Lewes District Food Partnership September–October 2026 Update

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Brite Box Pilot – Wallands Primary School

The Brite Box pilot at Wallands Primary School has completed its fourth week, with 22 children from the same class participating each week. The project is a collaboration between LDFP, Fitzjohns Community Food and Voices of Hope, who run the Brite Box scheme. Hannah Thomas is a local chef and caterer who sources the ingredients and prepares the weekly boxes with help from our Project Assistant Michele and volunteer Rhiannon.

Ingredients are delivered to Denton Island Community Centre each week, where Hannah prepares the boxes in the Community Kitchen. Each contains a recipe and the ingredients needed to prepare a meal at home, with vegetarian options available.

Initial feedback from children has been very positive. The pilot will hopefully continue next term with a different class, subject to funding. We hope to produce a report at the end of the pilot, drawing on participation and delivery data, feedback from children and families, experiences of home cooking, and lessons for future delivery.

Here are a few comments from the children:

"My favourite thing was making the pizza with my family."

"I liked trying foods I hadn't eaten before."

"The activities were really fun and I learned how to cook."



Hannah moving boxes



Ingredients and Instructions

Pinch Points – Lived Experience and Local Decision-Making

We are now into our third and final year of our lived experience project Pinch Points and September brought opportunities for participants to reconnect, build confidence and contribute to the design of local services. A creative writing workshop led by Sara Clifford explored places of personal significance, offering space for personal expression and social connection.

Participants subsequently met East Sussex County Council representatives to discuss the new Crisis and Resilience Fund, including how earlier feedback had helped shape the fund and experiences of the interim arrangements.

Three members also contributed to Lewes District Council's Equalities and Fairness Stakeholders Group, sharing their lived experiences and presenting details of the Community Small Grants Programme and Charter, which has been co-produced by Pinch Points participants. Feedback following the meeting was very positive. Their contributions underline the importance of involving people with lived experience directly in decisions affecting community support.

Feedback from attendees highlighted the value of creating space for people with lived experience to share their perspectives and contribute to discussions.

"It was such an enjoyable session and there was some brilliant writing and story-telling shared with the group as well as some suspenseful cliff-hangers in the postcard exercise!"

"It was a great opportunity to hear voices that are so often not heard"

"I thought the workshop was very well organised and delivered. It was particularly helpful to hear the participants' experiences and reflections on CRF. It was clear that the preparation work you had all done with them had really informed their thinking and built their confidence to share their views."

Community Small Grants Programme 2026 – Now Open

LDFP has completed development of its Community Small Grants Programme, supported by East Sussex County Council's Crisis and Resilience Fund and co-designed by local residents with lived experience of food insecurity. Grants of up to £1,500 will support eligible not-for-profit organisations delivering projects in Lewes District that improve access to healthy, affordable food and strengthen financial resilience.

Pinch Points participants helped co-design the funding priorities and Community Grants Charter. The guidance emphasises dignity, choice, inclusive and welcoming spaces, social connection, wellbeing, access to advice and preventative support. Applications from projects reaching underserved groups and communities are particularly welcome.

Application guidance has been prepared. The application deadline is 11 December 2026, and funded activities must be completed by 31 March 2027.

Malling Foodbank – Marketplace Model

We have been supporting Malling Foodbank to move from a traditional foodbank model to a Social Supermarket model, combining affordable food with access to advice and wider support. This work has been funded through the Crisis and Resilience Fund and has partnered Malling with the Alliance for Dignified Food Support, who have undertaken workshops and training with coordinators and volunteers. In addition, LDFP has provided Malling with new literature to help communicate and promote the new model. New members can receive six consecutive weeks of free food support, followed by a contribution of £3.50 per visit. No referral is required, and members can choose from fresh produce, bread, tinned food and other items.

The new Malling Foodbank Marketplace will operate weekly from Mon 16th November, 11am–1pm, at King's Church, Brooks Road, Lewes. The new approach aims to strengthen dignity, choice, accessibility and financial resilience.

Food Waste, Redistribution and Local Food Systems

LDFP added its name to a joint letter promoted by The Felix Project calling on the Chancellor to introduce tax changes that would encourage businesses to redistribute surplus food rather than waste it. This aligns with the Partnership's commitment to food security, food waste reduction and a more equitable food system.

LDFP has also joined more than 150 organisations, businesses and individuals supporting a letter coordinated by the Abattoir Sector Group. Scheduled for submission to the Prime Minister and farming ministers on 19 October 2026, the letter calls for a sustainable network of local and regional abattoirs, recognition of local slaughter capacity as essential infrastructure, review of regulation and charging, and targeted support for facilities. The campaign is relevant to local producers, supply chains and rural economies and we have written separately to both local MPs to share details of the campaign.

Good Food for East Sussex – October Events

Good Food East Sussex coordinated a programme of nine food-related events between 6 and 23 October 2026, including activities in Lewes District covering local food, food poverty, sustainable systems, farmers' markets and networking.

LDFP Steering Group – 17 November 2026

The next Lewes District Food Partnership Steering Group meeting is scheduled for 17 November 2026. The agenda has been circulated to members. Please let us know if you have any items to add.