

Good Food East Sussex

Working Group: Food Inequality and Health

Attended by Debbie Anderson, Helen Graham, Ruby Makepeace Somerville and Nancy Wilson.

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Food Partnership Updates

Eastbourne Food Partnership

Coordinator Nancy Wilson – nancy@eastbournefoodpartnership.co.uk

Working with Tech Resort to ensure community food projects are able to take payment with Healthy Start vouchers. See draft comms toolkit here.

- Piloting a project with a local veg supplier to supply a veg box worth £8.50 which can be paid for with healthy start vouchers.
- Working with Fareshare (Harriet Knight) on engaging supermarkets, especially around collections for community food projects.
- Community Food hub model to combine access to affordable food with opportunities for wider community engagement through food (Good Food Movement project)
- Shinewater Community Food Hub project launched this summer, with input from Shinewater Family Hub, Shinewater Primary school & Feeding Britain.
- Food inequality/insecurity strategy working group to be launched under EFP umbrella in Sept/Oct with representatives from EFP Eastbourne Foodbank, community fridges, food insecurity ambassadors, EBC. Aim to be a strategic body for the wider food security network (~30 orgs that will have direct input through open meetings etc), using a Food Ladders model.

Hastings & Rother Food Partnership

Coordinator Debbie Anderson – debbie@hastingsvoluntaryaction.co.uk

We have chosen to align our Hastings Food and Health work with the Sussex Health and Care Partnership vision for 2025.

In some areas there is more work currently taking place than in others however this could well change as we have found our work, particularly over the last year has become very reactive, changing to meet need or demand.

Starting Well – HALO – we are linking to cookery workshops that HALO are running for nursery staff, staff in Early Years settings etc to promote the Food network and to see where there might then be links to support provision for families in those settings. We are working with Active Hastings on the Broomgrove estate to target young people and provide them with food alongside an activity session. We are also working with Universal Healthcare to prototype sessions for younger people on the same estate where food is used as an engagement tool to have discussions with younger people about their healthcare needs. We are also running cookery and healthy eating workshops for young people as part of a new food access project being piloted in Broomgrove which is an area being funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund by Hastings Borough Council. In late 2023/early 2024 the Food Network will be promoting and supporting the leading food charity FoodCycle www.foodcycle.org.uk to start working in Hastings schools. Foodcycle mission is to use food waste to feed the community and their work in schools will help embed the Food Networks work too.

Living Well – We are supporting community food projects running across Hastings to make sure that people in need can access food in multiple locations. We are advocating for all of these projects to have, at least an element, of wrap

-around support embedded particularly around financial wellbeing. We work with Feeding Britain continually on food supply issues and are developing mechanisms to bring extra food into Hastings and St Leonards. We sit on the Tressell Trust working group looking at ways to move beyond the Food Bank and also sit on the Food Foundations Food Ambassadors programme board. Much of our work is around food related education and we are currently working with a supported accommodation unit delivering life skills cookery. Over the last year we have been working with Social Prescribers in Hastings and food is often used as an engagement tool to enable conversations with people around health and wellbeing. We support the new Hastings and Rother Diabetes UK Support Group run in partnership with the Primary Care Network with healthy eating provision and have also signposted people to food projects as Diabetes UK's recently published Cost of Living report has highlighted issues for people with long term health conditions in being able to afford food to help manage their conditions.

Ageing Well – We have been working with the National Association for Social Prescribers on a pilot around engaging older people in Social Prescribing and much of this engagement has been done again using food as a tool to bring people together. We support a lot of the Hastings Ageing Network work by delivering community lunches and coffee mornings to older people's groups in Hastings and St Leonards. The power of using food in this way has been impactful in helping to tackle loneliness and isolation and impactful in helping to reduce health inequalities. An example of this is a recent older persons tea party run in partnership with the East Sussex College Group where 45 older people came along and signed up to workshops in Nutrition for over 50's, Tai Chi and other opportunities to support their health and wellbeing. Through our latest small grants programme we also enabled the national organisation Re-Engage www.reengage.org.uk to start working with us in Hastings to offer older people an opportunity to connect with others in their community, eat, drink and socialise.

Lewes District Food Partnership

Coordinator Ruby Makepeace-Somerville - ruby@sussexcommunity.org.uk

- Chairs the Lewes District Emergency Food Network (6 food banks, 2 community supermarkets, food hubs, pantries, fridges, community kitchens etc). Engaging

groups such as Healthwatch and Care for the Carers and inviting representatives along to food projects to give info.

- Part of the multi-agency group chaired by Lewes District Council 'Cost of Living Partners Group'
- Working with Family Hubs on distributing information specifically around Healthy Start and dealing with dietary & allergy requirements when you have a low-income (e.g. Henry Programmes for families)
- Working closely with residents to amplify their voices to hear exactly what 'food inequality' means to people in their everyday lives. [Feeling the Pinch: Have Your Say](#) project ran between May-July 2023 and brought together residents and 25 community partners (from town and district councillors and East Sussex County Council, as well as third sector representatives from CAB and national charities such as Church Action on Poverty) to discuss the impacts of the COLC and food insecurity.
- We are finishing a report on the Feeling the Pinch Project and presenting to Lewes District Council, ESCC Public Health, District Council Network, and planning to develop a toolkit so food projects across the country are able to replicate similar 'participatory lived-experiences' projects with residents.
- Developing a Toolkit for Dignified Food Support with Community Psychologist Carl Walker from Brighton University and Lecturer Ronald Ranta from Kingston University to ensure community food projects are equipped to deliver their projects with dignity and inclusion at the centre.
- Developing toolkits and resources to help food banks transition from 'food bank to food club' which embodies Dignity, Choice & Agency.

Wealden Food Partnership

Coordinator Helen Graham helen.graham@3va.org.uk

HSF focus has been addressing food inequality and poverty; e.g. funding for Family Hub to deliver low cost healthy eating training to staff and volunteers to be able to then deliver courses, Community Chef to train groups in delivering larger/bulk projects such as lunch clubs, funding additional lunch clubs for older people, supporting HAF projects, supporting farms in their farm school programmes and developing growing spaces for local communities, supported additionality at Foodbanks and Community Fridges/Pantries over difficult periods such as Christmas. HSF has been key in addressing food inequality and linking to groups in Wealden.

Working closely with farmers, has begun a twinning project between farms and groups such as care homes and schools. Links to improving health and food choices; understanding where food comes from; sustainability through official 'Twinning' and ongoing relationships between group and farm. Looking at funding applications to develop.

Working to improve the council's response to the COL-C in regards to food support, ensuring all emergency food provision is up to date on their COL webpages

Part of the Wealden Strategic Partnership a multi-agency group addressing approach to Cost Of Living Crisis.

Looking to develop work with foodbanks/fridges, etc in moving to more sustainable and dignified models such as those promoted by Feeding Britain.

- Member of Feeding Britain
- Member of Healthy Weight Partnership
- Member of Healthy Start Steering Group

Creating a joint county-wide approach

We identified a number of similar themes throughout our work, for example the importance of thinking about food inequality and health from the start of live to the end of life, as well as linking it in to relevant national strategies. We recognise the need to support what we do and why we do it with evidence from across different areas such as Public Health and food security academia. Below are some key documents that guide our work:

[The Sussex Integrated Care Board Strategy](#)

[Sussex Health and Care Partnership: Our Vision for a healthier future](#)

[Food Ladders Model: a multi-scaled approach to everyday food security and community resilience.](#)

[An Emerging Strategy for Nature and Health in Sussex](#)

[East Sussex whole-system healthy weight plan 2021-2026 | East Sussex County](#)

[Council Health and Wellbeing Strategy - Wealden District Council - Wealden District Council](#)

Benefits of a county-wide approach

- Mapping work across the district and identifying gaps
- Spreading our expertise across multiple themes (we are each working on and focused on differing themes, by working together we can cover much more ground)
- Coherence in funding applications
- A joined-up approach means a wider impact
- Learning from each other and replicating good work and practice

Questions for public health

- What policies and procedures are in place for when people present to a health professional as food insecure/hungry/living in poverty?

- How can we 'Make Every Contact Count' (MECC)? – acknowledging that how someone is met when they ask for help can be the difference between them accessing support or not trying again.
- How to increase involvement with social prescribers?
- What are our shared outcomes? How can we get the word out about this to raise profile of food partnerships work in this area?
- Who else should be involved?

What can food partnerships do?

- Link people to groups for support (community lunches, volunteering opportunities, community larders and food banks)
- Work with social prescribers, health professionals, social services
- Feed back to the Healthy Start Working Group and Healthy Weights Partnership
- Advocate and campaign for change
- Whole-systems thinking – how does this intersect with the environment, with school dinners, with food business and enterprise?
- Engage, promote and celebrate good work
- Build bridges between residents and public health – authentic public engagement and consultation. Engaging groups that may sometimes be left out of discussions such as farmers.
- Ensure work is led with Dignity, provide training and information about the latest national studies
- HAF - working with the East Sussex County Council & food partnerships to develop guidelines around best practice inc. sourcing and food education.