
2024-2025



BMSDC FOOD SECURITY FUND - IMPACT REPORT



FOOD SECURITY FUND

The Food Security Fund ran from March 2024 to March 2025 and stemmed from Shared Prosperity Funding. At BMSDC the Communities team and the Economic Development team worked with Community Action Suffolk to support different VCFSE groups access the funding for capital costs to support activities relating to community food provision and addressing food insecurity.

The SPF funding also supported a Community Food Officer role to work in Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities to help establish a food network and support community food provision in the districts.

Fund Priorities

Applicants were encouraged to develop projects that would enable one, some or all of the following themes:

- **Impactful Volunteering and/or Social Action Projects**
- **Community Measures to Reduce the Cost of Living**
- **Community Measures to Enable Carbon Reduction**
- **Skills Improvement in Communities (relating to basic, life and career skills)**
- **Community Enrichment and Volunteering Activities**

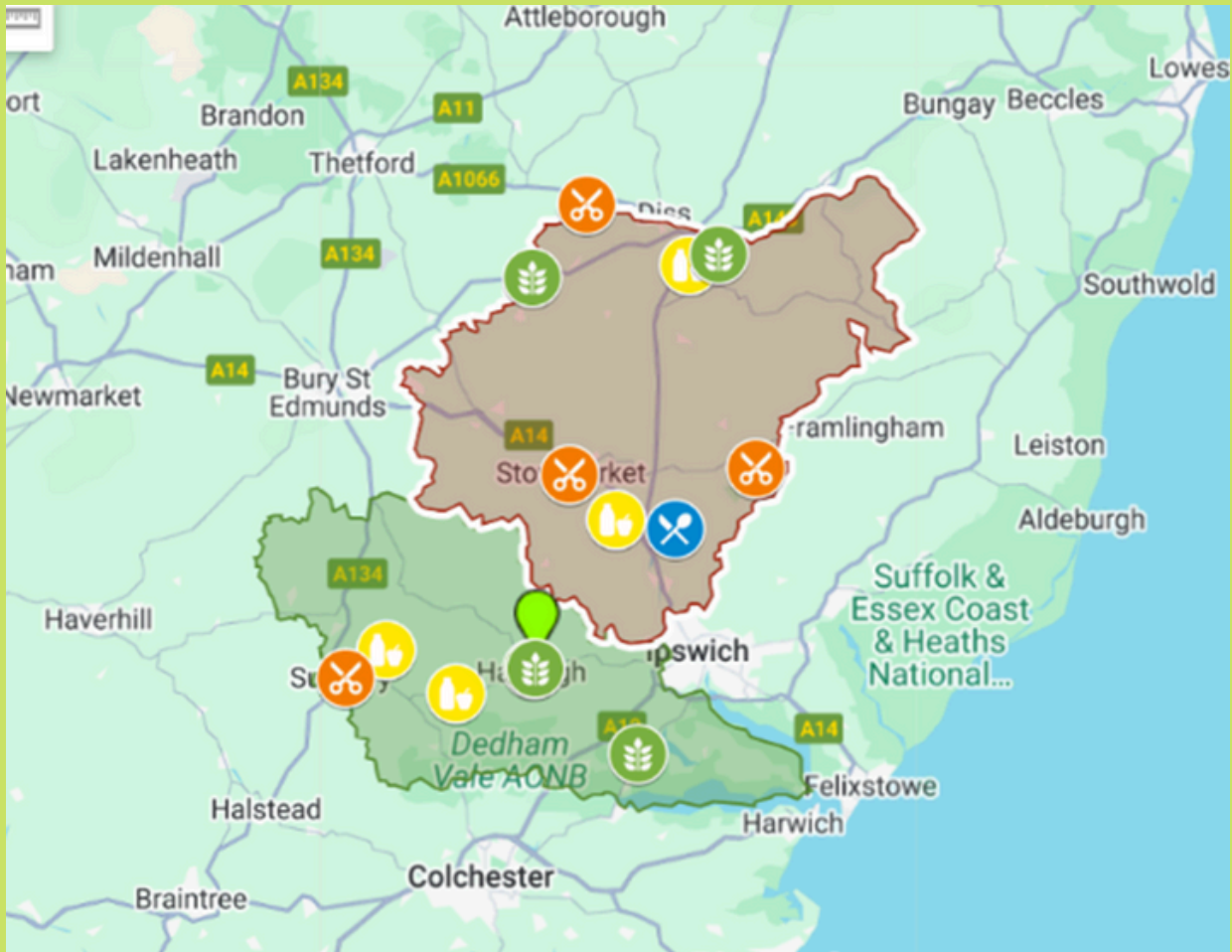
SMALL BUSINESSES

Thanks to feedback from Community Action Suffolk, a small portion of the funding was made available to micro and small food related businesses. Businesses will be considered if the grant is being accessed to support them with increasing their community outreach with a focus on a 'good food movement' or 'healthy food for all'. For example, a small food business such as a market garden wanting to expand to community workshops to help upskill members of the community.

INTRODUCTION



WHERE ARE THE PROJECTS?



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Projects supported

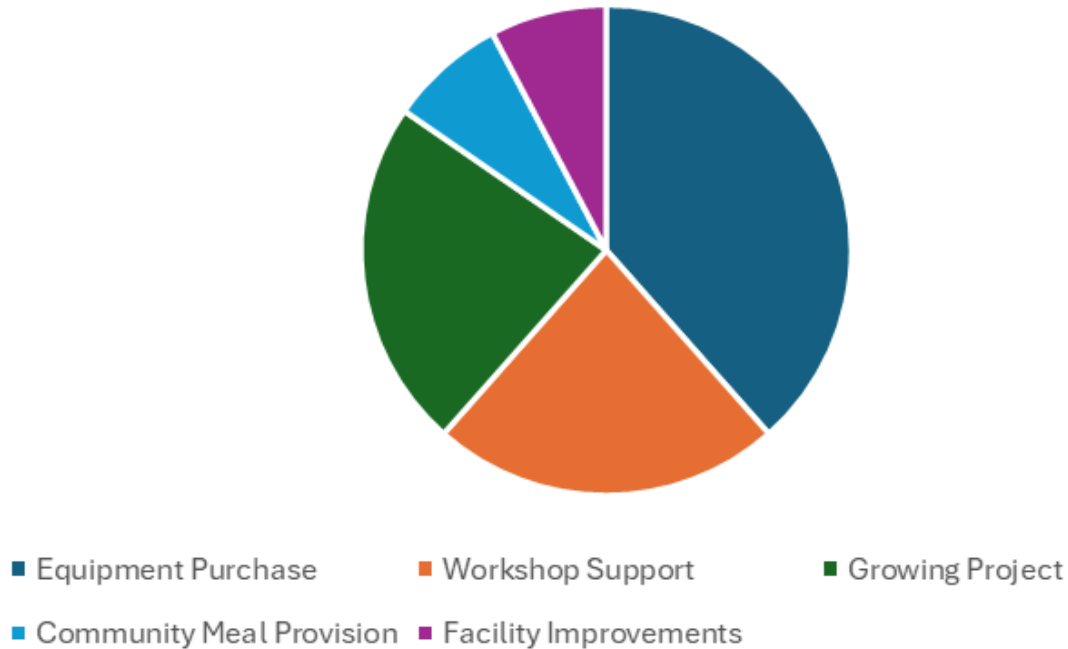
**£43,
758.12**

Funding allocated

- ◆ £24,658.60 allocated in Mid Suffolk
- ◆ £19,079.52 allocated in Babergh

WHAT ARE THE PROJECTS?

Types of Activities Supported



A variety of different projects were supported through the funding, with the most popular cost being equipment purchase which gave groups the necessary equipment and tools to deliver workshops and sessions to help communities engage in activities and learn new skills.

Other popular themes also included workshop support, including running costs relating to delivering sessions.

Growing projects were also supported through the fund, often combining skills and knowledge related to growing vegetables with viewing the produce as ingredients and cooking with it.

PROJECTS SUPPORTED IN BABERGH

✦ **Box River Benefice:**

Awarded **£450.00** towards the purchase of storage equipment for the Box River Benefice Bring and Share Foodbank.

✦ **Hadleigh Environmental Action Team (HEAT):**

Awarded **£439** towards set up costs for the Bridge Street Allotments Community Orchard

Awarded **£215** towards delivering Let's Grow and Eat workshops for local children and families

✦ **Bantu Farm:**

Awarded **£9,445.80** towards development of Access to Land Workshops

✦ **Great Waldingfield Community Pantry:**

Awarded **£850** for the purchase of a laptop and software to assist Great Waldingfield Community Pantry volunteers and activities

✦ **Cradle Foods CIC**

Awarded **£7,679.72** for the delivery of community breadmaking workshops.



PROJECTS SUPPORTED IN MID SUFFOLK

- ✦ **Wattisfield Village Hall:**
Awarded **£1827.00** towards Community Food Growing scheme
- ✦ **The Coddendam Centre:**
Awarded **£1,927.72** towards the Cooked in Coddendam lunch club project
- ✦ **The Food Museum:**
Awarded **£3,932.88** towards the purchase of tools to help support volunteer activities
- ✦ **Framsden Social Enterprise Community Benefit Society:**
Awarded **£3,120.00** towards capital improvements to the Framsden Greyhound Community Pub
- ✦ **Needham Market Community Pantry:**
Awarded **£640.00** towards the purchase of new equipment to support pantry activities.
- ✦ **Waveney Foodbank:**
Awarded **£4,950.00** towards new equipment to support volunteer activities at the Food bank.
- ✦ **Helping Hands:**
Awarded **£4,111.00** towards the delivery of 'Thrive' cooking workshops
- ✦ **Grow East Anglia:**
Awarded **£4,150.00** towards the delivery of Grow and Give planting and cooking workshops



FUND PRIORITIES

SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

- Reducing the Cost of Living
- Improving Skills in Communities
- Enabling Carbon Reduction
- Providing Community Enrichment and Volunteering Opportunities
- Delivering Impactful Social Action projects

BMSDC PRIORITIES

- Organisations are more self sufficient, sustainable and resilient for the future
- Processes and ways of working are streamlined to become more efficient
- Clients are supported out of hardship
- Skills and knowledge in the community are improved
- Local solutions to improve food supply and logistics are created
- Opportunities to offer a broader range of local, nutritious and culturally and dietary appropriate food are increased.



SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLACES NETWORK



The Community Action Suffolk (CAS) Community Food Partnership team have successfully applied to make Suffolk a Sustainable Food Place.

The national Sustainable Food Places programme aims to take a systems approach to address key issues relating to food production in the UK. These are:

1. Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action
2. Building public awareness, active food citizenship and local good food movement
3. Tackling food poverty and dietary related ill health and increasing access to affordable healthy food
4. creating a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable good economy
5. transforming catering and procurement and revitalising local and sustainable food supply chains
6. Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste.

Across the network, food partnerships are playing a range of roles to support food systems change, including, but not limited to:

Strategic approach: providing a forum for consultation and collaboration on food related strategies and policies

Delivery: facilitating the sharing of data, insight and best practice

transformational: facilitating joint food related advocacy and public campaigning

Educational: showcasing and championing the role of local food initiatives to the public and to local institutions and providing public education on food related issues

Influencing: championing local, healthy sustainable food within national and international food related networks and policy

Responding: Food partnerships can be in a position where they are ideally places to response to emergencies whilst also addressing underlying issues and building resilience.

More information about Sustainable Food Places can be found here:

<https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/about/what-are-sustainable-food-places/>



Monitoring from funded groups

Helping Hands Charity



Awarded £4,111.00 towards delivering cooking workshops in community spaces.

Outcome:

Increased confidence in cooking and skills

Improved feelings of isolation amongst attendees

Learning cooking skills such as knife usage and weighing and measuring

“Funding enabled us to deliver the Ready Steady Cook Club and children’s cookery workshops a weekly initiative designed to support individuals who have limited cooking skills, experience financial hardship, or face social isolation. Using surplus and waste food, participants developed practical cooking abilities, explored new ingredients, and gained confidence in preparing healthy meals.”

“Adult attendees improved cookery skills, budgeting – using food destined to waste or food households would not normally buy such as tofu or venison. Adults formed friendships and spoke about enjoying meeting others locally. Adults felt more confident in trying new dishes and experimenting more with different foods.”

“The children learned knife skills, adding/weighing and they wrote recipes down in a book to keep at home. They also tried and taste food new to them, such as fresh beetroot and venison. Children built self-esteem by creating dishes from start to finish and sharing their achievements with others. Working in pairs or small groups encouraged cooperation, listening, and problem-solving skills.”

“The sessions provided a fun, hands-on way to explore new foods and flavours, inspiring curiosity and a positive relationship with food.”

The Coddtenham Centre



Awarded £1927.72 towards the purchase of equipment to support delivery of regular lunches at the Coddtenham Centre, offering both social opportunities and meaningful volunteering opportunities.

Outcome:

The provision of subsidised community lunches and a commitment to make them a sustainable community initiative.

“From 2022 the ‘Warm Space’ and ‘Keeping Well in Winter’ campaigns helped us provide lunches for primarily those of retirement age in the winter months, with the help of local volunteers and funding from Mid Suffolk District Council. Local produce was bought from the community owned shop, with the minimum food miles serving over 700 servings to date.”

While originally designed to address any fuel poverty, the events had by far proven themselves as a catalyst for inclusion and engagement, particularly for those who are elderly and living alone. All ages were welcome, and our oldest ‘customer’ is in her nineties. New relationships had been created and there were many anecdotes of individuals becoming much more, part of the community.

While we secured additional volunteers, we however, needed funds for permanent (rather than borrowed) kitchen equipment to meet the expansion and make this offer a reality, now and on a more regular basis in the future. After discussion with the Food Network Officer, and members of the Grants Team, we prepared a revised list of the equipment needed and applied for funding.

A total of five lunches were successfully delivered between November 2024 and March 2025 including a Christmas event.. In addition, six ‘Soup Social’ took place, supported by the MSDC ‘ Keeping Well in Winter’, all to the immense satisfaction of the community and local guests. A copy of comments are included with this report. We continued to purchase local produce, including from the Community Shop. Heating for all events was provided by MSDC supported air-source heat pumps and solar energy. The level of satisfaction was such that many guests offered to increase their donation. We created a successful a local foodbank optional collection point, at all events. The events attracted regular visitors from surrounding villages, who were welcomed as part of a deliberate programme of inclusion of our neighbours. The kitchen equipment has provided flexibility, improved our standards and an ability to respond more effectively to the needs of this project and others.

he huge success of the project was widely applauded by the community. It has created further momentum to the opportunity for further engagement and replication of the project’s achievements in the future.

Hadleigh Environmental Action Group

Let's Grow and Eat

Awarded £215 towards delivering growing and cooking sessions to families and pre school aged children

Outcome: Over 300 children and families were introduced to growing their own vegetables by being given plants and by participating in bean planting events. General awareness and knowledge of sustainable food growing was supported through information boards and instructions.

'Over 200 plants were given away at The Hadleigh Show and Hadleigh Hidden Gardens. Over 100 beans were planted by children and taken home with instructions at the Hadleigh Show.

Two planting sessions were held with children at St Mary's School and Parkside Preschool.

Hopefully most of these are being looked after at home and will grow into broad beans, French beans and runner beans, peas and squashes.

All the seeds and pots were donated and 6 volunteers helped with planting and giving out the plants.

Four display boards were produced to promote nature based gardening, vegetable growing, seasonal food and locally produced food. These continue to be used at HEAT public events.

6 volunteers participated in planting vegetables and running sessions with children and families.'

