

*Seahaven*  
community food



# SCDA

## Food Security Strategy

### 2022 – 2025



At SCDA each community food project addresses multiple service level objectives and is responsive to the particular community that they serve. Projects are interconnected in a meaningful way, both by people (interacting with multiple projects based on their need), and very practically in terms of sharing food, resources & expertise. For example a community garden might produce a glut of carrots, so the partnered community kitchen will offer a pickling workshop to preserve them. The pickles produced are then sold to members at the community supermarket on a pay-as-you-feel basis. Projects can be replicated & adapted across locations.



Food partnership strategy both informs our work at a community development level and provides SCDA with an opportunity to share learnings and best practice.



Funding bids may aim to fund one or multiple community food projects, but will always demonstrate how they help to meet multiple service level objectives.

**This joined up approach to food security will deliver affordable food within a community setting, PLUS safe spaces, social eating opportunities and access to skills and advice. This will help communities to stay ahead of the cost of living crisis, by building resilience, rather than firefighting by responding to the crisis with emergency food provision.**

**Service Level Objectives:**



## Community Supermarkets & Fridges

According to Lewes District Food Partnership, community supermarkets or pantries are membership schemes which offer low cost food to people, either for a small subscription fee or on a pay-as-you-feel basis. There are typically fewer eligibility criteria to join a community supermarket or pantry than a foodbank, and members can often self-refer.

## Community Kitchens & Cookery

"A Community Kitchen is a group of people who meet on a regular basis to plan, cook and share healthy, affordable meals. Community Kitchens are for everyone, and can be run anywhere there is a kitchen. Benefits include increased access to healthy meals, helping to develop life skills such as budgeting, meal planning & cooking fresh food, and supporting members of the community to connect and start new friendships." [communitykitchens.org.au](http://communitykitchens.org.au)

## Community Growing & Composting

"Community gardens are spaces where people work collectively for shared benefit. Community gardening may address chronic disease through the provision of opportunities for physical activity, improved nutrition and reduced stress. Participation may improve wellbeing through increased social contact, culturally valued activities and mitigation of food poverty. The benefits of community gardening are argued to extend to more coherent and cohesive communities, improved physical environments and the sharing of the products of the labour." Lovell et al, 2014

## Social Eating Spaces

Marsha Smith of Coventry University describes social eating initiatives as "An increasingly popular way of providing meals for the public in the UK. These organisations provide a limited menu of low-cost meals prepared using food surpluses and serve meals communally to improve social inclusion. They also enable participants to actively engage and contribute to public life, and they meet the need for social bonding, pleasure and conviviality."

## Emergency Food Provision

Emergency Food Providers are groups or organisations which provide free or low cost food to people who struggle to afford sufficient food for their household. This is an umbrella term which covers a wide range of service models. Emergency food providers, such as the Trussell Trust have noted the emergence of chronic food poverty, which cannot be solved within a short time frame.

## Lewes District Food Partnership

Lewes District Food Partnership is a network, which takes a whole systems approach to promoting food security. The food partnership is currently made up of a core group of stakeholders from across the district, including community groups, food businesses, producers & policy makers. Their food charter invites the wider community to engage with issues such as sustainable growing, healthy eating for all and building a 'good food movement'.



## What should our approach to food security be?

We know with certainty that the cost of living crisis is going to escalate in 2022 and beyond. The provision of emergency food that served communities well during the pandemic is likely to become overwhelmed, whilst remaining limited in terms of the extent to which it gives its recipients agency or helps to promote social inclusion.

Therefore it is sensible that a long term food security strategy focuses on the *prevention* of food insecurity by building community resilience and improving access to affordable food schemes, social eating opportunities and improved skills via community kitchens and gardens.

Whilst we acknowledge that the demand for emergency food provision will likely continue to rise, this model of provision must account for the increasing levels of chronic food poverty, whereby people are in work and/or in receipt of all of the benefits they are entitled to and yet still cannot afford their most basic living costs.

SCDA currently operates two community hubs in Eastbourne and Newhaven. Our ambition is to ensure that each of these communities has access to the five community food activities outlined above: a community supermarket and/or fridge, a community kitchen, a community garden or growing space, social eating opportunities and, as a last resort, emergency food provision via food parcels or similar. We also support the development of community food projects in other locations, such as Fitzjohns in Lewes and run projects at satellite sites including Peacehaven.

"The right to food is a human right. It protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves in dignity."

"Food security occurs when all people are able to access enough safe & nutritious food to meet their requirements for a healthy life, in ways the planet can sustain into the future" Sustainable Food Places

## Key to this approach are two principles:

**Flexibility** - every community food activity should look different in each location, depending on the unique assets & needs of the community.

**Interconnectedness** - each of the community food activities should be connected, both with each other and with wider service offerings, such as the nursery, community advice team, youth services & employability.

Whilst some of activities might be delivered directly by the food security team, and oversight will sit within this team, some activities may also be delivered by other service areas and SCDA as a whole will work collaboratively to deliver food security service level outcomes.

Each community hub should also be engaged with its local Food Partnership to further develop opportunities for collaboration and networking to improve outcomes for the community.

Between April 2022 & March 2023 £65k of funding will be sought to develop each of the five identified community food activities in Newhaven & Peacehaven. Fundraising activity will include small grants, corporate and personal donations, crowd funding & pay-as-you-feel income.



This work requires a robust and specialist community food team to engage with communities, establish need and develop appropriate and interconnected community food activities. Our team currently includes:

- **Community Food Coordinator 22.5 hrs pw**

Leadership, coordination & development of all community food services

Coordination & supervision of specialist volunteers eg. community

supermarket & social media volunteers

Designated safeguarding lead for service area

Line management of development workers

Bid writing and reporting as required

Lead team meetings and ensure good communication across team

Lead on social media and internal comms work eg. contributing to monthly staff newsletter

Oversight of stock and lead on procurement

- **Community Food Development Worker 37 hrs pw**

Ensure delivery of day to day activity with a focus on community

supermarkets and emergency food provision, including contributing to

projects such as Food Use Places, Patch 2 Plate & Meal Kits

Procurement and organisation of stock

Coordination and supervision of storeroom volunteers

Contribute to social media, internal comms eg. leaflets for clients and reports

as required

Ensure record keeping is complete for all community food provision

Manage food@ inbox, responding to enquiries

- **Community Kitchen Development Worker 15 hrs pw**

Ensure delivery of day to day activity with a focus on the community kitchen,

including contributing to projects such as Food Use Places, Patch 2 Plate &

Meal Kits

Procurement and organisation of stock

Coordination and supervision of kitchen volunteers, including volunteer

cookery leaders

Contribute to social media, internal comms eg. leaflets for clients and reports

as required

Maintain food hygiene standards and lead on labelling etc

