predominantly from surplus food, and which runs on a pay-as-you feel basis. This means that no one is excluded from visiting and even more surplus food is put to good use. There are further examples across the districts, including:

- Midhurst Community Hub has a weekly free community meal, using surplus food.
- Grow Selsey has started a project collecting and redistributing free fruit from trees in private or public spaces (with landowner consent).

C: Other information: Other activities and context (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

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