



Adur & Worthing
FOOD PARTNERSHIP

Adur & Worthing Community Food Network

A summary of the community food response



April – Sept 2021

Published February 2022

www.awfood.org.uk

Community Food in Adur & Worthing

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Introduction

Across Adur & Worthing there are a number of community groups supporting people who are living in food insecurity. This report details the level of community support currently being provided.

The groups are run by members of the community across Adur & Worthing. Some groups are independently operated by voluntary or faith groups, and others are part of larger organisations.

A combination of home delivery and collection of food aid is available and throughout Adur & Worthing and some of the groups offer a drop-in service.

Three Community Food organisations run pop-up cafes on a regular basis, supporting people with a cooked meal and an opportunity to meet with others in their community. One organisation offers a takeaway service for the homeless community in Worthing.

There are a number of other organisations supporting people with food in Adur & Worthing, including food bank groups in Schools and organisations running additional support during the school holidays. Where we know of them, they have been referred to in the additional support section.

Community Food Network

A network of Community Food groups came together at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 to support each other and share learning and resources. The group is made up of food providers and mutual aid groups, the Food Poverty lead from Adur & Worthing Council and West Sussex County Council. These groups have been working together to support each other and ensure the families and individuals in their communities have enough food to eat.

Any group providing food support to their neighbours is welcome to [join the network](#).

The organisations who have taken part in the survey for this report are:

- Adur Community Café CIC
- Adur Community Gateway Hub
- Broadwater Support Group
- Community Works
- Fishersgate Foodbank
- Lancing & Sompting Churches Foodbank
- Maybridge Community Church
- Shoreham Food Bank
- Shout WSK
- Turning Tides
- Worthing Food Foundation
- Worthing Foodbank
- Worthing Vegan Foodbank



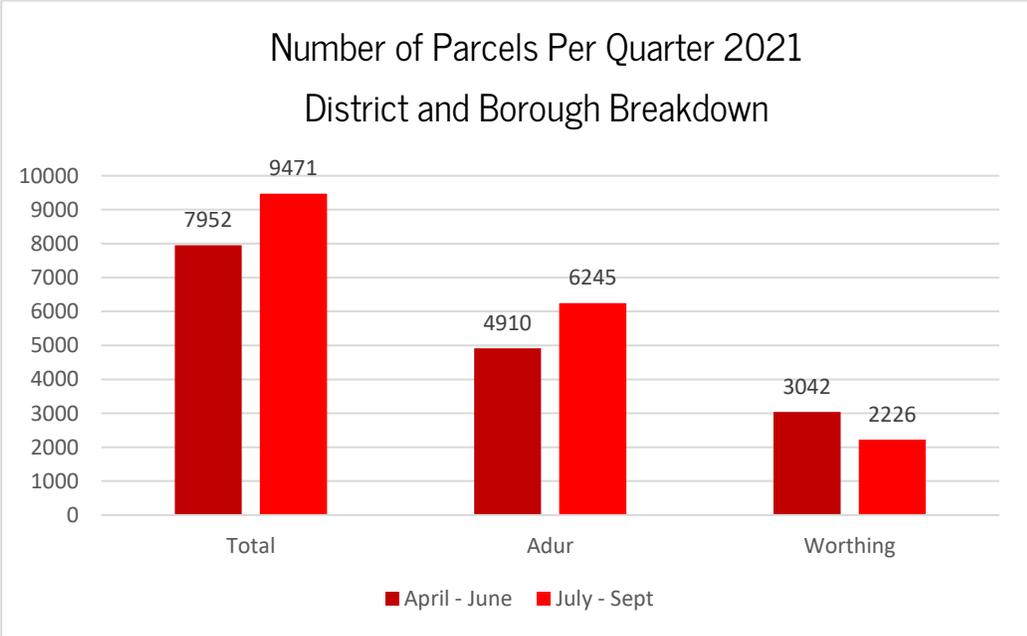
Community Food Need and Support

A total of **17,423** food parcels were distributed between April and July 2021. **7952** parcels were distributed between April-June and **9471** parcels were distributed between July – Sept .This equates to 12 organisations handing out **645 parcels per week** and around **2,580 per month**. This has increased from 1,693 parcels each month between July-Dec 2020¹. The breakdown between Adur and Worthing is shown below.

The number of parcels distributed increased by **1519** parcels between quarters. School holidays, increase in housing and rent, having to shield or isolate, debt, low income were all thought to contribute toward the increase in need.

This is in line with trends across the UK where food bank usage across has been increasing²

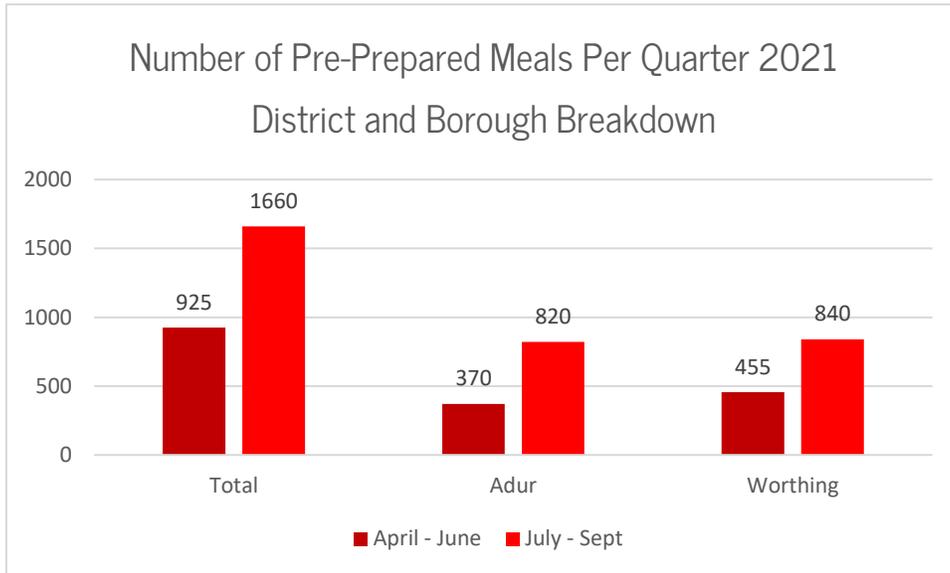
The below figures are good indicators of the level of food support being offered by the community however *these figures should not be taken as indicators for poverty*. Many people living in hunger do not access food support due to the shame and stigma associated with accepting food support and the number of community food organisations that exist will be reflected in the number of people accessing support.



¹ Emergency Food Adur & Worthing July – Dec 2020 report. <https://awfood.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/EmergencyFoodAWJulDec20.pdf>

² Tyler, G. 2021. Food Banks in the UK. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8585>

Pre-Prepared Meals



Three organisations regularly provide pre-prepared meals free of charge. These are, Adur Community Café, Fishersgate Food Bank and Worthing Soup Kitchen.

Food Pioneers Batch cooking project has now ended. They previously cooked 600 meals each month. These were distributed across Adur & Worthing, directly to people living in temporary accommodation and via community food projects.

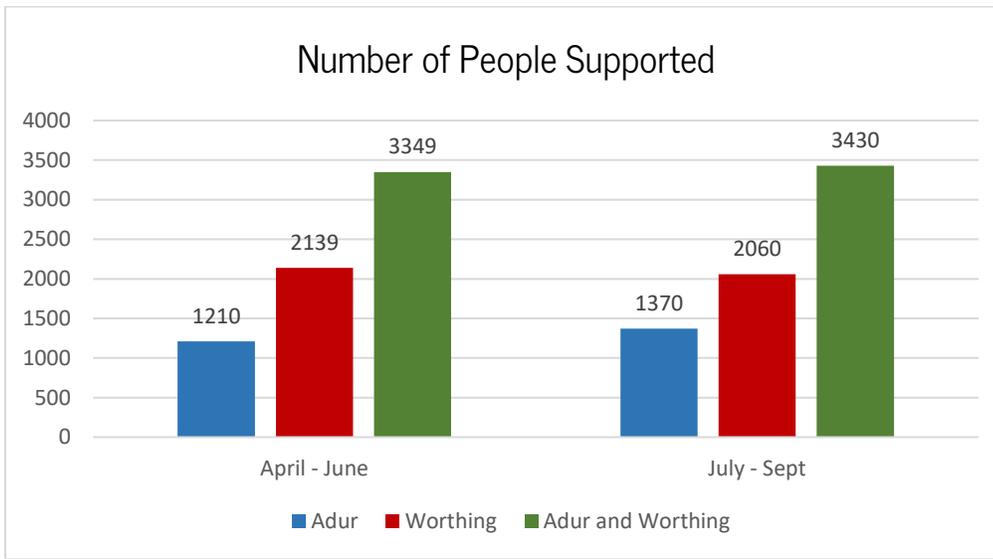


Pictures: Adur Community Cafe

Pre-prepared meals are important for those with limited cooking facilities, or who have other barriers to cooking their own meals. For example, people who have just left hospital, older people, people with physical or mental health issues and those with caring responsibilities. Research is needed to understand the barriers that people face in cooking at home across Adur & Worthing.

The Scale of Support

The median value of a food parcel is **£16-20**, this increased from £11-15 in April-June. Taking the median value of £15.50 per parcel, **£270,000** of food was distributed to the Adur & Worthing community between April – Sept 2021.



The above chart shows the number of people supported with both food parcels and pre-prepared meals across Adur & Worthing.

Some of the same people may be counted both in both quarters as their support need will have spanned both periods.

Again, this chart should not reflect the amount of support needed in each of these areas. This chart includes data from 4 organisations in Adur and 6 organisations in Worthing.

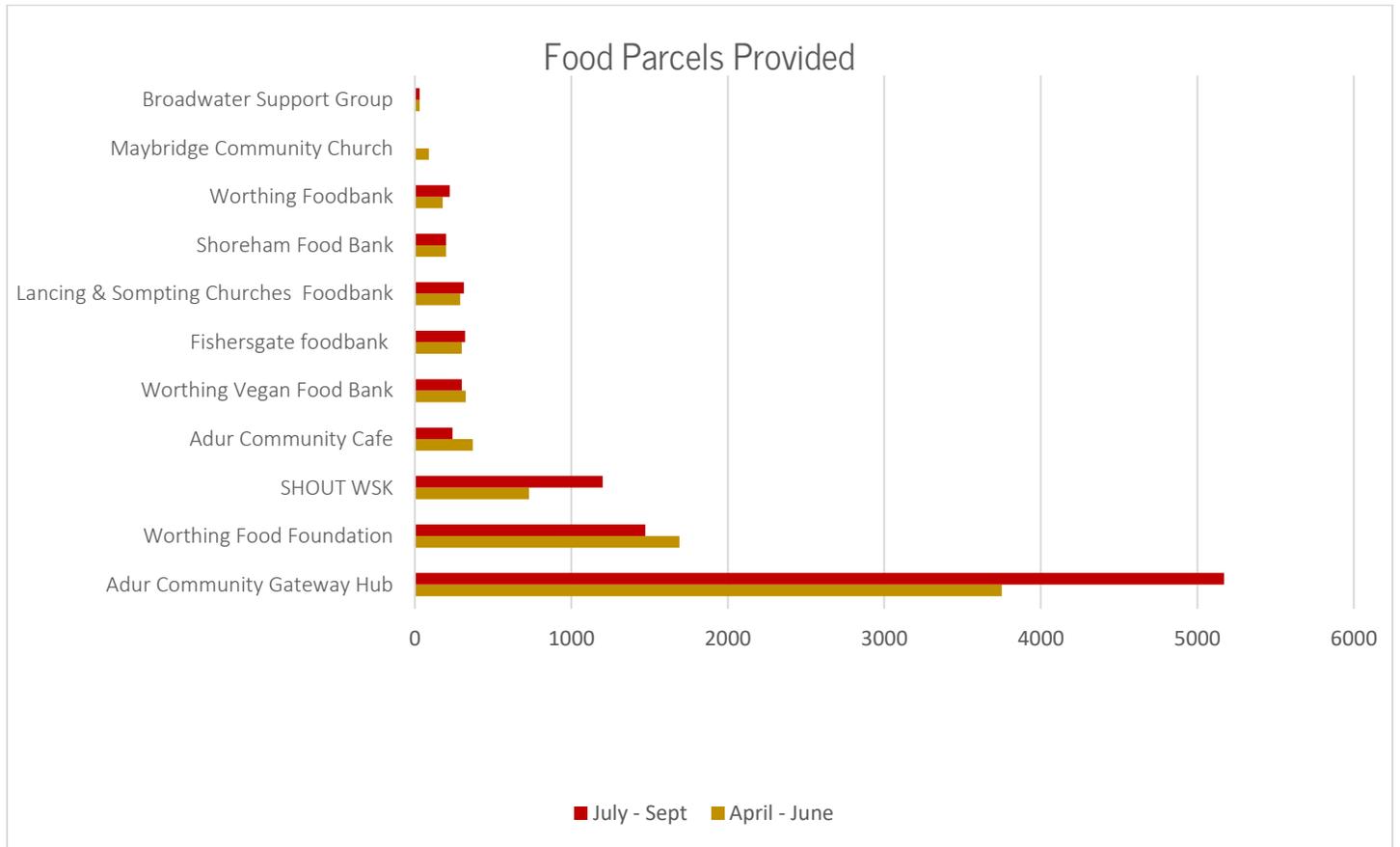
The data from Shoreham Food Bank and Turning Tides is not included in this chart.

“Without the help of the Foodbank, I don't know what I would have done.”

The scale of support that each organisation operates at varies as does the type of support offered.

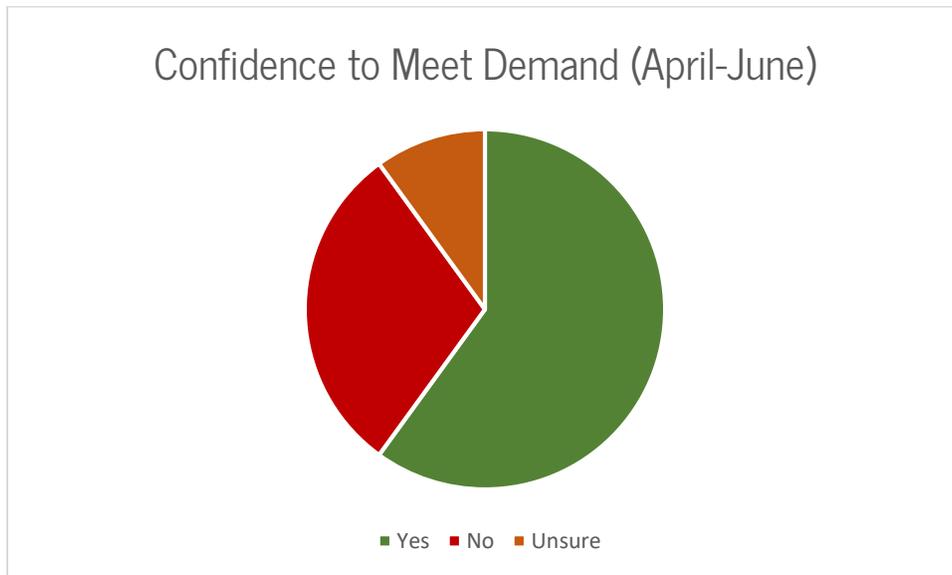
Organisations are each limited by the varying amount of volunteers, time, funds, and space available. Concerns around reaching capacity over the 2021/2022 were discussed in the emergency food network at the end of September.

More information about running a Community Food group is available in the 'Running a Community Food Organisation' section of this report.



Confidence to meet Demand over the next 6 months

Between April-September groups have become less confident that they will be able to meet demand. Increased financial pressures and increasing hardship is regularly spoken about at the Community Food Network meetings.



During April-September the following reasons for increasing food insecurity were discussed at the Community Food Network:

- Universal Credit Cap removal³
- Furlough Scheme ending⁴
- Food price increase⁵
- Increases in rent⁶

³APPG on Poverty (2021) The impact on poverty of not maintaining the £20 uplift in universal credit and working tax credits, and of not extending the uplift to legacy and related benefits Link: <http://www.appgpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/APPG-on-Poverty-20-uplift-report-FINAL.docx.pdf>

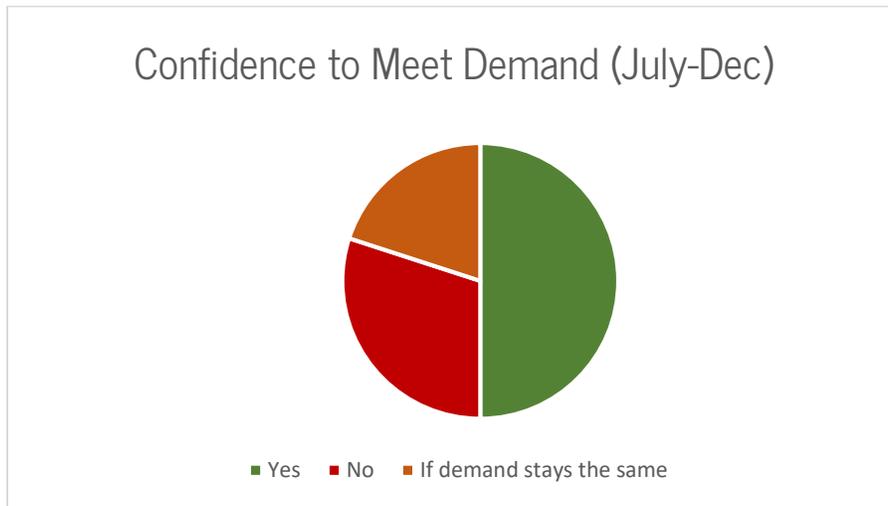
⁴ Commons Library (2021) <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/examining-the-end-of-the-furlough-scheme/>

⁵ Food Foundation (2021) <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/press-release/food-price-hike-puts-pressure-poor-families-struggling-feed-their-children>

⁶Home Let Rental Increase (2022) <https://homelet.co.uk/homelet-rental-index/south-east>

At the time of publication the Community Food Network are concerned about increasing financial pressure and hard-ship due to:

- Increase in National Insurance⁷
- Increase in Income Tax⁸
- Energy Cap Increase (The number of households in fuel poverty is set to increase from 9-27% when the new energy price cap comes into place⁹).
- Increases in rent¹⁰
- Food price increase¹¹



The Community Food network are concerned about increasing demand at a time where less grant funding is available for food and less attention is on food poverty, when comparing to the peaks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

⁷ Increase of the rates of Income Tax applicable to dividend income (2021) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/increase-of-the-rates-of-income-tax-applicable-to-dividend-income/increase-of-the-rates-of-income-tax-applicable-to-dividend-income-2104>

⁸ Increase of the rates of Income Tax applicable to dividend income (2021) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/increase-of-the-rates-of-income-tax-applicable-to-dividend-income/increase-of-the-rates-of-income-tax-applicable-to-dividend-income-2104>

⁹ Families Suffering from Fuel Stress set to Treble (2022) <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/press-releases/families-suffering-from-fuel-stress-set-to-treble-overnight-to-six-million-households-as-energy-bills-soar/>

¹⁰ Home Let Rental Increase (2022) <https://homelet.co.uk/homelet-rental-index/south-east>

¹¹ Food Foundation (2021) <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/press-release/food-price-hike-puts-pressure-poor-families-struggling-feed-their-children>

Other Support

There are a number of groups contributing toward providing food aid to our neighbours in Adur & Worthing who are not included in the data. The activities of the organisations and groups that we are aware of¹² are summarised below.

Community House

Community House run a pop-up food bank 5 days a week (Mon- Fri) from 9:30-11:30. The offer varies and is dependent on the donations from local supermarkets. People come to pick what they would like to take home and the person running the stall often refers people on to other community food groups who can provide longer-term support. The pop-up food bank gave out food 2,050 times to individuals between April-June and 1,605 times to individuals between July-September.

Food parcels are also available from Community House. 55 people were supported with Food Parcels between April- June and 52 people were supported with food between July-September.

Benefits support is also available at Community House and the staff members regularly signpost to other support services.



Pictures: South Coast Skate Club and Space at the Table

¹² If you are part of a group who are providing food support and are not included below please get in touch with sarah@bhcommunityworks.org.uk.

Downsbrook Primary School Food Bank

Downsbrook Primary School Food Bank started just before Covid-19 by Claire Maynard, Behaviour and Welfare Officer, and a generous donation of £200. The Food Bank currently offer dry/ambient goods to families of pupils. No referral is needed and families can self-identify themselves as in need of support.

Downsbrook Primary is partnered with Whytemead Primary as part of Schoolsworks, a primary sector multi academy trust. Both schools work together to raise donations. Second hand school uniforms are offered by the schools. The Food Bank also work with Community House to offer parents and carers resources, for example use of computers and workshops.

Referrals fluctuate between 0-7 weekly. Recently referrals from Whytemead have increased. A total of 50-60 refferals have been received so far.

Space at the Table

Space at the Table provides free, hot meals once or twice a week during the main school holidays for families who receive free school meals or who use the Lancing and Sompting Food Bank.

It is a partnership project run by Electric Storm Youth, Lancing and Sompting Food Bank, Lancing Tabernacle, Lancing Art Club, Sompting Community Church, St James the Less Church, St Michael and All Angels and The Lancing and Sompting Lions. The organisations work together to plan meals, purchase supplies and prepare, serve and clear up food.

This summer holiday, Space At The Table offered a hot meal once a week for four weeks. They served 466 meals over the four weeks.

Space at the Table also issued 129 x £10 vouchers to families utilising the scheme over the summer. This enabled families to buy any additional food they required during the holidays. Additional vouchers were offered during the shorter holidays and when restrictions prevented hot meals being served.



Pictures: South Coast Skate Club

South Coast Skate Club

South Coast Skate club is set up to help support young people in different ways. HAF funding has enabled the South Coast Skate Club to integrate food into their support and out-reach to children and families in need of food support.

During the school holidays, the South Coast Skate Club community chef prepares the food and designs the menus with the children, who then cook and eat together with the chef at Chesswood School Hall. The children are given the menus to take home so they can make the dishes for themselves and their families, and any extra food is given to the parents and guardians.

The summer HAF Skate programme supported and engaged 138 children, 32 children engaged in the Winter HAF programme. Many of the children and families have become friends and engaged in the other support that South Coast Skate Club offer, including the youth club, events and skateboarding.

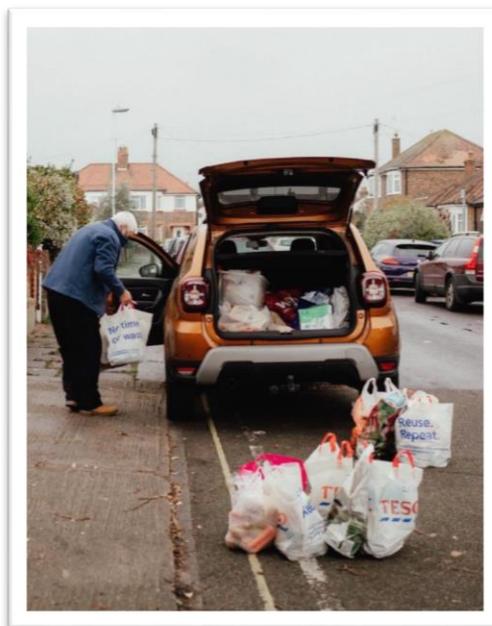
Emma Taylor

Following the Covid-19 guidance to stay at home, a local resident worked to feed 7 families each week from April 2020 until August 2021. The support offered served as a top-up to bolster weekly food supplies.

Delivery in response to Covid-19

In April-June all of the organisations were operating a delivery only service. This changed between July-Sept when one organisation reverted back to collection only. One organisation operated a delivery-only service during lockdowns.

Many organisations have referenced the importance of face-to-face conversations with people who require food support. Regular conversation creates greater understanding and organisations can then better signpost to other suitable support.

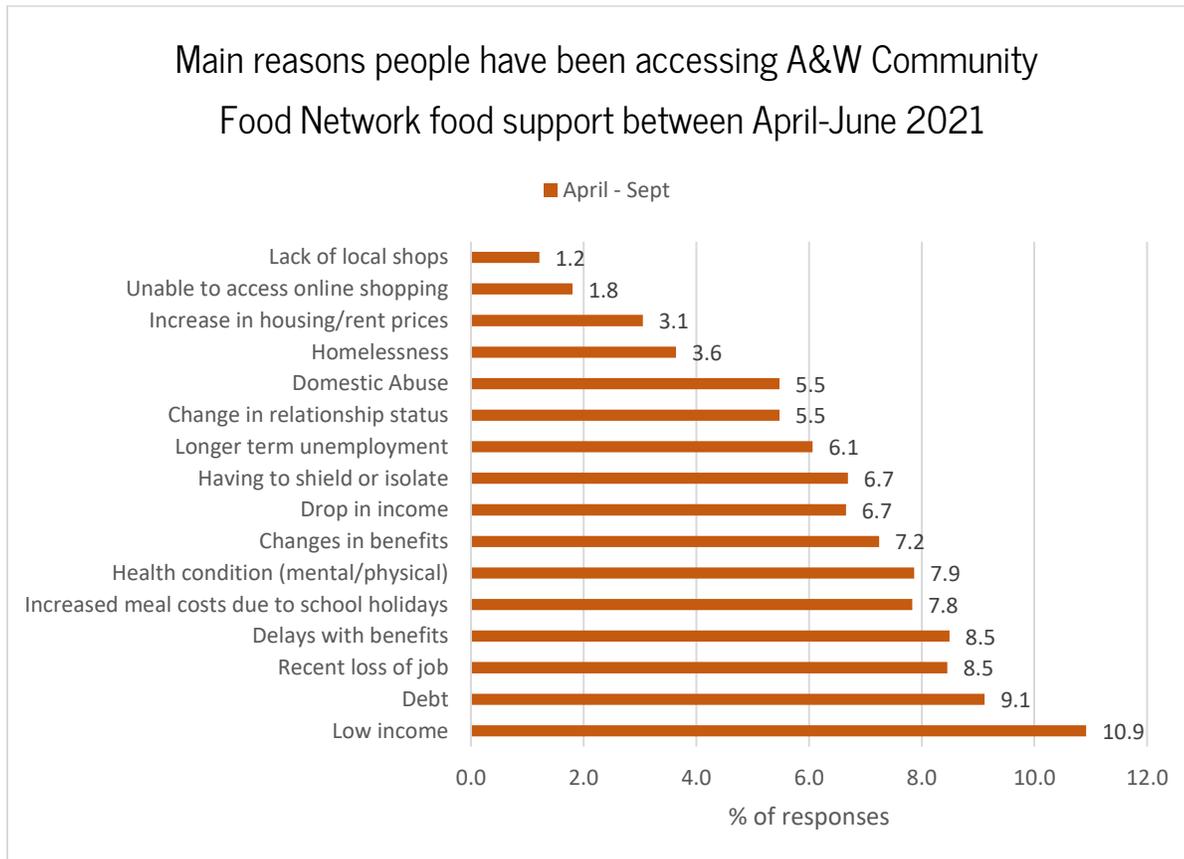


Pictures: Worthing Food Foundation by Libby Cristensen

Why people need access to Community Food Support

Low income is the greatest reason for people needing to access food support in Adur & Worthing. A large number of people are needing to rely on food support due to delays and changes to benefits. Debt issues, long-term unemployment and drop income are also important financial contributors to people needing access to food support.

The pandemic is having an impact on the amount of food support needed with job losses and having to shield or isolate cited as common reasons.



Increased meal costs due to school holidays are also a major contributor to food insecurity. This suggests that many families are just coping and are not able to deal with changes in financial pressures.

Housing and homelessness, were all found to significantly affect people's ability to access food.

Changes in relationship status and domestic abuse also affect people's ability to access food.

The inability to access online shopping highlights the issue of digital exclusion in Adur & Worthing.

Lack of local shops was reported to be a factor in the Fishersgate community.

The community food network have noted a change in the demographic of people accessing food support this year as they are seeing more people living in private rented accommodation needing access to food support. A number of people who are accessing food support are thought to be in work.

The trauma of hunger and the nutritional effects of hunger have been found to cause and exacerbate physical and mental health issues. Malnutrition both predisposes people to disease and affects the clinical outcome, while resulting in increased pressure on healthcare services.¹³ People living in food insecurity during covid-19 were found to have a **257% higher risk of anxiety** and a **253% higher risk of depression**¹⁴.

Further research is needed to further understand what is happening in Adur & Worthing and how to better support people to access healthy and nutritional food.

Supporting People to Support Themselves

Length of Support

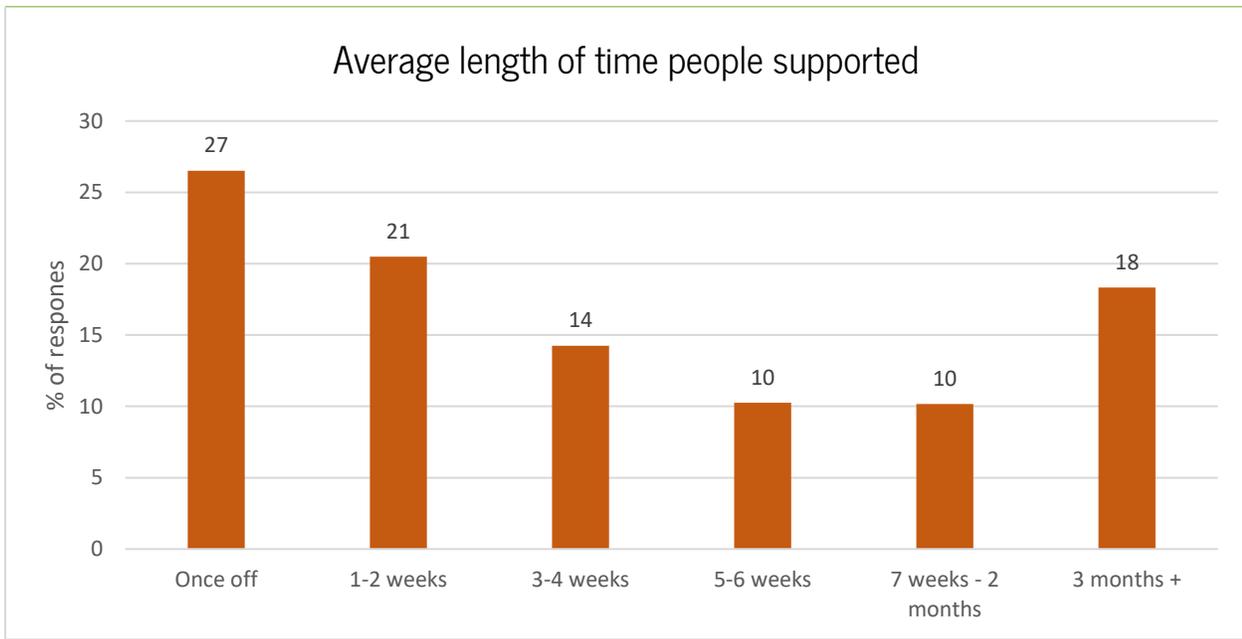
27% of the people accessing food support need to do so as a once off, 21% of people for 1-2 weeks. This suggests that a large amount of support offered is crisis support. However, the community food network note it is common for people to return for one off support around the holiday period, especially during Christmas and winter when the increase in fuel use prompts a choice between food and fuel¹⁵.

18% of people are needing to access food support for **3 months or longer**, indicating longer-term issues.

13 Elia, M. (2015) The cost of malnutrition in England and potential cost savings from nutritional interventions <https://www.bapen.org.uk/resources-and-education/publications-and-reports/malnutrition/cost-of-malnutrition-in-england>

14 Fang, D., Thomsen, M.R. & Nayga, R.M. (2021) The association between food insecurity and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. BMC Public Health 21, 607. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-10631-0>

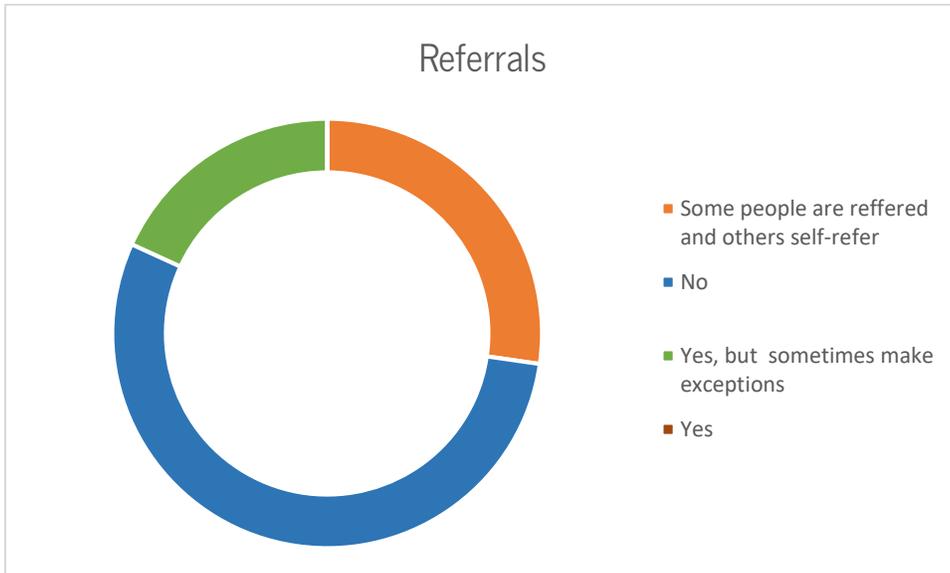
15 Beatty, T. K M., Blow, L., Crossley, L.B. (2013) Is there a 'heat-or-eat' trade-off in the UK? <https://doi.org/10.1111/rssa.12013>



Adur Community Gateway Hub are currently carrying out qualitative research into the reasons people are needing to access support in Fishersgate. More investigation is needed to understand why people are needing to access food support long term.

Referring to and from other local support

The majority of Community Food organisations across Adur & Worthing do not require a referral. 6 of 11 organisations do not require a professional referral, 2 organisations require referrals but sometimes make exceptions, and 3 organisations take both self and professional referrals.



Agencies the community food organisations commonly receive referrals from include:

Adur & Worthing Council (including the Wellbeing Team and Outreach team), Citizens Advice, Change Grow Live Drug and Alcohol Service, Christians Against Poverty, Family Centres, Health Visitors, Housing Officers, Mental Health services, Mind, Time to Talk Money Advice, Turning Tides, other community food providers, One Stop Junction, Parish Nurses, Refugee Settlement and Refugee Agencies, Schools, Social Services, West Sussex County Council and Youth Workers.

Broadwater support provide emergency out of hours food support. People who need ongoing support are referred to Worthing Food Foundation, Lancing and Sompting Food Bank and Gateway Hub.

The projects also regularly refer between each when they do not have capacity to meet the additional need.

Signposting

The Community Food organisations projects regularly refer their neighbours to other services for additional support. Organisations which projects regular refer to include, Citizens Advice Bureau, Christians Against Poverty, One Stop Junction, Mind, Discretionary Housing Payments, and A&W Council services

Fishersgate Food Bank run a regular Tuesday café where people sit down together and share breakfast. This opens up the opportunity to have conversations and signpost people toward the appropriate services.

The community food projects offering a collection service, are able to regularly check-in and engage with people. Delivery drivers also often help to flag potential issues. Organisations with support workers and mechanisms for further signposting, are able to follow up and check-in to offer further support.

The limitations the pandemic imposes on engaging with people face-to-face has limited the amount of engagement and therefore signposting and support available over the last two years.

Additional and Intensive Support

The Trussell Trust Food Banks work with Christians Against Poverty who provide debt and money advice. This wraparound support was often halted during lockdowns as face-to-face service delivery temporarily ceased. Worthing Food Foundation partner with One Stop Junction who provide support with money, employment and digital services.

Two of the organisations, Worthing Food Foundation and Adur Community Gateway Hub, employ staff members to help people navigate the available support. These support workers work with people and help guide them through the forms, call-centers and processes that need to be followed in order to access support. In addition to in-person meetings, digital messaging and phone calls, support workers often carry out home-visits that help to deliver person-centered support.

“I never thought in my lifetime I would have to claim benefits, it is so difficult to know where to go”

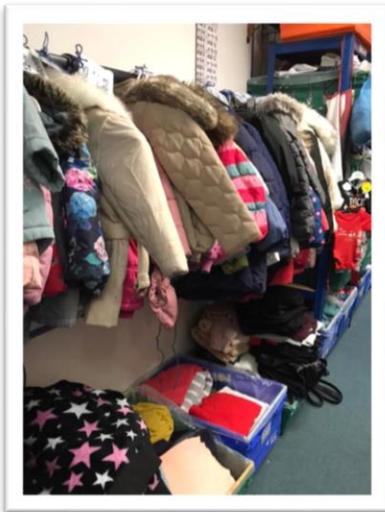
The support-worker at Worthing Food Foundation has helped 31 food neighbors to access furniture, white goods, debt reductions and write offs, grant applications, fund referrals, Discretionary Housing Payments and Warm Home discount applications. The financial total of the support accessed via the support worker is £11,559¹⁶.

SHOUT WSK's voluntary coordinator regularly assists people with matters such as housing, food, furniture and debt and addiction.

"It has been a long road to get here without the help from WSK it would have been a whole lot harder"

- From someone who received their first flat

Four of the community food projects are offering additional services to help relieve poverty and prevent further reliance on food support. Including a school exchange, clothes, books and toys.



There is currently no clear picture of what routes people take into and out of community food and wraparound support. Research and consultation is needed to create an understanding of people's experiences of their interactions with support services, as well as to understand the connections and referral routes between the different agencies in Adur & Worthing.

¹⁶ As of 31 Jan 2021

Prevention

Cash First

Taking into account the most common reasons for needing food support, maximising income has been found to be effective in aiding lower-income populations facing food insecurity¹⁷.

A cash first leaflet is currently being developed to help relieve the pressure on Community Food groups across Adur & Worthing. The leaflet will guide people toward financial support that is available, it is hoped that this will help prevent a need for a reliance on Community Food. This project is being led by Worthing Food Foundation who are working in partnership with the Community Food Network, IFAN and Adur & Worthing Councils.

More information about the cash first approach that local authorities are taking [can be found here](#).

Community Led-Action Plan

The Community Food Network would like to collaborate on a participatory community-led action plan to address the causes of and the solutions to food insecurity, alongside food acquisition and distribution so that they can better support the communities of Adur & Worthing.

Examples of Food Action Plans from other areas [can be viewed here](#).

¹⁷ Orkin, K. (2020) University of Oxford. <https://www.research.ox.ac.uk/article/2020-05-12-the-evidence-behind-putting-money-directly-in-the-pockets-of-the-poor>

Running a Community Food Organisation

A typical community food project will be involved in and organising:

- Promoting offer/raising awareness of project
- Welcoming people who need support
- Ensuring people get appropriate food support
- Wraparound support (signposting, uniforms, fuel vouchers, cooking equipment etc.)
- Ordering food
- Working with surplus food donators/providers
- Collecting food donations
- Collecting items from storage
- Processing items and disposal of waste
- Packing and distribution
- Delivery of food
- Moving locations¹⁸
- Funding applications and reporting
- Christmas food drives
- Volunteer training and recruitment
- Accounting
- Taking part in local and national networks
- Taking part in and organising training and events
- Regular volunteer/trustee/director /operational meetings



Picture: Adur Community Gateway Hub

¹⁸ See 'Additional Challenges'

Additional Challenges for Community Food Projects

Suitable Locations

A key issue that the community food groups face on a regular basis is finding an appropriate space, both to run their operations and to store food.

Operating Space

Many of the organisations are operating out of locations with short or temporary lease agreements, others may be able to increase the level and types of support they offer but are limited by the space. Moving locations every few months disrupts the support the groups are able to provide as volunteers are mobilised to move locations rather than provide support to their communities, and project leads are on a perpetual task to find suitable locations.

This issue is not specific to community food groups and is echoed by other voluntary and community groups across Adur & Worthing.

Storage Space

The majority of organisations are in the need of additional storage space. Limited storage space means that organisations are limited in the number of food donations they can hold. This is a particular issue around the Winter period, a time where donations increase around Christmas then drastically reduce in the new year. Larger storage space with cold storage facilities would allow groups to make maximum use of donations and surplus food.



Storage space needs to be accessible to the group, have electricity and handwashing facilities, car parking/loading area, with enough space to pack, unload, access and rotate the food easily as well as social distance. It is important that the food and equipment is stored in one location where possible; this limits the amount of volunteer time and coordination needed to collect, distribute and store food and equipment. Similar to the operational space, it is important to have longevity in any storage solution whenever possible.¹⁹

A number of network partners have expressed a desire for a shared storage facility. Shared storage would allow the groups to:

- Rationalise the excess food available in the area
- Minimize food-waste
- Receive catering donations other larger donations and frozen donations
- Triage food so it can be used in the most effective manner
- More choice and variety (healthier options, frozen food)
- Develop links with local growers/producers
- Develop links with allotment associations

If the storage facility had a kitchen it would allow the groups to:

- Produce ready meals
- Support homeless projects with meals
- Supplement existing food project cafes

Storage Solutions

Adur & Worthing councils are currently exploring the possibility of installing port-a-cabins on sites in Lancing, Shoreham and Worthing and securing a long-lease on Eastbrook Primary Academy to provide additional ambient and cold storage for the network.

Funding

The majority of groups are run on a voluntary basis however still require funds to operate.

¹⁹ If you think you may have, or know of a suitable space – please contact sarah@bhcommunityworks.org.uk.

Food donations for the public alone are not enough to support the level of need and are often inconsistent, therefore groups need to purchase food to nutritionally balance their food offer. Groups who provide fresh food also need to purchase this in on a regular basis.

Operational costs such as storage, transport, heat, lighting, volunteer expenses, training, computer hardware and software, internet, printing, packaging, equipment etc. also incur financial costs.

About this Report

This report has been compiled by the Adur & Worthing Community Food Network to highlight the scale of support that is collectively being provided across the district and borough.

Methodology and Using the Data in the Report

The data contained in this report can be used as indicators of the level of support being offered by the community, *however these figures should not be taken as indicators for poverty.*

Many people living in hunger do not access food support. This could be due to a number of reasons, including using their social networks for support, not knowing that food support is available and reluctance to collect or order a parcel due to the shame and stigma often associated with accepting food support.

Importantly, the number of community food organisations that exist will be reflected in the number of people accessing support.

Most community food projects keep accurate records of number of parcels, individuals supported etc. however the nature and reasons for food bank use are not consistently recorded across the different organisations. Some of the responses to the questions are therefore self-reported perceptions of demand by staff or volunteers. It is recommended that more research is carried out to better understand the need for community food support from the perspective of the person needing support.

It is important to note that the number of responses contributing towards some of the data sets varies due to an unavailability of information in some instances. This has been highlighted where it occurs.

It must also be noted that not all respondents answered all questions, for e.g. organisations only providing pre-prepared meals did not answer questions relating to parcels.

The Community Food Network Quarterly Survey

The data in this report has been collated from a quarterly survey that is completed by all of the Community Food organisations in the network.

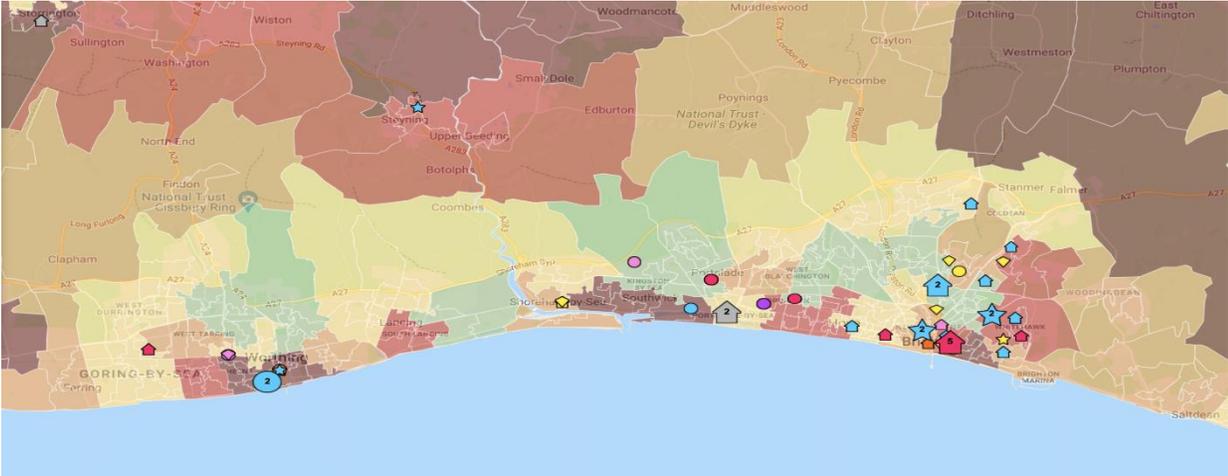
In future, it is recommended that a survey is collated annually to reduce pressure on volunteer-led community projects. We will continue collecting quarterly information up until March 2022.

There are a number of organisations across Adur & Worthing who are providing community food who have not been included in the overall data-set. Where we know of their activities we have asked for a comment which has been included in the 'additional support' section of the report.

Other Data

Worthing Food Foundation and Adur & Worthing Councils are currently working on a method to calculate the level of food insecurity in Worthing. The FSA found that **15%** of the UK population were living in food insecurity in between March-June 2021²⁰.

[Sussex Uncovered](#) provides a mapping tool with a food vulnerability Index score.



Sussex Uncovered 2021

Previous Reports

[Food Bank Survey Report August 2020](#)

[Adur & Worthing Emergency Food Provision July-December 2020](#)

²⁰Food Standards Agency. (2022) Food and You Wave 3. <https://www.food.gov.uk/research/food-and-you-2/food-and-you-2-wave-3>