

Report

# TACKLING FOOD INSECURITY IN THE UK

July 2022

Overview and good practice





# REPORT

## TACKLING FOOD INSECURITY IN THE UK: OVERVIEW AND GOOD PRACTICE

This report produced by Business in the Community (BITC) highlights good practice examples of the different ways community groups and other organisations are tackling food insecurity and supporting people to be less reliant on food banks.

### CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. THE FOOD LADDERS FRAMEWORK	4
3. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE	4
RESOURCES	13



## INTRODUCTION

Lessons from the good practice examples found by BITC are being drawn on in supporting five community organisations in the East Midlands through the Tackling Food Poverty project supported by Fusion 21. In particular, BITC are supporting these charities to develop activity around food pantries, community cafes and community growing. These include:

- **Food pantries, community larders, community shops & affordable food networks** – tend to operate with membership model, aiming to strengthen the self-esteem of members, increase self-reliance and reduce reliance on food banks.
- **Community cafes** - offer training and employment opportunities, and a pay-it-forward system.
- **Social eating** – provide low-cost meals served communally to support social inclusion and wellbeing.
- **Community hubs** – provide training and employment opportunities, offer mental health and wellbeing, debt advice and money management support and signpost to vital services.
- **Community growing projects** – created by local councils and communities, bring multiple benefits including access to healthy, locally grown food, improved health and wellbeing, community cohesion and the greening of communities.
- **Urban farming** – urban farms can help to create jobs and provide affordable food to local urban communities, at the same time as protecting natural habitats, and reducing water use and carbon emissions.
- **Food waste redistribution** – aim to reduce food waste, bring people together and empower communities through enabling local residents to share and access surplus food.

Business in the Community has chosen to deliver this project in the East Midlands and to focus on 2 counties; Nottingham and Northamptonshire.

These locations were chosen because:

- One in four children under 16 are living in poverty in the East Midlands.<sup>i</sup>
- The unemployment rate for April to June 2020 was 4.3%, a 0.6% increase on the previous quarter – the highest rise in the country<sup>ii</sup>.
- The most deprived area is Nottingham
- Child Poverty in Northamptonshire is 26.8% and working in Northamptonshire enables us to pilot the project in a more rural community.

### **The charities being supported through this project**

BITC wrote to many charities in Nottingham and Northamptonshire asking them to submit an application to be part of the project. The applications were reviewed by a panel of business leaders and key partners and 5 were chosen.

- Hope – Nottingham

[Hope Nottingham](#) is a Christian charity, working with local churches and community groups to serve those in need in neighbourhoods all around Nottingham. Hope also supports many neighbourhood food banks across the city, helping people out of crisis and directing people to life-changing support.

- Himmah - Nottingham

[Himmah](#) is a grass roots community-based initiative tackling poverty, mental wellbeing, racism and social exclusion in Nottingham. Himmah has a food bank which delivers around 250 food parcels, and 200 hot meals each week. In partnership with FareShare, they have launched a new membership scheme to help fight food poverty. The Nottingham People's Pantry has been set up to help people on low incomes from falling into the food poverty trap.

- Bestwood Park Church Nottingham

The mission of Bestwood Park Church is to transform the local community by providing opportunities for everyone to get involved, feel included and develop their skills. They do this by investing in community engagement and volunteering opportunities, such as Bestop Kitchen, 'Place of Welcome' cafe and a community garden where people can meet, volunteer, learn and develop.

- Northampton Hope Centre

Food is central to [Hope](#) and they use food in many different ways to bring benefits to individuals and the community. They provide access to high quality, healthy food from day services for homeless people and people on low incomes who attend their food club, offered in a positive, fair and dignified manner to people in need. By doing so, they improve people's health and wellbeing. For Hope, food is a way of driving change, for individuals, and society.

- Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) - Northamptonshire

[ACRE](#) is a countywide, independent charitable organisation working with rural communities in Northamptonshire to improve their quality of life, especially the disadvantaged. Their focus is on community development and engagement including helping groups to access funds for projects.

With thanks to:



## THE FOOD LADDERS FRAMEWORK

**Food Ladders** provide a useful organising framework for community scale interventions aimed at building local level resilience in the face of food insecurity. The approach was developed for low-income communities to address the wider effects that poverty has on health, wellbeing, and community cohesion and sets out three levels of intervention:

- **Rung 1: Catching.** This first rung provides a starting point for those who are in crisis. Such interventions might include emergency food aid, mental health support, access to social services, etc. Catching enables the ability to cope with a shock, whether that be the loss of a job, an unexpected large payment, debt, longer-term illness or relationship breakdown.
- **Rung 2: Capacity building to enable social innovation.** This second level supports those not currently in crisis, but who may be struggling to afford and/or access good food. Activities include training programmes, shared cooking and eating activities, food pantries, children's holiday clubs, and voucher schemes. Done in a manner that celebrates difference and is not stigmatising, activities provide residents with accessible choices that relieve the stresses that co-exist with low-incomes, expand skills, and enable the recognition of personal and local assets. These interventions connect people together by creating networks of trust and reciprocity through shared activity around food. This sort of intervention enables people and communities to be more adaptable by expanding their pool of assets.
- **Rung 3: Self-organised community change.** This third rung supports communities to realise goals through self-organised projects that capitalise on local assets. Projects meet community needs as

communities themselves identify them. Examples include developing a social enterprise based on community cooking knowledge that provides employment, community story-telling that leads to activism, cooperative food growing and food procurement that increases the local availability of good food, regular social cooking and eating activities to overcome loneliness, cross social divides and create intergenerational knowledge transfer.

## EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

### Food Pantries, Community Larders & Community Shops

#### Food Pantries

Food pantries are community food stores aiming to help households to save money and to create a sustainable and long-term solution to food poverty. The model originates from [Your Local Pantry](#), formed by Stockport Homes Group in 2013 and now comprising a 35 strong network of pantries.

Food Pantries operate as local co-operatives or social franchises with members paying into the club and remaining members for as long as they chose. They feel close to a 'normal shop' with members choosing what they buy from a range of frozen, refrigerated and fresh food such as fruit and fresh vegetables, sold at discounted prices. In this way, they provide a longer-term solution to food banks, which typically provide short term, occasional support to families suffering from food poverty. This also elevate the experience by reducing stigma and calming anxiety.

The benefits of the model include:

- Saving money on grocery bills: Over £15 a week or if a member visits weekly, £780 a year
- Saving food from landfill: Through environmental charity FareShare, Your Local Pantry draws on the oversupply in supermarket supply chains

- Enhancing nutrition and food variety: Through a commitment to offering fresh and frozen, chilled and seasonal produce
- Knitting neighbourhoods together: Through the weekly shop, with familiar faces, fighting isolating and signposting to other services
- Developing employability: Through a range of volunteering opportunities, developing skills through systems governing stock and software, payments, communication and environmental health.

Examples of food pantries in the East Midlands include:

- [The Nottingham People's Pantry](#) is being piloted by Himmah, a social justice charity working for poverty, race and education equality based in Nottingham city. The Pantry offers membership to people in receipt of benefits and has been designed to support families before they reach crisis point through building resilience around food poverty/insecurity. The Pantry has a dedicated support officer who works with vulnerable families and individuals to help them with budgeting and other support services. Members can spend up to £20 per week for heavily discounted food bundles, resulting in savings of up to £50 a week, whilst also supporting budgeting for other essential items.
- [Derbyshire Community Pantry Scheme](#) – Derbyshire County Council has provided £300,000 to Rural Action Derbyshire to help set up 12 community shops and pantries in some of Derbyshire's most deprived areas. The shops and pantries will sell nutritious food and groceries and be part of a countywide self-sustaining 'affordable food network'. Depending on location, the scheme will involve three models of delivery: pop-up shops, locations within existing community venues, mobile delivery.

Other examples of food pantries can be found on the [Your Local Pantry](#) website.

## SOFEA - Community Larder

SOFEA's mission is to enable the transformation of people's lives, and their communities, with a major focus on young people. They do this through:

- providing education, employability and wellbeing programmes for vulnerable young people, and
- tackling food insecurity and the disadvantage it causes whilst having a positive impact on the environment by reducing food waste

SOFEA trains and engages young people in their network of community larders and food surplus distribution.

The community larders serve as 'pop-up' hubs, as places to access surplus food, make friends, access support and advice (ranging from finance to accessing mental health care and employment and skills support). Some larders have been fitted by the Co-op and are set up like regular stores.

Participants pay a weekly subscription of £3.50 per week and can then choose £13-15 worth of food. Money generated from the community larders goes back to the local community and or to supporting the young people and adults they work with.

Since its launch in 2014, SOFEA has helped over 400 young people gain qualifications, skills and work experience whilst helping to transform their local communities via purpose projects such as community larders and food surplus distribution. Each year SOFEA provides 5 million meals, prevents 1,700 tonnes of food from becoming landfill and supports 150 charities with food.

## Community Shops

The [Company Shop Group](#) redistributes surplus food and household products. Company Shop members are offered surplus products from well-known brands at discounted prices. Membership is free and open to those in receipt of means tested benefits and to employees and pension recipients of the NHS, Care and Emergency Services, Prison



Service, British Armed Forces and the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods supply chain.

The Group has a social enterprise called Community Shop which aims to build stronger individuals and more confident communities by using surplus food to build confidence, giving people purpose, providing learning and development programmes and nurture stronger communities – at the same time as feeding those on the cusp of food poverty. Community Shop comprises three key initiatives:

- **Community Store** – offering food and household products from well-known brands at deeply discounted prices.
- **Community Hub** – providing training and personal development, and helping people to increase their confidence, build on strengths and overcome barriers in their lives with support ranging from health and wellbeing to money matters and community leadership training.
- **Community Kitchen** – a welcoming space where people can enjoy good quality meals at low-cost prices. Kitchens host a range of events and family activities and provide an opportunity for people to get out of the house and for communities to come together.

## Affordable Food Networks

A key priority for [Feeding Britain](#) is to establish and support [Affordable Food Networks](#) which improve access to affordable nutritious food, alongside wraparound support, for people on low incomes. Affordable Food Networks models range from citizens' supermarkets and social supermarkets to food buses and food clubs, depending on the needs and circumstances of the local area.

Each variation of the model entails a weekly basket of food and essentials provided to members for a fraction of supermarket prices. Affordable Food Networks also provide specialist support to help people move towards longer term food security

and financial resilience, and offer social activities based around food, and food growing schemes.

In total, Affordable Food Networks are currently saving 14,000 households more than £3.8 million a year on their shopping.

Innovative projects include:

- **FOOD Clubs** - Feeding Bristol has teamed up with Family Action and FareShare South West to open 14 FOOD Clubs in children's centres across the city. Members pay an annual £1 fee and weekly payments of £3.50 to acquire £15-£20 worth of fresh, chilled and ambient food. Membership is restricted to families who live in the communities around children's centres and is capped at 50 people per centre. Membership also links families into a mutual support network, as well as cookery demonstrations and lessons.
- **Food Buses, Mobile Citizens' Supermarkets** – These projects involve fitting out a double decker bus with a shopping area, advice booth and food preparation area on the lower deck, community café seating on the upper deck, a serving hatch and outdoor seating. The shopping area stocks culturally appropriate fresh, ambient, and chilled goods sold at affordable rates, with some locally produced fruit and vegetables being used. Healthy Start vouchers are accepted and home deliveries are offered to people who are housebound. Work placements are offered to young people facing barriers to employment.
- **Coventry Citizens' Supermarket** - Feeding Coventry's citizens' supermarket opened on the site of the Foleshill Community Centre in March 2020 and accepts a mixture of agency referrals and self-referrals. Members pay £4 and can shop for a balanced range of food with a value of £20-25. An on-site community café is being

developed, as are two large halls to be hired out for community activities. Outdoor space is being used for community food growing and to supply fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers for sale in the citizens' supermarket. An IT suite is also being set up to help people with benefits and job-searching. 650 members signed up to the citizens' supermarket during its first nine months.

## Community Cafés

Inspiring examples of community cafés can be found across the UK. Many provide training and employment to disadvantaged groups including ex-offenders, people with disabilities and the homeless, as well as supporting local businesses, running community-focused events. Some providing food and drink on a 'pay what you can' or 'pay it forward' basis.

Good practice examples include:

- [The Pulp Friction Canteen](#), located at the Nottinghamshire Fire Services Headquarters near Bestwood Park in Nottingham, prepares food for staff and their visitors. The canteen is a working kitchen and enables people with learning difficulties to develop skills by preparing and serving food, to gain qualifications in food hygiene and first aid, and to grow in self-confidence, work readiness and independence. The canteen receives food donations from Fareshare and surplus food from Lidl, Tesco and Marks & Spencer.
- [The Hornbeam Café](#) in Walthamstow runs a wide variety of community events promoting sustainable and low-cost living and gives support to people who need a place to meet. They serve locally grown organic food produced by the Organiclea cooperative and other local farmers. Various activities take place through the week including opportunities to learn to cook vegan food, a 'pay-what-you-feel' community cafe with a focus on organic and surplus food and What the Fattoush? serving up plant-based Palestinian street food and donating 10% of profits to SkatePal (an NGO supporting young people in Palestine through skateboarding). The cafés also run pay-as-you-feel food stalls around the Waltham Forest Borough with surplus food from local shops.
- Crisis, the national charity for homeless people, run [Café From Crisis](#), a training café and social enterprise in the heart of Spitalfields providing Crisis members with practical hospitality training while serving fresh food and drink. Through technical training such as kitchen craft and barista skills, members can gain qualifications and confidence in a public facing environment where they are supported on their journey out of homelessness. Crisis give trainees practical skills, refreshed confidence and the industry knowledge to equip them for future opportunities.
- [The Forest](#) is a volunteer-run, collectively-owned arts and events project in Edinburgh. They are a not-for profit charity funded mostly by a café. The café has a 'pay it forward scheme' which enables customers to pay for a coffee for someone who is unable to. The Forest provides a space where vulnerable can use the wi-fi, play instruments and boardgames and get creative. It also has a free shop where visitors to the café can bring unwanted items or food and pass them on or swap them.
- [Paper and Cup](#) is a small café just off Shoreditch High Street run by the Spitalfields Crypt Trust charity to employ and train people in recovery from addiction and support them to move forwards with their lives. The café also provides an events and exhibition space for new artists to raise funds for the charity.



## Social Eating

Social eating initiatives have become increasingly popular in the UK, providing low-cost meals prepared using local food and food surpluses and served communally to support social inclusion and wellbeing. These initiatives are part of a 'more than food' movement that recognises that eating together is hugely beneficial and seeks to normalise social eating. They also enable participants to develop 'food cultural capital' by increasing their engagement with a range of ingredients, cooking techniques and meal types.

In Nottingham, there are at least 25 social eating initiatives operating across the city which have emerged to counter isolation and food insecurity and are used by a variety of people including students, families and older people who pay £2-£3.50 for a 2-3 course meal. Meals are often prepared using surplus food from FareShare, supermarkets, community growers and the community organisations. Initiatives tend to be based in community spaces such as children's centres, community centres and churches, and meals are usually provided once a week. Good practice examples include:

- Nottingham-based social enterprise [Pulp Friction](#) teamed up with a local pub to deliver a hot meal service during lockdown. They are now trialling a "heat and eat" social eating service where meals are made offsite, heated and sold in larger venues which may not have adequate storage or kitchen facilities to run a conventional meal service, but where there is adequate space to serve crowds safely.
- At the [Bulwell Forest Garden](#) lunch club in Nottingham participants can either arrive early to harvest food and help cook a two-course vegetarian meal or come along later to share a meal and good company.
- The [Sumac Centre](#) in Nottingham provide a hot Sunday Brunch on a pay-what-you-like basis and people are encouraged to take extra for friends or neighbours facing food hardship.

[Foodhall](#) is a community and cultural centre in Sheffield with a community kitchen, social eating

space, social art gallery, workshops, pottery facilities, bike workshop and cinema. Managed by the community for the community, they tackle social isolation and encourage integration across a diverse range of groups.

Their core activity is the running of a community café, where communal meals made from surplus food donations are served on a 'contribute what you can' basis. To supply the kitchen and café Foodhall uses food waste surplus from local traders, serving hot meals at least three times a week. They also use surplus ingredients to cook frozen meals, which are delivered out to those in need around the city by bicycle as part of their Food Delivery Project.

Foodhall provides a space for members of the community to host evening dinner parties - 'Plates' – in a 'ready steady cook' style using surplus food from supermarkets or brought by the community group. This helps communities to share culture with food, interact and build ideas together. Plates are often accompanied by an activity such as a show, talk, lecture or other activity. Plates platform runs on a suggested donation basis and any funds generated support Foodhall's core costs.

## Community Hubs

Community hubs provide training and employment opportunities and develop people's skills. They offer mental health and wellbeing support, debt advice and money management support and they signpost people to vital services.

Those that have kitchens and community cafes, offer cooking classes and have food as the focal point of the centre help people to develop skills and gain employment in catering and hospitality, but they also improve people's understanding of nutrition and enable people to become more food secure.

An example of a community hub with food at its heart is the Oasis Centre in Cardiff who provide support to refugees and asylum seekers in Wales. They support approximately 1,000 people per week with basic needs, including food provision with communal meals to build integration and

community. They run various women-only sessions and groups, art classes, English language classes, sports sessions, daily advisory sessions, advocacy forums, relaxation sessions, a weekly Home Supper Club (exploring the food heritage and culture of different countries and inspired by clients who work in the kitchen) and a free lunch every weekday.

Clients can also participate in a weekly Cookery Club where they have an opportunity to socialise and develop new friendships, share and learn cooking skills, talk about the food and culture of their country of origin, learn about kitchen hygiene and safety, and experiment with new ingredients. At the end of each class, participants eat together and offer suggestions for future classes.

## Community Growing Projects

Community growing projects are being created across the country by local councils and communities. These projects bring multiple benefits including contributing to access to healthy, locally grown food, health and wellbeing, community cohesion and the greening of communities. A number of organisations support councils and communities in establishing community growing projects including [Sustain](#), [Capital Growth](#) and [Good to Grow](#).

Good practice examples in the East Midlands and beyond include:

- [St Ann's Allotments](#) is managed by the Renewal Trust – a regeneration charity working with children, young people, adults and communities in St Ann's, Sneinton and Mapperley in Nottingham. It is one of the largest inner-city allotments in the world, with 670 allotment gardens spread over 75 acres just 1.5km away from Nottingham city centre. The Allotments are thriving with a waiting list for plots and a range of facilities including a Visitors' Centre, Community Orchard, display and museum plots and a heritage plant nursery.

- [Arkwright Meadows Community Garden](#) in Nottingham City Centre grows and sells organically grown fruit and vegetables as well as providing volunteering, education and training, and activities to bring local people together including a kids club, yoga session, picnic weekends and an after-school club. The Garden is run by local people and provides a well-loved resource which reflects its vibrant and diverse community.
- [Tower Hamlets Food Partnership](#) and the Women's Environment Network (WEN) are a cross sector network aiming to build a better food system for everyone in Tower Hamlets. In 2020, they ran a Keep Growing campaign to provide support for people to grow their own food and share produce. They sent out over 700 seed packs to people in the borough and supported them through newsletters, videos and online Grower's Question Time sessions. This is just one of the projects supported by the partnership, which brings organisations and individuals together to develop innovative, community-led projects that shape a better food system for everyone in Tower Hamlets and distribute food where it is needed. Members include housing providers, food charities, small businesses, schools, social enterprises, community gardeners and the council.

## Urban Farming

In response to various factors including climate change and increasing food demand, an increasing number of organisations are turning to urban farming. In addition to their potential to protect natural habitats, reduce water use and cut carbon emissions, urban farms can help to create jobs and provide affordable food to local urban communities.

An example is Farm Urban, born out of the Life Sciences Department at the University of Liverpool, who install and manage high-tech urban farms that produce low-cost food in a sustainable and cost-effective way. Some of their projects include:

- **Alder Hey** - Liverpool's Alder Hey Children's Hospital has just been through a £0.25bn redesign to create one of the most environmentally sustainable hospitals in the world. Patients were involved in every step of the design process, resulting in a very family-centred and eco-friendly building that generates a portion of its own energy, is covered with green roofs, and has play decks for children to access the outdoors. Farm Urban has designed and installed three aquaponic systems on the play decks which enrich both the environment and diet of the children, as the food grown in them is used in the ward meals by hospital chefs.
- **Northern School's Trust UTCs** – Farm Urban and the Northern Schools Trust have collaborated to install an experimental educational farm in the basement of Liverpool University Technical College, along with the management and operation of the Wigan University Technical College two-story, fully-automated vertical farm.

## Food Waste Redistribution

In 2018, annual food waste within UK households, hospitality and food service, food manufacture, retail, and wholesale sectors was estimated at around 9.5 million tonnes and worth £19 billion. An estimated 60% of wasted food could have been eaten.

### FareShare

FareShare is the UK's national network of charitable food redistributors, made up of 18 independent organisations. Together, they take good quality surplus food from right across the food industry and get it to more than 10,500 frontline charities and community groups.

Their food reaches charities across the UK, including school breakfast clubs, older people's lunch clubs, homeless shelters, and community cafes. Every week FareShare provides enough food to create almost a million meals for vulnerable people.

FareShare offer two options – a paid for service with a FareShare Community Food Membership, or the opportunity for charities and community groups to collect free surplus food from a local supermarket through FareShare Go. Since launching FareShare Go in 2015, over 7,500 charities have been connected with more than 3,500 stores across the UK.

### Community Fridges

Hubbub coordinates the world's largest [Community Fridge](#) Network with over 250 Community Fridges running across the UK.

Community fridges reduce food waste and empower communities through providing a space where local residents can share and access surplus food. They bring people together, address social isolation and provide people with the opportunity to access healthy food, try something new and save money. As well as introducing people to their neighbours and new foods, community fridges host all kinds of activities such as cooking workshops, allotments and clothes swaps.

The Hubbub Foundation offer free support to groups to set up their community fridge and provide a comprehensive guide, design assets, health and safety templates and discounted fridges and freezers.

Annually, the Community Fridge Network redistributes around 7,200 tonnes of surplus food (equivalent to 17.1 million meals) and welcomes over 460,000 visitors.

### Food Connect

Another initiative led by Hubbub is [Food Connect](#), is a zero-emissions redistribution service using a small fleet of e-cargo bikes and an e-van to share surplus food from local businesses with the community.

Community groups – such as members of Hubbub's Community Fridge Network – normally rely on volunteers to collect surplus from retailers and other businesses, and collection times and the volumes of food can be a real challenge. Food Connect was set up to support the 'final mile' in food redistribution, to reduce air pollution and to create fair green jobs by creating a professional service, rather than relying on volunteers..

Hubbub first trialled Food Connect in Milton Keynes in 2020-21, providing food redistribution to community fridges and a temporary doorstep food delivery service as a COVID-19 response during the first lockdown. They saved 110 tonnes of food from going to waste – the equivalent of 260,000 meals. The food saved was associated with 36 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, while the use of electric vehicles avoided 1.7 tonnes of transport emissions. The pilot also created six green jobs.

## The Bread and Butter Thing

[The Bread and Butter Thing](#) aims to make life more affordable for people on low incomes, build stronger communities and reduce food waste through a self-sustaining approach to the redistribution of surplus food and non-food items.

Food otherwise destined for waste or landfill is provided to the project by supermarkets, factories and farms. It is then made up into food bags and distributed to customers. Customers receive a text every week asking them if they would like to order and reply "YES" to collect the following day. A typical order costs £7.50 and comprises three shopping bags - fridge goods, cupboard goods and fruit and vegetables.

The Bread and Butter Thing also collaborates with local and national partners on bespoke packages of support for local communities, offering advice and practical solutions for dealing with debt, managing utilities, accessing mental health support and grants and funding.

Almost 200 volunteers working on the project each week.

## Food Waste Apps

Several food waste apps have been developed which enable businesses and individuals to redistribute surplus food, creating less waste and helping to build a more sustainable future where resources are shared.

[OLIO](#) connects neighbours with each other and with local businesses so surplus food can be shared. This could be food nearing its sell-by date in local stores, spare home-grown vegetables, bread from a local baker, or the groceries from people's homes when they go away.

Items are shared via an app that includes a photo and description of the food, as well as when and where the item is available for pick-up.

[Too Good To Go](#), in Cardiff allows customers to order leftover food from restaurants for a fraction of the price. Restaurants are able to sign up and portion off any leftover food to list on the app, whilst customers order and collect.

## Sustainable Food Cities / Food Partnerships

Nearly 50 cross-sector food partnerships have been set up throughout the UK as part of the Sustainable Food Cities (SFC) Network movement. A key component of the SFC approach is the establishment of a cross sector body which owns and drives forward the agenda. These typically include representation from the public, private, voluntary and community sector. Local Food Partnerships publish a food strategy and action plan for their region. In some places, these are newly formed partnerships coming together specifically to meet the criteria to become a SFC Network member; in other areas these

partnerships have been in existence for a decade or more.

Below are some examples of a Food Partnership's activities:

[The Nottingham Good Food Partnership](#) was set up in 2018 and aims to:

- Commit to eradicating food poverty and diet-related ill health by increasing citizen's access to affordable, healthy food through socially innovative growing and eating programmes.
- Promote the importance of healthy and sustainable food to diverse communities.
- Build on the historical wealth of community food knowledge, reclaim lost skills and revitalise undervalued assets.
- Catalyse a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy that expands local food production and shortens supply chains.
- Transform the relationship between catering and food procurement that prioritises local supply.
- Work towards a circular food economy, radically reduce the ecological footprint of the food system and aim for zero edible food waste.

Their projects include:

- **Local Lunch** – a weekly podcast introducing Nottingham's local food heroes and how others can get more involved.
- **Nottingham's first Urban Greening Conference** on vertical gardening, resource efficiency and sustainable eating. Participants were provided with a vertical garden to pick their own salads and were taught about why vertical gardens are more sustainable than conventional agriculture.
- **The ladies lunch club** at Nottingham's Refugee Forum is a lively friendly group of women who make and share cuisine from their home countries with other female refugees and asylum seekers.

- **The Nottingham Growing Network**, which has partnered with Social Farms & Gardens to build links between community growing groups. They are supporting 20 grassroots community growing & wildlife groups through:
  - Peer-to-peer site visits and training to promote good practice in wildlife, biodiversity and community growing.
  - Learning to manage different habitats to address climate change and develop wildlife trails.
  - Creating more diverse and better managed green spaces, improving urban biodiversity and species rich habitats.
- **Nottingham Neighbour Food** offer local, sustainable produce with an opportunity to meet the producers. Users order online through the website then come along to pick up fresh produce at a weekly collection. All sales are in advance through the website which minimises wastage as all the food producers know how much to prepare.

[Brighton & Hove Food Partnership](#) won the Partnership won the UK's first Gold Sustainable Food Places Award. The award recognises the city's outstanding achievements on a range of key food issues and most recently on tackling food poverty during the pandemic.

Their collaborative approach to good food work means they are one of the few areas of the UK bucking the trend on childhood obesity, their breastfeeding rates are 25% above the national average and they have tripled the number of community gardens in the city in the past five years.

When Covid-19 hit earlier this year, the Food Partnership launched the '[Hungry at Home](#)' fundraising appeal and the city's Emergency Food Network became the vehicle for a citywide emergency food response to the pandemic lockdown.

Their projects include:



- **Food growing** – with 70 community gardens and orchards across the city.
- **Cookery classes** – with a regular programme of low cost or free cookery classes in the Community Kitchen covering everything from patisserie to fermentation, Indian street food to dim sum, aiming to improve wellbeing and develop confidence. The Food Partnership run a series of community cookery courses for specific groups including:
  - Dementia Friendly Cookery Course
  - Cooking on a Budget for people in low-income families
  - Cookery for People with Learning Disabilities
  - Students from local primary schools
- They have a number of **farmers markets and veg box schemes** with food sourced from local farms, including **Soul Soup** which delivers healthy, prepared soups and bags of fresh, rescued produce with customers donating what they can afford, be that more or less than their recommended donation amount.
- **Food Waste** - The Food Partnership coordinates the Brighton & Hove Surplus Food Network, an alliance of projects working together to intercept surplus food and redistribute it to people in need.

## OTHER THINGS YOU MIGHT NEED

### ENJOYED THIS CONTENT?

You might also like to:

- find out more about [our work](#)
- [learn more about our advisory services](#)
- [join us for one of our upcoming events](#)



Talk to one of our expert team [today](#) to learn how membership of BITC can help you take your responsible business journey further, and drive lasting global change.

## REFERENCES

---

<sup>i</sup> <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://westbridgfordwire.com/east-midlands-unemployment-rate-the-highest-in-the-country/>