

BRIGHT STORE

LOCAL - AFFORDABLE - SOCIAL

OUR FIRST YEAR

OCTOBER 2020 -
OCTOBER 2021



FOREWORD:

Food has never been so important than over the last 18 months. The pandemic has highlighted the many issues we face with our local, national and global food systems.

It has brought into sharp focus the many challenges we face in our own city when it comes to food insecurity. However, it has also brought opportunities to look at the way our food systems can be in the future and that is where BrightStore comes in!

It was one of seven affordable food pilot schemes set up in response to the pandemic last year and supported by the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership.

These are new models that we helped establish with funding from the Big Lottery Coronavirus Support Fund as part of a more sustainable, neighbourhood response to accessing healthy food. In a recent survey we conducted into their impact, 74% of people who used the schemes said they were eating better and within their budget.

A visit to BrightStore is a positive experience from when you walk through the door to when you exit it. Neighbours connect with neighbours and there's always a choice of food on offer including fantastic fresh fruit and veg. The majority of the food is surplus and saved from going to waste.



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Most importantly, members who use the store feel part of something positive and empowering.

I firmly believe that food schemes such as BrightStore are the way to achieve long-term, sustainable change to the way our food systems operate making them fairer, more sustainable and more resilient. BrightStore is a fantastic example of how this can be done at community and neighbourhood level.

What it has achieved in its first year has been phenomenal and has shown how you can build and strengthen a community through food. I'm looking forward to seeing it continue to grow even more in the months and years ahead.



Vic Borrill
Director,
Brighton &
Hove Food
Partnership

BRIGHTSTORE - OUR FIRST YEAR AND OUR FUTURE

It's been a whirlwind but incredible first year for BrightStore. We've gone from being asked to be part of a pilot project to see if social supermarkets would work in Brighton and Hove, to setting up four BrightStores across the city with another in the planning.

The people of Brighton and Hove have taken us to their hearts and we want to thank each and every one of our supporters, shoppers and teams of helpers who have all showed such generosity of spirit encouraging us through every change, development and about-turn we've made over the last year - all during an ever changing pandemic.

We are proud of what we have achieved in our first 12 months but we want to look forward - we are on a food mission!

We would like BrightStore to be an organisation focused on all aspects of food, but at the same time build communities around food.

Some of the things we are looking at include food tasting and cooking sessions, a community allotment plot where we can start to grow our vegetables in a micro-local fashion and community

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composting alongside, of course continuing to offer a well-rounded, healthy, local shop.

Our eco principles are a strong driving force for us, so we will continue to focus on our environmental impact, sourcing as much rescued and local food as we possibly can, and thinking at all times about reducing, reusing and recycling.

It is with that incredible support and positive spirit experienced in our first 12 months that we enter the next year and beyond with confidence and hope that BrightStore will become a permanent and increasingly important part of the communities that we work in. Who'd have thought I would have been saying that this time last year!



Rachel
Pitts-Wicks
Founder,
BrightStore



BRIGHTSTORE: HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The idea for BrightStore came from the shared experiences of a small group of people volunteering on a number of food projects in Brighton and Hove during the first wave of the Coronavirus pandemic.

From the beginning, our vision for BrightStore was to create a long-term, local and environmentally sustainable solution to tackling the issues of food inequality and food waste.

This vision was also informed by the pandemic prompting people to think more about how they shop and alternatives to existing ways of sourcing food. This included community-led models which empower local communities to change their local food systems - making them fairer and more resilient.

We were chosen by Brighton & Hove Food Partnership as one of seven pilot affordable food schemes across the city and armed with rapidly developing knowledge, we identified a need for an affordable, weekly social grocery store in the Hollingdean area of the city. BrightStore was launched on October 27th 2020 at the Hollingdean Community Centre.

We opened our second store at the Vallance Community Centre in Hove in January 2021 and our third at the Edge Community Centre in North Brighton in May 2021 working in partnership with the existing Pankhurst Pantry project. Our fourth store in Mile Oak opened in June.

WE NOW HAVE 355 MEMBERS ACROSS OUR FOUR STORES.





LOCAL - AFFORDABLE - SOCIAL

WHAT IS BRIGHTSTORE?

We are a volunteer-led social grocery store and membership scheme where local communities and people experiencing food insecurity can get a weekly shop of mostly locally-sourced, quality food for a fraction of what it would normally cost and in a positive, welcoming, social setting.

Everything at BrightStore comes from high quality surplus or donated food. The majority of it comes from Fareshare UK and The Brighton Food Factory, who supply fresh produce from local growers and farmers. Some of it is donated by local independent food businesses. We supplement all of this by buying some products in bulk, to make a well-rounded shop.

We offer quality fresh vegetables and fruit, bread, eggs, UHT milk, a selection of dried goods such as pasta, oats, rice and couscous along with a large selection of grocery items which vary each week.

We are not a foodbank but we have supported memberships for people who have previously used one or who are in a food emergency so they can access food for free and in a positive and empowering way.

OUR AIMS

- To create a long-term, local and environmentally sustainable solution to tackling the issues of food waste and food inequality
- To provide an affordable, positive and fair way for communities to access and engage with food through our network of stores in community settings
- To build and strengthen the neighbourhoods and communities we work in through food, making them more resilient and sustainable



BRIGHTSTORE: HOW IT ALL WORKS

Our stores open weekly for members to drop in and shop. They are run entirely by BrightStore members.

Stores are set up based on an identified need and in communities where a significant number of people are experiencing food insecurity and where there maybe a lack of access to fresh food.

Our members pay a small weekly membership fee and in return access fresh, local produce and stock cupboard items. This stock may have a short shelf life but will always be safe to eat.

We work on a strong 'pay what you can afford' and solidarity principle with two membership categories, so members that

can afford to, pay a bit more to help others who might be struggling. We offer supported places for people in a food emergency so they can access food for free. Members can move between membership categories depending on their changing circumstances.

The money that is gathered from memberships helps cover the costs of running the scheme. Any surplus funds are put back into buying extra products to supplement what is already on offer.

We strive to provide a supportive and positive experience for our volunteers and members with an emphasis on supporting each other, whilst building social bonds and resilient communities through food.

OUR WEEKLY MEMBERSHIPS

BRIGHTSTORE MEMBERSHIP

£4 / Small (to feed one / two people)

£6 / Large (to feed more than two people)

EXTRABRIGHT MEMBERSHIP

£6 / Small

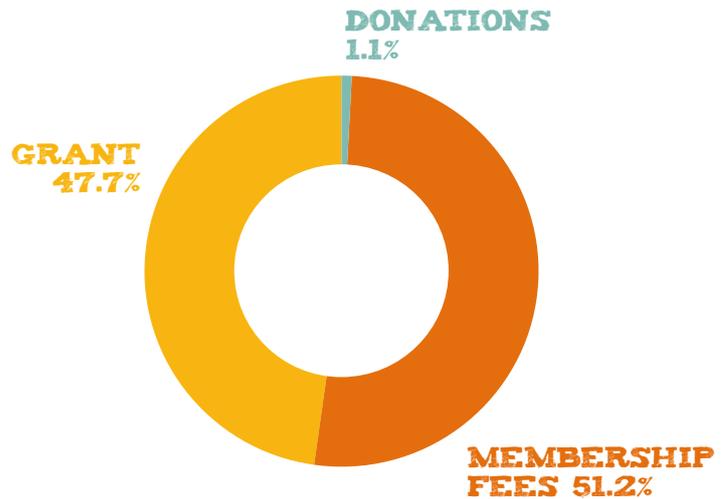
£8 / Large



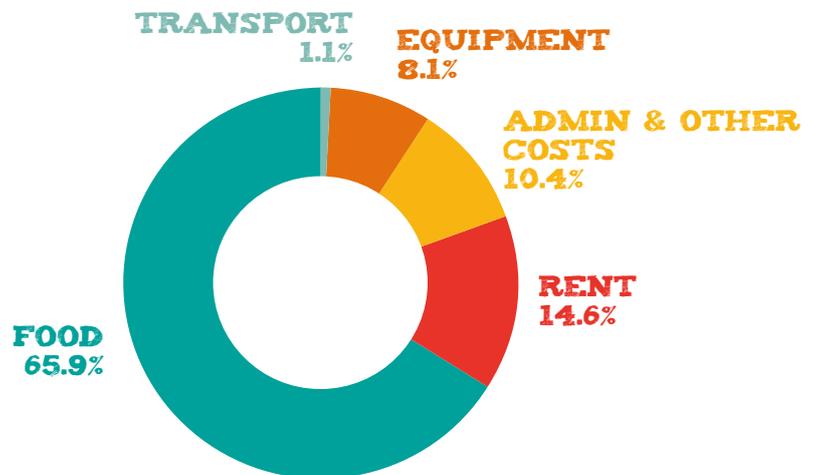
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

BrightStore strives to be financially sustainable. During our first year, our membership scheme funded most of our food operations with external funding grants largely allocated to set up costs and ongoing administration of the project. As part of our commitment to financial sustainability and stability, we also allocated a small amount of funds in our first year for cash reserves to help support our strategic objectives in our second year.

BRIGHTSTORE YEAR ONE INCOME

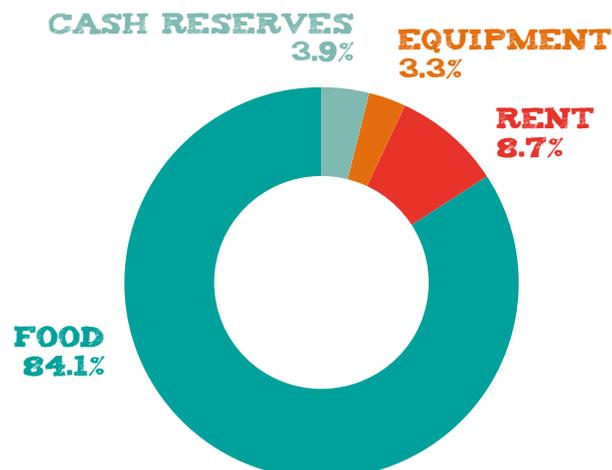


BRIGHTSTORE YEAR ONE EXPENDITURE



WHERE OUR MEMBERSHIP MONEY GOES

This graphic highlights how we spent income from our members between July - Sept 2021 (the first quarter where all four stores were operational)



MEET THE COMMITTEE

BrightStore was formed and set up by five people who met after volunteering on a number of community food projects across the city during the first Coronavirus lockdown. Based on this experience they decided to come together to set up BrightStore as a long-term solution to tackling food inequality in Brighton and Hove.



RACHEL

Rachel is the founder and heart beat of BrightStore. She does everything from setting the strategy, to organising logistics, sorting out food orders and counting the tins of beans! She loves nothing more than being in the store chatting to members, finding out how their week has been and what recipes they've created with their BrightStore shop.



CLAIRE

Claire is our creative genius and can always be found organising and helping out at her local Hollingdean store. She is responsible for our lovely BrightStore artwork and branding and created our website. When she's not at BrightStore you'll see her walking her dog Benny around the beautiful green spaces of Hollingdean or along the seafront.



LISA

Lisa helped set up our second store in Hove in January 2021 and is a constant source of knowledge, help and support to our volunteer teams. Outside of BrightStore Lisa teaches yoga but keeps our members entertained by juggling fruit n veg!



NEIL

Neil is our finance, admin and IT guru and helps ensure the smooth running of all our stores. When his normal day job as an actor was impacted by Coronavirus, Neil started volunteering at Balfour Foodbank which led to him becoming a founder member of BrightStore. When he's not knee-deep in spreadsheets, he loves cooking and exploring Brighton and the surrounding countryside.



JOEL

Joel handles all of our PR and communications and got involved in food volunteering in April 2020 when he started organising weekly food collections from local neighbours for the BMECP (Black Minority Ethnic Community Partnership) foodbank in Brighton. Since then he has become passionate about tackling food inequality. His other passions are music, football and cheese!

OUR TEAMS

Our volunteer teams are also our members and are the lifeblood of BrightStore. They run our stores doing everything from checking in and welcoming fellow members to BrightStore, managing food deliveries, setting up and staffing the store and packing away and cleaning up when it closes.



"BRIGHTSTORE IS KEEPING US AFLOAT. WE SLIP THROUGH THE NET ALL THE TIME BUT THIS TAKES THE STING OUT OF OUR FOOD BILLS AND REMOVES SOME OF THE STRESS OF SHOPPING"

- Kelly, BrightStore Hollingdean Member

OUR MEMBERS

There isn't a 'typical' BrightStore member but they share a number of things in common. Most will be experiencing or understand what it's like to experience food inequality. They also care about the environment and want to shop more sustainably.



"BRIGHTSTORE HAS ENABLED OUR FAMILY ACCESS TO FRUIT AND VEG EVERY WEEK, SOMETHING THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY A RARE LUXURY"

- Kelly, BrightStore Mile Oak Member

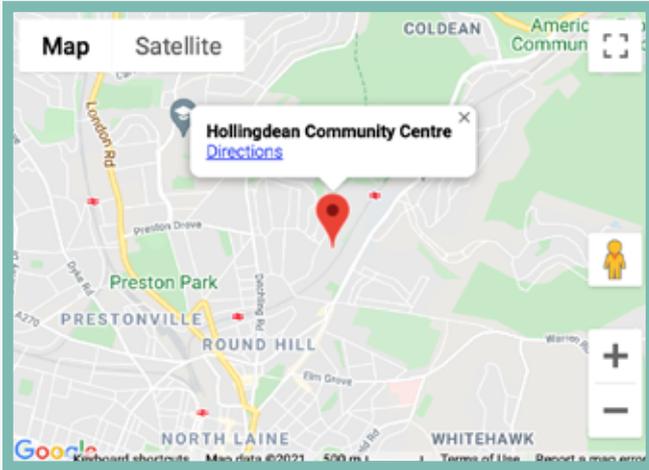
"I ENJOY COMING EVERY WEEK TO HELP OUT AND DO MY SHOP AND I LOVE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE PART OF OUR STORE - THERE'S AN AMAZING SENSE OF COMMUNITY HERE"

- Fabrizio, BrightStore Hove Member

OUR STORES

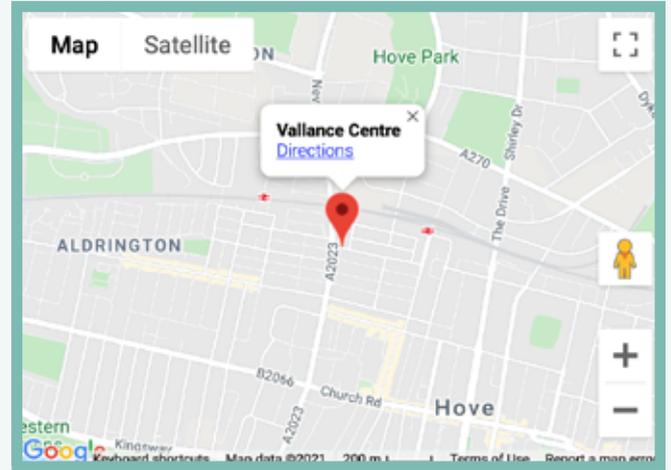
HOLLINGDEAN

Hollingdean Community Centre



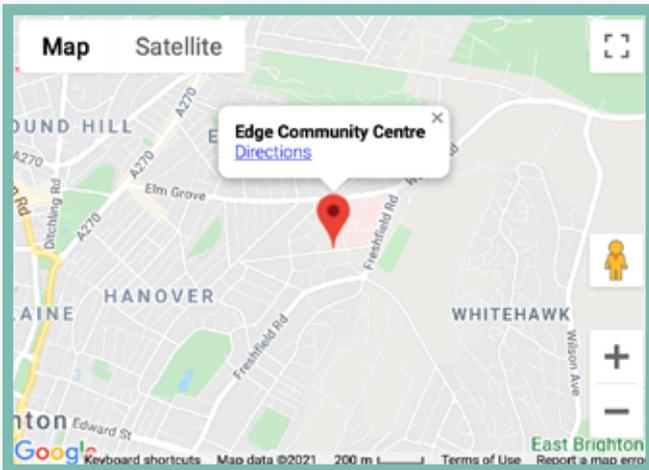
HOVE

The Vallance Centre



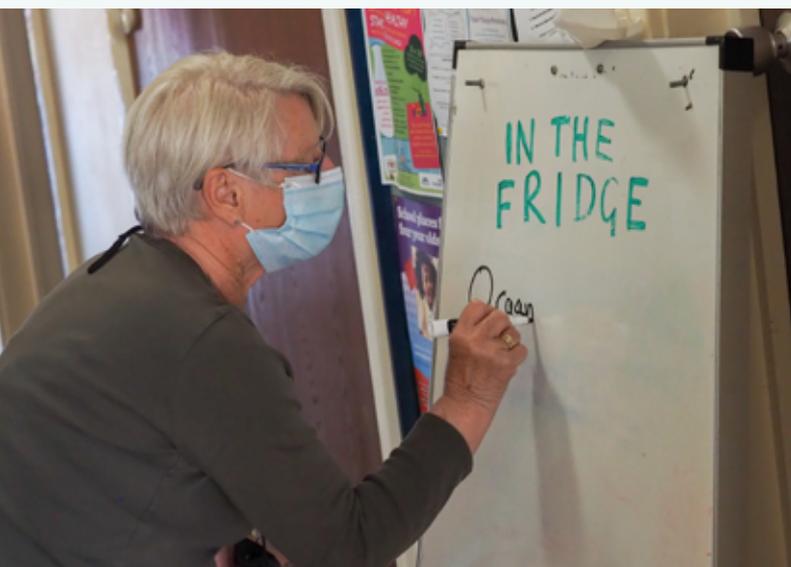
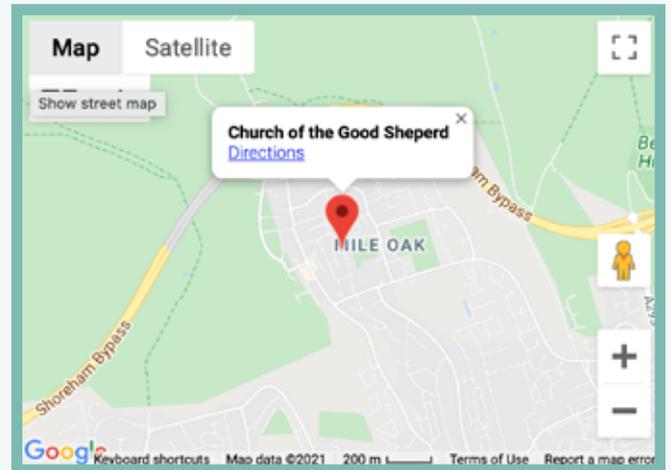
PANKHURST

The Edge Community Centre



MILE OAK

The Church of the Good Shepherd Church Hall





LOCAL - AFFORDABLE - SOCIAL

OUR FIRST YEAR

TIMELINE



OUR IMPACT



3,568
weekly shops
by members



8,302
people fed



75% of members
said they felt more
connected to other
people since coming
to BrightStore*



80%
said they saved
money being a
member*



51%
said they'd eaten
more vegetables
since coming to
BrightStore*

OUR STRATEGY

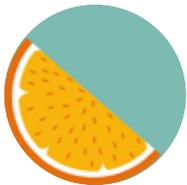
FUTURE VISION

To develop BrightStore into a long-term and sustainable affordable food scheme that is environmentally conscious, serves communities that need it across Brighton and Hove and continues to make a valuable contribution to making local food systems fairer and more resilient.

YEAR TWO OBJECTIVES



Consolidate our existing network of BrightStores and brand across Brighton and Hove and expand to areas where there is an identified need for an affordable food scheme



Retain and reward our amazing volunteer teams by providing a comprehensive training scheme and a broader range of opportunities and skills



Enhance what we provide to our members with complimentary services linked to our core offer including community food growing and cooking sessions



Secure the long-term future and sustainability of Brightstore by becoming a CIC (Community Interest Company) and by developing strategic partnerships with organisations that share our ethos and principles



OUR SUPPORTERS

We are proud to work with the following organisations who have supported BrightStore in our first year:



THE
VALLANCE CENTRE
COMMITTEE





GET IN TOUCH

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