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Support of Learning and Innovation
Networks for Sustainable Agriculture

Agricultural Knowledge Systems In Transition:
Towards a more effective and efficient support of Learning
and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture

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BRIGHTON AND HOVE FOOD PARTNERSHIP

LINSA Case Study Report: England

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1 SUMMARY

The Brighton and Hove Food Partnership (BHFP) is a 'network of networks' concerned to develop localised food systems in an *urban* area in an holistic sustainable context that embraces equity, prosperity, environmental quality, fair trade and physical and mental health. It originated from a local state (health authority) desire to improve the quality of food in hospitals and to use food as a means of health improvement. It now embraces over 200 organisations in the state, private and voluntary sectors concerned with all stages of the food chain. The City council is an active member and has adopted a number of the BHFP's ideas as 'legal' policy. Its funding basis is short term and reliant on bidding for funds (section 2)

The study was conducted using 9 separate research methods (section 3) and these methods (and the focus of the research itself) were conducted in full partnership with the LINSAs wherever possible, through research *co-production*. The main findings of the case study are (section 4):

- The BHFP sits outside of the conventional agricultural system and has no connection with the AKS.
- It has the local state (municipality, health authority), voluntary sector and private companies within its membership.
- It is a radical innovator and not risk averse.
- It operates on trust and co-operation rather than regulation.
- Learning processes are informal and can be seen to take place at the individual, group and organisational levels.
- Much developmental knowledge within BHFP is internally generated. Tacit knowledge also has an important role to play.
- There is no assurance of the quality of knowledge within the LINSAs.
- Formal support for the LINSAs comes through a range of small income streams and through local policies for land use planning.
- Informal support comes through mentoring, volunteering, facilitating and good communications channels.
- Efficiency and effectiveness are not really part of the vocabulary of the LINSAs: it is more concerned with changing values and increasing community cohesion.
- That said, the main cost-effectiveness of the LINSAs comes through the pursuit of multiple objectives simultaneously.
- One of the main strengths of the LINSAs is in the support of a large number of the lay population of the area, actively as well as ideologically.

In conclusion (section 5), it is important to evaluate LINSAs within the value systems which they themselves hold. Also, it is important when assessing sustainable agriculture, to recognise different interpretations of its meaning.

DEFINITIONS

Agricultural Knowledge System (AKS): The AKS describes institutionalised and formalised tasks of research, education and advice, organizationally reflected in research, education and extension/advisory institutes.

Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture (LINSA): Networks of producers, customers, experts, NGOs, SMEs, local administrations, as well as official researchers and extensionists, that are mutually engaged with common goals for sustainable agriculture and rural development - cooperating, sharing resources and co-producing new knowledge by creating conditions for communication (Brunori et al., 2013).

Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS): this concept seeks to encompass and influence the complexity of knowledge and innovation processes in the rural sphere. It draws on the notion of Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) which is defined as 'a network of organisations, enterprises, and individuals focused on bringing new products, new processes, and new forms of organisation into economic use, together with the institutions and policies that affect the way different agents interact, share, access, exchange and use knowledge'. AIS consists of, not just researchers, extension agents and farmers, but all types of public, private and civil society actors, such as inputs and processing industry actors, agricultural traders, retailers, policymakers, consumers and NGOs (EU SCAR, 2012).

2 INTRODUCTION

The BHFP was established to create a network of organisations, the local state, businesses and residents with a mission to:

“Work across the community to strengthen the growth and development of a localised food system which promotes social equity, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, global fair trade and the health and well-being of all residents”. (BHFP, Food strategies 2006 and 2012).

This LINSAs is different from most of the case studies as it does not have agricultural origins. It originates, rather, from a desire to integrate the *whole of the food chain* with a range of other sustainable actions (relating to waste, health, energy, transport) in an urban setting. Consequently, many members who were interviewed did not see themselves as part of a ‘food’ process but, rather, part of a ‘sustainable development’ process. The LINSAs has little connection to traditional agriculture (no farm support, no link to the AKS). It is a ‘network of networks’ with a small executive and a management board (partly elected, partly nominated) but with over 200 voluntary food groups who can join and leave the LINSAs at will. Communication through the LINSAs is informal and through web sites and *ad hoc* meetings.

The research process

Working with the LINSAs was at times challenging. Unlike working with the public sector (who commonly see research co-operation as part of their ‘public service’) or the private sector (who co-operate if they see financial benefit in doing so), this was a disparate set of public, private, voluntary and community groups. There seemed to be some resistance to being researched which, whilst not explicitly stated, seemed related to one or more of the following:

- there was sometimes a sense that we were invading the privacy of an organisation that was new and still finding its feet. It needed to be able to learn through making mistakes and did not want to be made self-conscious by being observed by outsiders;
- as a voluntary body, there was some questioning of why they should be accountable to us as outsiders;
- there was a worry that we were ‘judging’ the LINSAs rather than trying to assist in its development;
- there was some concern that the evaluation criteria that we might use were at variance with the intentions of the LINSAs: we might be judging them against things they weren’t intending;
- as an innovative body, they felt over-researched and over exposed as a result.

We therefore had to be sensitive to the wishes of the LINSAs respecting their desire ‘not to take part’ when they chose not to. This extended to our offer of finance to go and visit other LINSAs as a learning experience: members of the LINSAs felt that they were ‘too busy’ to take part in such activities.

The research purpose

The main purpose of the analysis of the BHFP was to explore several of its key characteristics: its scale, origin and function, effectiveness and efficiency; links to the

AKIS; governance; integration; innovation, and levels of learning. These are discussed in section 4 below and summaries of these characteristics are at appendix II.

3 METHODS

From the outset, it was decided that the methods for the exploration of this LINSAs would be developed working with the LINSAs itself, through *research co-production*. Thus, the LINSAs had a strong influence over the methods adopted (and indeed the things that were to be researched), and these were discussed in full at the first (and as it turned out, only) workshop with the LINSAs. At this opening workshop, it was made clear that future workshops would not be part of the methodological repertoire as people working in, for, and with the LINSAs, were generally too busy to get together for such activities. Voluntary workers operated under a fragile resource base and giving up time for this kind of activity was not realistic.

As a result of these discussions at the workshop and subsequent correspondence, the following methodological elements were agreed with the LINSAs. Permission was sought from the senior employed staff of the LINSAs before each of these methods was deployed, and subjects for interview were nominated by these staff before they were approached directly.

One workshop with key players – this was the opening meeting with senior staff in the LINSAs at which the co-methodological groundwork was established as above.

Regular contact with the key stakeholders for advice and guidance – given the sensitivities with the LINSAs discussed in the introduction, contact was made with senior staff of the LINSAs at all stages of the research to ensure that they were fully informed of our actions

Site visits – four site visits were made to specific growing or selling areas within Brighton and Hove during the course of the project.

Working directly with the LINSAs – the research team had an active involvement in advising on and redrafting part of the BHFP second food strategy, Spade to Spoon: digging deeper.

Academic literature reviews - these covered the urban and sustainable food chain literatures as well as those on new social movements.

Full review of official documentation and associated 'grey' literature – a large number of internal documents and web sites of constituent members of the LINSAs was made available to the research team.

Attendance at BHFP events - we went as participant observers (for example the launch of the second food strategy).

Four rounds of semi structured interviews - the first round of face to face interviews took place in April 2012 (seven interviews), the second took place in May 2012 (five

interviews) and a third round took place in May 2013 (five interviews). In addition supplementary interviews took place by telephone (4 interviews). People commonly withdrew from interviews at short notice. Some were rescheduled and others had to be abandoned, for the reasons outlined in the introduction above.

Discussions with others researching the BHFP – there were a number of other research teams researching issues surrounding the LINSAs during the two years of our empirical investigation and information about both findings and processes was shared with them.

4 RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

4.1 Constraints and opportunities for LINSAs within their particular context and the support needs for successful LINSAs

4.1.1 Summary of constraints and opportunities for the BHFP

Because the BHFP is different from most of the other LINSAs case studies, the constraints and opportunities that it faces have to be measured in terms of its own aspirations rather than any more generic goals for LINSAs. In terms of constraints, the following have been observed.

- It falls outside of the conventional agriculture system and is therefore not able to access funding through the CAP.
- Its funding is secured largely through constant bidding that means its financial basis is fragile, time consuming and short term.
- The holistic (sustainability) nature of BHFP means that it has a complex network structure which can be difficult to organise.
- Despite active support from the City council they are reluctant to use their farms for local food production as they are a significant source of revenue under their current legal arrangements.
- Being radical innovators in terms of urban food, there are often few precedents from which to learn and moving into new areas of activity often can be risky.
- The LINSAs are seeking a significantly different knowledge set than that being offered by the AKS.

In terms of opportunities

- BHFP has secured the support of both the City council and the local health authority. This makes the LINSAs 'legitimate' in the context of the local state.
- The strategies of the LINSAs are being adopted into 'legal' policies of the local state.
- The LINSAs are recognised as being 'ahead of the game' in terms of integrated food systems, and a number of organisations are keen to learn from them.
- The large number of organisations within the LINSAs (the 'network of networks') makes it possible to reach a large number of the local citizenry.

- The population of Brighton and Hove is well suited to the development of urban food systems, in terms of general attitudes, cultures and ideas.

4.2 Mechanisms of network development, learning and innovation processes and connections with the formal AKS systems

4.2.1 Mechanisms of Network development

Network development is in a mature stage in BHFP. It is based on trust and cooperation rather than rules and regulation. There are no legal obligations or explicit *a priori* responsibilities within the networks. The complexity and pace of change bode against any regulatory frame. This engenders commitment and enthusiasm, and builds common values. It has allowed state bodies to work more easily within these networks on the basis of trust rather than bureaucracy, which is helpful. As the network becomes larger and more successful, however, there is increasing pressure to introduce bureaucracies. In some instances, the informal becomes formal.

4.2.2 Learning and Innovation Processes

The BHFP is a *radical innovator* in working in an integrated way with several state bodies (health authority, national park, city council) and upwards of 200 voluntary groups, productively and on the basis of goodwill. Food strategies have been adopted as policy documents by the City council and public open space is used for food production.

Brighton also is a unique place within which innovation takes place. It's a transient community with many environmental radicals and a strong Green Party and the UK's only Green MP. There are few other similar food partnerships in the UK. Brighton is the only urban area in the UK seeking to become a biosphere reserve. The BHFP seeks to influence the whole of the City rather than just particular interest groups. It acts as a city-wide hub to bring together lots of small projects so that the sum is greater than the parts.

The BHFP also is innovative in terms of exploring food as a *departure* from *existing agricultural systems* and knowledge. It is community-based, not land-based and is concerned with food consumption as much as production and all of the sustainable consequences of both. In this context, much innovation in food production and consumption seems to be coming from outside of agriculture. BHFP also breaks conventional agricultural rules by measuring success by a very different set of rules than the commercial bottom line: community cohesion and a range of sustainability indicators. There has been an historical animosity between 'farmers' and 'foodies'.

The use of food as an instrumental ally of mental health is persuasive. The 'communing' nature of helping to make things grow; the getting up early to knead dough (as physical exertion) to make bread; the smells of cooking (especially the bread), the 'serving' of

others with food and the pride in a job well done, were all active therapies in the local mental hospital.

4.2.3 Connections with the formal AKIS Systems

There are very few of these connections (formal or informal, practical or ideological) because the BHFP does not see itself as part of the agricultural system. There are some farmers who are in the BHFP but this is incidental to the AKS. They are fairly unconventional for farmers anyway. Most BHFP members don't *want* to have links with the AKS as they want to do things differently. A lot of the technology of food production used in the BHFP is about relearning old ways rather than drawing on cutting edge scientific research for new methods. The BHFP teaches the local agricultural college about community food growing: the AKS is learning from the LINSAs rather than the other way round.

4.2.4 Learning approaches, methods and tools used in LINSAs

Summary of approaches

In one interpretation, the BHFP is all about learning. Its mission is about learning and influencing the learning trajectories of others. Its aims are about increasing capacity through learning and subsequently enabling understanding.

In the BHFP, *information* is the starting point for learning. It produces a regular newsletter, a web page, a range of 'ad hoc' publications and a formal strategy, now in its second edition. Constituent members of the BHFP also have their own information infrastructure: collectively this information base is considerable.

The *learning* process, however, is much less formal, based on networks of practice, trust, an understanding of beliefs and customs and the like. Tacit knowledge has an important role to play which embraces customs and folklore as well as a 'gut' understanding of the way things operate – a *savoir faire*. Tacit knowledge has to be assimilated, however, rather than learned directly.

In this context, formalised learning and *informal learning* have compatible as well as complementary roles to play. Informal learning tends to be dominant – there are few formal courses, for example. Thus information protocols are quite *laissez faire*, with trust having more of an important role to play than validation or regulations such as intellectual property. Within this *laissez faire* infrastructure member organisations commonly have their own 'communities of learning' (from local seed exchanges to national forums such as the Permaculture Association).

Three levels of learning were observed. *Individual* learning invariably was experiential. *Group* learning has more formality (meetings, agendas) but often remains informal, anecdotal and 'cultural' as much as scientific. It concerns learning about beliefs and values as well as mechanisms. *Organisational* learning is the most formal, particularly when the local state (health authority, local municipality, local national park) is involved.

Even here, the role of tacit knowledge and values is not overruled by ‘facts’. At all three of these levels, learning is mutual and negotiated rather than externally imposed.

Resultant learning characteristics

Knowledge relating to the values and holistic nature of the role of food in sustainable development appears high. This knowledge is constantly evolving and the BHFP increasingly is being held as a *source* of learning for others. Knowledge needs are therefore less pressing in the ‘science’ of sustainable development and more in reconciling this approach with more conventional approaches to food in terms of values, policies, finance, and developing networks of action.

The BHFP is unusually well equipped for this because of the novel integration of the local state with the voluntary and community sector. Channels of communication and knowledge sharing are very well developed across these sectors unlike in many other initiatives that are focussed on developing more sustainable networks of food provision, where there can be a clash of values and procedures.

It is likely that the notion of ‘professionalization’ would not be that prized an aspiration within the BHFP relative to ‘inspirationalism’. This disconnection is significant in that arguably the conventional AKIS, with its predominant focus at the production end of the food supply chain, has much to learn from the consumption perspective, as articulated and actioned within the BHFP.

Limitations

- It can take time for new entrants to understand the nature of the informal knowledge that is used and how it is transmitted.
- Competence can be presumed to be quite variable as there is no ‘regulation’ (such as qualifications and experience), that might be a limit to those who may become involved in the BHFP.
- There is no identifiable learning relationship with the conventional AKIS.

4.2.5 Tasks, roles and emerging quality needs for the knowledge and skills

In terms of *tasks*, BHFP’s first food strategy in 2006 – *Spade to Spoon* - was concerned with growing systems, food waste and the local food economy. The second in 2012, *Digging Deeper* - focuses on procurement and local food systems but at its core are social objectives relating to the life course approach to nutrition. Two of BHFP’s 10 main aims in its Action Plan (BHFP, 2010) are concerned directly with learning through education and networking:

“to support educational initiatives across all sectors of the community to raise awareness of the production of food and its role in supporting health, the economy and the environment, in a local and global context”, and

“to provide networking opportunities and the exchange of information, support and advice for individuals and organisations working on food initiatives across the City and beyond, in order to build skills and capacity, and to encourage linkage between diverse sectors”.

The main *roles and needs* in developing these tasks can be summarised as follows.

Mutual engagement – this takes place extensively but there was an expressed need for BHFP officers to spend more time with grassroots activists at the locations in which they work.

Joint enterprise – the BHFP allows individual projects to see how what they are doing is contributing/can contribute to a wider goal.

Shared repertoire - the BHFP has an important role in trying to harness and focus the disparate energies of a wide range of different groups, in part through demonstrating how working together can sometimes enable the delivery of objectives that are difficult to deliver in isolation.

Participation - The BHFP is committed to making individuals/groups, through their engagement with local food, realise benefits both for themselves and the wider community. The LINSAs act as gatekeepers in this respect.

Reification. A key role of the BHFP is to provide an overarching framework and direction for the energies of individual groups and individuals.. The LINSAs set out the overarching goals, but is not prescriptive about how individuals/communities contribute towards them.

Boundary work – The FP has a key role as a boundary breaker. It functions as a bridge between different partners, spreading information as a broker, to diverse parties who might not normally communicate with each other directly.

4.2.6 Support measures which are most effective and cost efficient

Types of support: formal

In terms of formal support *financial* support for BHFP initially came from the local health authority. This was justified because of the relationship between food consumption (and sitting behind that, production) and obesity. Within the whole food chain, this health authority funding also has been associated with improving cooking – seen very much as part of healthy eating.

Funding also has come from another part of the local state: the City council. It has a number of grant programmes for individual projects. For example it has funded the delivery of the One Planet Living plan to do some mapping of food growing. This will cover three phases – the city centre, the suburban areas and the city hinterland. This

project will identify land that will be suitable for food growing across the city. This includes publicly and privately owned land not just for market gardens but also for sheep, cattle, orchards and the like. Such support, however, can be bureaucratically slow and highly political.

There have been few specific policy instruments, but the *land use planning system* can offer some support. One way is to encourage developers to release vacant patches of land for short term food growing. But there is always an apprehension on their part that once the ‘community’ gets hold of the land they will never get it back – guerrilla gardening as it is sometimes called. The community will be against them when they want it back. And with the Localism Act 2012, the community can make a legitimate claim on the land after a certain period of time, so this blights short term community leases.

Types of support: informal

Informal support appears to be the central form of support for the BHFP. This is invariably mutual through mentoring, volunteering, facilitating and enhancing communications channels.

Effectiveness: Challenges

The LINSAs are about developing values and lifestyles as much as ‘getting things done’. Because of this, efficiency is not really a ‘strong’ objective of the LINSAs.

Times are very hard at the moment. The multi-purpose nature of the urban food movement makes it particularly hard to attract funding because it does not fit comfortably into any one silo in the way that funding commonly does. Any funding that is gained requires creativity to access it. It comes only from the Big Lottery’s Local Food programme at the moment in any significant way. This is now closed to new applications and most other sources of funding tend to stress the community cohesion elements, rather than the food production ones. There is nowhere really that currently provides funds for urban food head on.

Effectiveness: successes

The huge amount of voluntary support within B and H for the BHFP and its components leads to social cohesion amongst certain sectors of the population. This is happening also in a number of other British cities (such as Sheffield, Manchester and Bristol). It is helpful that food growing serves a number of different purposes simultaneously. It is about lifestyle choices that have a contact with the soil really. This value has increased the sustainability of food growing in general. Certainly, if there was an opportunity for social enterprises to be set up (through a better return on investment) they would be very popular. Some kind of subsidy would help this. People commonly are unlikely to pay more for local food partly because they can get it cheaper and partly because they cannot afford it. The food poverty agenda is big in Brighton

The governance approach – with a clear Board but then a large number of autonomous members – is effective at disseminating values and good practice. The power relations inside the LINSAs have been observed to be highly cooperative and developed on

mutual support through a common set of beliefs, rather than any notion of rules, regulations, control or required behaviour. It is hard to define the power relations from inside to outside of the LINSAs as this 'boundary' is not easy to identify. Relations with the local state, for example, are very collaborative, but in many ways the local state is 'inside' the LINSAs. Inside/outside relations tend to be developed through conveying 'good practice' rather than anything more assertive or imperialist.

4.2.7 Evaluation criteria and cost-efficiency of support

Evaluation Criteria

There is an online sustainability checklist for all planning applications. All residential development and soon all non-residential as well, has to complete this checklist. This includes food growing as part of the checklist and has done much to improve awareness of incorporating food into all development, although there is no requirement at this stage to do this.

The City Local Plan (about to go to Examination in Public in the summer of 2013) also has policies on **all** development having to address issues of food growing on the development site. Once adopted, this could become a requirement. Wherever there is landscaping for amenity or biodiversity purposes, it should include food.

Monitoring the implementation of planning applications with food growing considerations in them might be difficult (on site), but applications can have conditions placed upon them (often so that they have to be completed pre occupation of the building).

Cost efficiency

Support can be cost effective if it is twinned with multiple purposes (such as physical and mental health or community cohesion) as this makes the support money go further. If you have to spend public funds looking after people with mental health problems, they might as well spend their time growing food.

Care Co-ops work on this basis for example. There are several allotment projects focussed on people with mental health problems or learning difficulties. The BHFP also works with adult social care centres and old people's homes (using their land to grow food). They often go into these places on a diet related agenda, they can develop other aspects relating to food growing once they are there. The community often can pick up things that the community isn't good at, through monitoring.

There is a place for localised food systems in England but actually it is a very small place at the moment. Compared to most other countries there is a real scarcity of land in England. Local food works much better in America, for example, because of land availability at an affordable price. This is a particular problem in the south east of England and the proximity to London.

4.2.8 Operational tools that AKS actors could use, to improve support, enhance capacity and foster success

Again, it must be noted that the BHFP has such a tenuous relationship with the AKS that there is little currently that can be envisaged in terms of direct AKS support to the LINSAs. There are however, a number of operational tools outside of the AKS that could be used to garner success.

- There are a lot of people in BHFP who are actively keen to get their hands dirty on the ground and these could be more fully harnessed. It is more than just an 'ideological' interest. There is a strong interest amongst younger people who want to get involved in growing and food production.
- A gradual reassessment of the use of the City-owned farms would be valuable, if they were able to be used, even in a very small way, directly in pursuit of the objectives of the BHFP.
- The implementation of City planning policy that actively encourages food growing will send positive messages to the citizenry generally.
- Wider recognition and endorsement on the part of state bodies will enhance effectiveness. In particular, the support of the Local Enterprise Partnership would be valuable.

5 CONCLUSION

This was an interesting LINSAs case study in that in many ways it did not meet the *a priori* expectations of the researchers. Rather, it (rightly) challenged a number of our assumptions about what sustainable agriculture, and its organisation, is all about. The salient lessons in this respect are as follows.

- It is important not to assume that all innovative initiatives will want to be researched to see how they work. Radical innovators are prepared to take risks and make mistakes and often they would sooner not be observed doing so.
- Innovators often innovate not because they want to change technology or economic prosperity, but because they wish to change values, community cohesion and the distribution of local assets: cornerstones of social innovation. Because of this it is critical to develop evaluative criteria that measure the performance of the LINSAs against the objectives that it has set for itself rather than any externality imposed criteria that we as researchers might think it ought to be pursuing.
- It is critical that we as researchers have an 'open view' of sustainable agriculture. This case study suggests it might be an oxymoron. Many involved in BHFP could not see food, in sustainability terms, in isolation from its systemic

context. It was felt to be inextricably linked to waste, energy, transport, physical and mental health, equity, fair trade and environmental quality, for example, and so it could not be developed outside of this more holistic context. The food chain is just one part of the sustainability equation and should be fully integrated with it.

- It is important also, from this case study, to use the terms 'agriculture' and 'food' with some discrimination. 'Agriculture', invariably is associated with the production of food, whereas this is only one small part of the food chain. Sustainable food is likely to embrace production, processing, distribution, cooking, consumption and waste, again in the context of a more holistic approach to food.

Whilst this case study has questioned some of the more traditional perspectives of sustainable agriculture, we feel that it is all the richer for having done so.

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APPENDIX:ANALYTICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Summary report of the BHFP Characteristics

ORIGIN AND FUNCTION

The BHFP originally developed from an action plan on food within the Brighton and Hove City Council's sustainability strategy of 2000 produced as a result of the Local Agenda 21 Programme. The existing East Sussex food partnership had expertise, there were many community food projects in the city, and a 'Food shed' report was produced followed by a *Spade to Spoon* conference organised to find out what the community wanted to see from a food partnership. All areas of the food system were covered.

It was suggested at the *Spade to Spoon* conference that an overarching body be set up and some outline aims (of which there are now 10) were drawn up at the conference. By 2003, the Health Trust (Primary Care Trust - PCT) and the Sustainability Commission from the City Council had established a need for an independent group to address food issues and to bring together the diverse elements of the food, health, environment and economic sectors and encourage a more sustainable food system throughout the City. The PCT put in some initial funds to set up the BHFP in 2003, and by 2007 it became an employing authority. By 2010 it was legally constituted as a 'not for profit' company limited by guarantee.

Functions

The BHFP was thus established to create a network of organisations, businesses and residents with a mission to:

"Work across the community to strengthen the growth and development of a localised food system which promotes social equity, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, global fair trade and the health and well-being of all residents". (BHFP, Food strategies 2006 and 2012).

In delivering this mission, the BHFP developed as a Service Provider offering infrastructure support through small grants to community projects. Early on it also undertook lobbying and campaigning and developed a Membership Scheme. It then successfully applied to the Big Lottery-funded *Local Food* programme for funding (approx. €600,000) to explore the feasibility of a city increasing the food produced within its boundaries, as well as providing opportunities for local people to grow and eat fresh, nutritious food. The resulting project is known as Harvest Brighton & Hove, which is intent on delivering an integrated portfolio of practical community food projects, as well as developing an infrastructure that will help make a local food system function effectively. This was an early Membership response to the direction of BHFP which they wanted to move into food production. These functions were not always easy to reconcile, particularly the relationship between delivery and lobbying.

In setting these functions in a planning context the BHFP has produced two Food Strategies (2006 and 2012). The former was adopted by the City Council as policy. The latter proposes shifting the functional emphasis onto procurement and local food systems.

Eight main functions for the BHFP were set out in their 2010 brochure *about the partnership*.

City Food News: a quarterly newsletter called on current food, health and environmental issues, as well as local food work, events and courses.

Food for a Healthy Future project: delivering a range of food and health work on contract from the Primary Care Trust: increasing cookery skills, programmes to promote healthier and more active lifestyles and better food in schools.

Stalls and events: to raise awareness of BHFP's work.

Local Produce Festivals: just like a farmers' market – local farmers and producers come and sell their goods – but with an added element of fun, education and activity. Each festival has taken place at a school in an area where there are few shops selling fresh produce.

Meetings and networking: to bring together people from diverse sectors across the city to share information.

Promoting local food: where people can buy locally produced foods

Spade to Spoon: production of an action plan.

Matchmaking scheme: to link allotment growers and community food projects like cookery groups, lunch clubs and community cafes. Allotment gardeners with surplus produce (even if it's only a big bag of courgettes you won't get through the supermarkets) are encouraged to contact the Food Partnership's office to be connected to a local project

These functions have been supported by 10 main aims which have been developed into a Food Strategy and Action Plan (BHFP, 2010).

- support educational initiatives across all sectors of the community to raise awareness of the production of food and its role in supporting health, the economy and the environment, in a local and global context;
- provide networking opportunities and the exchange of information, support and advice for individuals and organisations working on food initiatives across the City and beyond, in order to build skills and capacity, and to encourage linkage between diverse sectors;
- lobby Governmental agencies at local, regional and national levels, run local campaigns within the City and influence policy and planning decisions, in order to further the aims of the Partnership;
- increase access for *all* residents within the City to nutritious, safe, affordable food in culturally and socially acceptable ways;
- promote food production systems which conserve and enhance the environment;
- encourage the development of a vibrant local food economy, expand local¹ food production and create opportunities for City residents to access locally produced food;

¹ In this context 'local' includes growers and producers in the immediate feeder areas to Brighton and Hove City.

- introduce procurement policies within public institutions such as schools, hospitals, etc. which favour the use of regional and locally produced healthy food, and which strive to support environmental sustainability, animal welfare and fairtrade;
- reduce, re-use and recycle waste generated by the food system, e.g. reduce packaging, compost organic waste to improve soil fertility;
- provide a policy forum to initiate research, publications and activities that encourage the exchange of ideas both within the City and beyond, and to inform, and be kept informed, of emerging trends in local and global food policy;
- be accountable to and rooted in the participation of *all* sectors of the community, give voice to those not normally heard, to reflect the social diversity of the City, and to celebrate the part food plays in the community and culture of the City.

SCALE

The Partnership had over 200 members (individuals and groups) in 2011 and membership is free to anyone living or working in Brighton and Hove. The geographical jurisdiction of the BHFP is limited by the city boundaries.

EXENT OF INNOVATION

INNOVATION

1. Do the LINSAs display characteristics of incremental or radical innovations?

Integrating sectors: The BHFP is also a *radical innovator* in working in an integrated way with several state bodies (health authority, national park, city council) and upwards of 200 voluntary groups, productively and on the basis of goodwill. Food strategies have been adopted as policy documents by the City council and public open space is used for food production. City –owned farms are being brought into the approach, albeit slowly.

Brighton is a unique place. It's a transient community with many environmental radicals and a strong Green Party and the UK's only green MP. There is no other similar food partnership in the UK. Transience leads to openness, trust and direct action. Brighton is the only urban area in the UK seeking to become a biosphere reserve. The BHFP seeks to influence the whole of the City rather than just particular interest groups. It acts as a city-wide hub to bring together lots of small projects so that the sum is greater than the parts.

2. How do LINSAs support socio-technical transition to sustainability?

Trust and cooperation rather than rules and regulation form the *modus operandi* of the Partnership and the Food Strategy. There are no legal obligations or responsibilities at all attached to their development. The complexity and pace of change bode against any regulatory frame. This engenders commitment and enthusiasm, and builds common

values. It has allowed state bodies to work more easily in partnership on the basis of trust rather than bureaucracy, which is a help. As the organisation becomes larger and more successful, however, there is increasing pressure to introduce bureaucracies. In some instances, the informal becomes formal: the Food Strategy, for example, has been adopted by the City's regulatory framework.

Food strategies: produced in 2006 and 2012 for the whole of the City. The first strategy – *Spade to Spoon* - was a real departure and was about growing systems, food waste and the local food economy and adopted by the City as an official policy document but is implemented entirely by voluntary means. The Second Strategy – *Digging Deeper* - (2012) is more rounded (covering a range of different things) and mature. It focuses on procurement and local food systems but at its core are social objectives relating to the life course approach to nutrition.

3. Is the LINSAs a novelty, a niche or a change in the regime?

Holistic approach: an important characteristic of the *regime change* associated with BHFP is that it has started from the need and desire for sustainable living in an holistic sense, rather than the need to make food production *per se* more sustainable. Thus it is about eating for physical and mental health, sustainable waste management, energy reduction, climate change and the like, and growing and consuming healthy local food is just a part of this.

Whilst this is radical in terms of LINSAs, innovation is incremental or radical depending on where you are starting from. Much of BHFP innovations are very radical from a point of view of traditional agricultural approaches, but incremental in the context of sustainable community empowerment. This raises the issue of 'spheres of knowledge'. The partnership is drawing on many spheres of knowledge simultaneously (food production, environmental conservation, community development, mental health and so on) where 'new knowledge' in one sphere might be conventional knowledge in another.

4. Is the LINSAs focused on incremental innovation, mobilising and applying existing knowledge in given contexts or it is a network that 'breaks the rules' of dominant socio-technical systems and builds up new economic spaces endowed with their own rules, actors, and artefacts?

This issue takes as its point of departure, *existing agricultural systems* and knowledge and assesses its 'rule breaking' against this nom.

Community-based, not land-based: BHFP is a community initiative rather than a food initiative and is concerned with food consumption as much as production and all of the sustainable consequences of both. In this context, much innovation in food production and consumption seems to be coming from outside of agriculture. BHFP also breaks conventional agricultural rules by measuring success by a very different set of rules than the commercial bottom line: community cohesion and a range of sustainability indicators. There has been an historical animosity between 'farmers' and 'foodies'.

State owned farms: attempts are being made to use the City-owned farms for community agriculture, but lease arrangements make this difficult. This reinforces the differences between community food production and agriculture.

Food production and agricultural divergence: there seems little connection between the economic spaces of food production (urban, labour intensive, high value horticulture, communal, food quality, no direct state support) and agriculture (all the opposite things).

Environmental benefits: BHFP produces environmental benefits at no state cost, but agriculture contiguous to the city is largely in Higher Level Stewardship, which is very expensive.

Institutional food quality: BHFP is seeking to introduce both healthy food consumption and food growing in to all of the city schools and hospitals.

5. Are there any things revealed about the level of innovation that were unexpected?

* The BHFP did not identify itself as being about food as much as being about community cohesion for sustainability.

* There was a clear nervousness about being 'researched'. There was a possible apprehension about being criticised.

* The use of food as an instrumental ally of mental health was persuasive. The 'communing' nature of helping to make things grow; the getting up early to knead dough (as physical exertion) to make bread; the smells of cooking (especially the bread), the 'serving' of others with food and the pride in a job well done, were all active therapies in the local mental hospital.

* Radical innovation in one context is incremental innovation in another.

6. Summary

- The BHFP is not about food but about sustainable development and the role that food has to play in it.
- BHFP is successful at getting the local state and the voluntary sector working fully together.
- BHFP is very 'place dependent'. It probably could not be done as successfully in any other city in England.
- In the BHFP there is little connection between food production and agriculture.
- The BHFP operates on trust and cooperation rather than rules and regulations.

DEGREE OF INTEGRATION

1. What are the mechanisms of network development?

The Food Partnership (FP) and Food Strategy (FS) are inextricably linked. The FP is composed of several state bodies, including the health authority and the city council, as well as more than 200 voluntary groups. The FS on the other hand sets out the goals of

the FP. The FS can be understood as a framework that provides direction and focus, whereas the FP aims to harness and coordinate the energy of a range of people in order to achieve the goals of the strategy.

Identifying the mechanisms of network development is complicated by the fact that the FP is effectively a 'network of networks'. The FS itself involves 23 partner organisations, with the role of the FP being to deliver the strategy, support innovation and encourage partnerships. Inherent within this, is the aim of making connections and enabling bodies and individuals to realise that the goals of the FS have the potential to help them to deliver on their own individual agendas. Connections are made through holding events, visiting projects and disseminating information through the partnership's website.

2. What are the processes of innovation and learning and how do they occur?

Mutual engagement. It is clear that the FP do listen to its members. Nevertheless, due to the diversity of groups involved, it is inevitable that sometimes individual groups feel that more could be done. This includes the FP spending more time with grassroots activists at the locations in which they work, rather than simply inviting people to their own functions. As one respondent suggested: in order to more fully engage with the range of organisations, they need to be 'the barefoot doctor and come out to see the patient', rather than the patient coming to see them.

Joint enterprise. There has always been a degree of ad hoc engagement and interaction between different projects, but the FS enables those involved to see how everything is connected. In this sense, individual projects have the opportunity to see how what they are doing is contributing/can contribute to a wider goal. Some of those involved are more integrated than others, with the FS effectively encouraging a loose partnership approach that works towards a common goal.

Shared repertoire. The groups who have been brought together within the FP all have their own agendas, and yet there has been a degree of convergence of opinions over time. In this respect, the FP has an important role in trying to harness and focus the disparate energies of a wide range of different groups, in part through demonstrating how working together can sometimes enable the delivery of objectives that are difficult to deliver in isolation.

Participation. The FP is a values driven organisation, but not everyone has to be driven by the same values as the FP. The key thing is that individuals/groups through their engagement with the FS realise benefits both for themselves and the wider community. The FP in some respects acts as a gatekeeper. There is a recognition that it needs to be open to new ideas and people and to reach out to anyone who might contribute to the aims of the FS. Farmers were highlighted as being one group that are not fully engaged with the FP and FS; in particular the farmers immediately around the City who are Council tenants. This is not necessarily because they are uninterested, more that their focus is on national or even international markets, whereas local food initiatives tend to be community-based/oriented.

Reification. A key role of the FS is to provide an overarching framework and direction for the energies of individual groups and individuals. At present, the FS cannot be described as integrated, but as a means of bringing groups together and helping to coordinate their actions. Over time, there is a hope and feeling that as those involved

start to appreciate what the FS is about, it will start to become more integrated. There is a recognition that the FS must not be used simply to communicate the existing views of the FP and that communication channels are kept open. The FS sets out the overarching goals, but is not prescriptive about how individuals/communities contribute towards them.

Boundary work. The FP has a key role as a boundary breaker. In the absence of the FP, the network would not really exist and the FS could not be delivered. It functions as a bridge between the different partners involved. For example, the person managing a forest garden would never step into the town hall, and yet what he has to say needs to be heard by those running the council. Similarly, those involved in running projects need to be made aware of the agenda that is being driven forward by the council, and therefore of potential funding sources. The FP is also able to see beyond the individual projects involved to take a broader perspective across the City.

3. COP, NOP or constellation of practice?

Realistically, the FP/FS cannot be described as an integrated COP, in that there is no systematic coordination of practice. It is also difficult to consider them as a NOP, in that there is no one recognised network. Nevertheless, it is certainly something that provides structure and guidance, linking what would otherwise be disparate ideas and groups together. One respondent described it as 'an organisation of choice', wherein those involved feel a loyalty to the FP/FS because they believe in its underlying principles; it is almost a 'kitemark stamp' that identifies that those working within the FP do so against a particular set of principles. As such, it is appropriate to refer to it as a constellation of practice, that gradually over time may develop into a NOP as more of those involved actively engage in the underlying values of the FP/FS, rather than simply seeing it as a positive backdrop to what they are doing in their individual projects.

4. Are there any things revealed about the degree of integration that were unexpected?

It has become clear that the FP/FS is effectively a 'network of networks', which at present is perhaps best described as a constellation of practice. The key group of people that is not engaged in any meaningful way with the FP/FS is farmers. For the most part, farmers are oriented towards national or international markets, rather than being focused towards the City. While this is not necessarily unexpected, it is perhaps significant in terms of understanding how the FP/FS might genuinely develop and become a LINSAs. Food is clearly central to both the FP and FS and yet in terms of quantity the outputs are likely to remain relatively small-scale. In this respect, the overarching goal of the FP/FS is to achieve social change in some way through the medium of food, largely at a community level, but not to directly develop sustainable agricultural practices.

5. Summary

- The FS can be understood as a framework that provides direction and focus, whereas the FP aims to harness and coordinate the energy of a range of people in order to achieve the goals of the strategy.
- The FS effectively encourages a loose partnership approach that works towards a common goal.

- The FP has an important role in trying to harness and focus the disparate energies of a wide range of different groups, through demonstrating how working together can enable benefits that may be difficult to deliver in isolation.
- The FP has a key role as a boundary breaker, functioning as a bridge between the different partners involved, who might otherwise work in parallel.
- The FP/FS cannot be described as a COP or NOP, but through linking what would otherwise be disparate ideas and groups together, it is appropriate to refer to it as a constellation of practice.
- The key group of people who are not engaged in any meaningful way with the FP/FS is farmers. While this is not necessarily unexpected, it is perhaps significant in terms of understanding how the FP/FS might genuinely develop and become a LINSAs.

LEVEL OF LEARNING

1. What is the LINSAs approach to learning?

To what extent, and in what way, is learning coordinated, managed and/or formalised?

There is a clear and co-ordinated ‘infrastructure’ for learning in the BHFP. Essentially this is a base of information, rather than learning *per se*, but a base from which learning takes place. It comprises a regular newsletter, a web page, a range of ‘ad hoc’ publications and a formal strategy, now in its second edition, all generated by the BHFP itself. Many of the constituent members of the BHFP also have their own information infrastructure including web sites, and once web site links are taken into account, this information base becomes considerable.

Building on this formal structure of information, the *learning* process, however, is much less formal, based on networks of practice, trust, an understanding of beliefs and customs and the like. We have characterised this learning approach as having a significant element of tacit knowledge where customs and folklore have a role in the learning process as well as a ‘gut’ understanding of the way things operate – a *savoir faire*. In this context, adopting and understanding roles and identities become an important part of learning and the way in which learning is expressed through discourses also is important. All of these tacit knowledge elements have a strong influence over the network but have to be assimilated rather than learned directly.

What are the tensions between formalised explicit (codified) approaches to learning and non-formalised implicit learning approaches?

These are not so much seen as tensions, as formalised learning and informal learning seem to have compatible as well as complementary roles to play. Barriers to informal learning arise when ‘outsiders’ seek to become part of the BHFP. Whilst there is certainly no resistance to new entry, on the part of existing stakeholders, it can take time for new entrants to understand the nature of the informal knowledge that is used and how it is transmitted.

What are the structures and mechanisms of learning? (is an AKS structure evident? What are the: communication patterns, communication infrastructures,

retrieval information systems, intellectual property rules, validation of information protocols?)

The structures and mechanisms of learning (as opposed to information which is described in question 1 above) are both informal and diverse. With over 200 notional members of the BHFP, each with their own 'communities of learning' (from local seed exchanges to national fora such as the Permaculture Association). The resultant communication patterns remain largely informal and outside of the formal information infrastructure. The information protocols appear quite *laissez faire* rather than formalised, with trust having more of an important role to play than validation or regulations such as intellectual property.

2. Can individual, social and organisational learning be identified?

If so can they be separately characterised?

These all have been separately identified in the interviews and workshops. The scale of learning correlates with the degree of formality. In the context of the information infrastructure above, individual learning takes place informally, commonly implicitly and often through contact with other individuals. This learning is often experiential. Group learning has a greater degree of *organisational* formality (organised meetings, stated agendas) but often again learning is informal, anecdotal and 'cultural' as much as scientific. It concerns learning about beliefs and values as well as mechanisms. Organisational learning is the most formal, particularly where it has the active involvement of the local state (heath authority, local municipality, local national park). But even here, the role of tacit knowledge and values is not overruled by 'facts'.

Importantly at all three of these levels, learning is mutual and negotiated rather than externally imposed.

What are the emerging needs for knowledge and skills in the LINSAs?

There seems to be a high level of knowledge relating to the values and holistic nature of sustainable development (in so far as it relates to the City of Brighton), within which sustainable food production has a place. This knowledge is changing but within BHFP is itself sustaining and indeed BHFP increasingly is being held as a *source* of learning (in terms of both its actions and values). Knowledge needs are therefore less pressing in the 'science' of sustainable development and more in reconciling this approach with more conventional approaches to food in terms of values, policies, finance, and developing networks of action.

How well equipped/competent are the actors and institutions to meet these needs?

The BHFP is unusually well equipped in this regard because of the novel integration of the local state with the voluntary and community sector. Channels of communication and knowledge sharing are very well developed across these sectors unlike in many other initiatives that are focussed on developing more sustainable networks of food provision, where there can be a clash of values and procedures. Competence can be presumed to be quite variable as there is no 'regulation' (such as qualifications and experience), that might be a limit to those who may become involved in the BHFP.

To what extent is education, training and professionalization needed and provided?

Education and training are generated from within the organisation as much as from without and there is little that the conventional AKS would be able to contribute to the kinds of knowledge that are valued within BHFP. Indeed it is more likely that BHFP could provide education and training to more 'professional' organisations about alternative food production systems. Such education and training, however, might not be easily received by the conventional AKIS as it operates from a different value system. It is likely that the notion of 'professionalization' would not be that prized an aspiration within the BHFP relative to 'inspirationalism'. This disconnection is significant in that arguably the conventional AKIS, with its predominant focus at the production end of the food supply chain, has much to learn from the consumption perspective, as articulated and actioned within the BHFP.

How much priority does the LINSAs assign to learning and identifying current and future learning needs?

In one interpretation, this is all that the LINSAs is about. Its mission is about learning and influencing the learning trajectories of others. Its aims are about increasing capacity through learning and subsequently enabling understanding.

3. Summary

- Approaches to learning are more organic and tacit than formal and imposed.
- BHFP is concerned to generate new knowledge, and disseminate it through good practice and experiment.
- BHFP accommodates a broad range of values and approaches so learning tends not to be concerned with things being wrong or right but more about how well they contribute to achieving sustainable systems.
- BHFP is concerned with learning more about sustainable living holistically, and how food fits into that, than learning about sustainable food per se.
- BHFP has been successful at bringing learning systems across the state and community sectors.

GOVERNANCE

1. How is the LINSAs governed/managed?

BHFP has a Board of Directors elected each year (nine of them). They are the directors of the company and are supported by appointed and co-opted members who add to the skills and expertise on the Board. There is an appointed place for representatives from the Primary Care Trust and City Council, the two founding partners, and for a councillor from the Sustainability Commission of the city. The appointed council officer is from the Sustainability Team and the appointed Primary Care Trust representative has historically been from the Health Promotion Team.

Governance is much wider than this, however, as the constituent members have the autonomy to operate independently of the BHFP.

To what extent is the network governance inclusive/democratic? Organisational governance is democratic in that nine of the 12 Board of Directors of the BHFP are elected on an annual basis. *Network* governance however, is much more of an 'open' system and to that extent could be considered to be less democratically accountable. All who wish to have an opportunity to influence the governance of BHFP and its constituent bodies through open meetings workshops, websites and other fora. With this open access to governance, it is not necessary for the Board to be 'representatively' elected. It is considered important by the NINSA that people are elected as individuals and for who they are, rather than for who they represent.

To what extent is the LINSAs institutionalised? At the level of the Board it is institutionalised to the extent that it conforms to all of the legal and ethical requirements of Boards in the third/charity sector. Beyond that, the BHFP has a dynamic and changing (perhaps even radical) set of governance behaviours through the autonomy of its constituent bodies which can enter or leave the LINSAs more or less at will.

How are communication, decision making, problem solving actioned? This is done both through the Board and at the local, more autonomous level. Most decision-making at board level is consensual but voting may take place if necessary. The executive officers of the BHFP also have delegated authority to make day to day decisions.

Do actors have sufficient skills/competencies for network governance? Such skills are hard to identify in principle, in their entirety, but the success of the BHFP would suggest that its governance is robust. Undoubtedly this is due in part to the skills and competences available, but also due to the enthusiasm, commitment and belief of the actors themselves. The wide range of people involved both in the Board and wider networks ensures that the LINSAs can draw on a broad range of skills and competencies.

2. Who has authority/control?

Ultimately, nobody controls the LINSAs as its constituency comprises a large number of bodies who themselves are autonomous and can join or leave the LINSAs at will. More narrowly, the Board has a duty of 'accountability' for certain staff, such as the executive officers who have

delegated authority to make day to day decisions, as well as for the strategic development of the LINSAs.

What are the power relations: inside LINSAs and inside/outside LINSAs. The power relations inside the LINSAs would seem to be highly cooperative and developed on mutual support through a common set of beliefs, rather than any notion of rules, regulations, control or required behaviour. It is hard to define the power relations from inside to outside of the LINSAs as this ‘boundary’ is not easy to identify. Relations with the local state, for example, are very collaborative, but in many ways the local state is ‘inside’ the LINSAs. Inside/outside relations tend to be developed through conveying ‘good practice’ rather than anything more assertive or imperialist.

Who is excluded from the LINSAs and why is he/she/they/it excluded? In principle, nobody. In practice there may be some exclusion of those who do not understand the processes of membership and what it means to be a member. The most notable body of actors who are excluded in practice (although not in principle) are the (largely) tenant farmers who farm immediately adjacent to the City boundaries. In many cases they are actually farming land owned by the City. Their focus is towards networks that are global in perspective, rather than on networks that form the focus of this LINSAs, although some are now starting to engage with the values and aspirations of the LINSAs.

What are the different levels of governance? The Board is the strategic coordinating body that holds accountability for the ‘executive’ functions of the LINSAs. Beyond that, member organisations have their own governance structures and accountabilities. Many in the LINSAs would not wish to use the term ‘levels’ in connection with governance as they would perceive the structure to be flat and non-hierarchical.

3. How does the governance approach affect network efficiency and/or effectiveness of the LINSAs?

The LINSAs is about developing values and lifestyles as much as ‘getting things done’. Because of this, efficiency is not really a ‘strong’ objective of the LINSAs. The governance approach – with a clear Board but then a large number of autonomous members – is effective at disseminating values and good practice.

4. Summary

- Governance effectively integrates the local state and the community sector

- There is a blend of ‘formal’ governance through an elected Board and informal governance through open membership of organisations which themselves have their own governance structures.
- The skills base for governance is broad but somewhat dissipated.
- Governance is inclusive.
- Governance is about nurture and enablement rather than control

EFFECTIVENESS AND COST EFFICIENCY

What type of support does the Linsa use/look for?

External/ direct support/‘hard’ support measures. Financial support came largely from the Health Authority initially which is quite unusual for a land use. The funding has been delivering health services around obesity but because of its connection with healthy food it has allowed the money to be used for food activity too. Cooking has been part of the health initiative too. The health authority funding has been a great core to allow matched funding to be attracted.

There’s also been a small amount of money coming from the Brighton and Hove City Council in terms of grant programmes for individual projects. For example it has funded the delivery of the One Planet Living plan to do some mapping of food growing. This will cover three phases – the city centre, the suburban areas and the city hinterland. This project will identify land that will be suitable for food growing across the city. This includes publicly and privately owned land not just for market gardens but also for sheep, cattle, orchards and the like.

There have been few specific policy instruments, but the land use planning system can do some things to help (FI 25). One way is to encourage developers to release vacant patches of land for short term food growing. But there is always an apprehension on their part that once the ‘community’ gets hold of the land they will never get it back – guerrilla gardening as it is sometimes called. The community will be against them when they want it back. And with the Localism Act 2012, the community can make a legitimate claim on the land after a certain period of time, so this blights short term community leases.

Internal/indirect/‘soft’ support. This is the central mechanism of support in the BHFP. It is largely through mutual support that it develops.

(CD 20:15) The City Council is supportive but largely it doesn’t translate into money. Support without resources can go only so far – and it is often highly political and bureaucratically slow. The City’s significant land holdings (in farmland) that are not being used for local foods are particularly contentious. They are very conservative about the use of their farms because their principal value is the generation of income and revenue for the land. Members of the BHFP have discussed new ways of using the Council’s landholdings in partnerships with the community – innovative new forms of development and tenure – but the Council is very nervous about these kinds of change.

As with much of the alternative food movement sector, there is need for a step change but most of the 'authority' collaborators tend to be risk averse and most of the food activists don't quite know what to do to move forward – or indeed where to get the advice about what to do. The stagnant economy does not help this much and there is a bit of danger of losing momentum.

Effectiveness (impact) for all kinds of support discussed in the first question.

To what extent do the different types of support help the LINSAs to achieve its goals? (CD 18:30) Times are very hard at the moment. The Local Food fund is drying up. The multi-purpose nature of the urban food movement makes it particularly hard to attract funding because it does not fit comfortably into any one silo in the way that funding commonly does.

Any funding that is gained requires creativity to access it. It comes only from the Big Lottery's Local Food programme at the moment in any significant way. This is now closed to new applications and most other sources of funding tend to stress the community cohesion elements, rather than the food production ones. There is nowhere really that currently provides funds for urban food head on.

*What are the benefits of the different types of support- in terms of **outcome** and **outputs** and how have these been measured?* The huge amount of voluntary support within B and H for the BHFP and its components leads to social cohesion amongst certain sectors of the population. This is happening also in a number of other British cities (such as Sheffield, Manchester and Bristol). It is helpful that food growing serves a number of different purposes simultaneously. It is about lifestyle choices that have a contact with the soil really. This value has increased the sustainability of food growing in general. Certainly, if there was an opportunity for social enterprises to be set up (through a better return on investment) they would be very popular. Some kind of subsidy would help this. People commonly are unlikely to pay more partly because they can get it cheaper and partly because they cannot afford it. The food poverty agenda is big in Brighton (22)

Who are the beneficiaries of different types of support? Individuals, a small group, a community, wider society? Sections of the community do benefit from the support but this has not been formally measured.

Are the different types of support evaluated (externally or internally)? Not at present but there is a keenness to evaluate the success of BHFP more generally as it is felt that this will help the case for future funding

Cost efficiency

Support can be cost effective if it is twinned with multiple purposes (such as physical and mental health or community cohesion) as this makes the support money go further. If you have to spend public funds looking after people with mental health problems, they might as well spend their time growing food.

Care Co-ops work on this basis for example. There are several allotment projects focussed on people with mental health problems or learning difficulties. The BHFP also works with adult social care centres and old people's homes (using their land to grow food). They often go into these places on a diet related agenda, they can develop other aspects relating to food growing once they are there. The community often can pick up things that the community isn't good at, through monitoring.

Is the support beneficial for some groups (LINSA members only) but not for others (e.g. society)? (CD 23:40) there is a place for localised food systems in England but actually it is a very small place at the moment. Compared to most other countries there is a real scarcity of land in England. Local food works much better in America, for example, because of land availability at an affordable price. This is a particular problem in the south east of England and the proximity to London.

Has there been any attempt to evaluate the cost efficiency of the support? How? What outcome? There is an online sustainability checklist for all planning applications (FI developed this and it is available online). All residential development and soon all non-residential as well, has to complete this checklist. This includes food growing as part of the checklist and has done much to improve awareness of incorporating food into all development. There is no requirement at this stage.

The City Local Plan (about to go to Examination in Public in the summer of 2013) also has policies on **all** development having to address issues of food growing on the development site. Once adopted, this could become a requirement. Wherever there is landscaping for amenity or biodiversity purposes, it should include food.

Monitoring the implementation of planning applications with food growing considerations in them might be difficult (on site), but applications can have conditions placed upon them (often so that they have to be completed pre occupation of the building).

Summary

- There are small amounts of money coming from the Local Health Authority and the City Council, but these are diminishing in times of austerity.
- There is little direct policy support for urban food.
- The LINSA does not accord a particularly high priority to notions of efficiency relative to less measurable things such as social cohesion.
- The benefits of support are diffuse and holistic and not easy to measure in terms of effectiveness and efficiency.
- There is an interest in developing better evaluation systems of the BHFP: it is recognised that these currently are not in place.

LINKS TO THE AKIS

There are very few of these connections (either formal or informal) because the BHFP does not see itself as part of the agricultural system. There are some farmers who are in the BHFP but this is incidental to the AKS. They are fairly unconventional for farmers anyway.

There has been some work with the local agricultural college (Plumpton College), but this has been more to teach them about farmer co-operative agricultural systems than to teach the Partnership about food growing technology. The BHFP would not go to the agricultural college for that purpose.

What are the opportunities for connection to the AKIS? Do they engage in any joint activities/ partnerships with AKIS? This would be good, but they are going in very different directions. A lot of the technology of food production used in the BHFP is about relearning old ways rather than drawing on cutting edge scientific research for new methods. The Harvest Project has been all about disseminating these skills about how to grow food in simple ways. It has not been about high technological advancement.

There have historically been links with local farmers on the council owned farms, but this has abated and in the main they are livestock farmers with little to contribute to urban food growing (vegetables, salads and fruits)

What are the barriers for connection to the AKIS? The main barrier is that the LINSAs are seeking a significantly different knowledge set to the AKS. The needs of the LINSAs are concerned with social innovation and the AKS tends to be concerned with technological and economic innovation.

The CAP has little relevance to this more holistic process. The RDPE was something that BHFP thought might offer some potential when it was setting up some 10 years ago. But this really was just considered to be rural. LEADER in particular was definitively only rural and people argued for this to remain in rural areas. Despite application for LEADER funding for urban food, it is not considered relevant to urban areas.

There are a lot of people in B and H who are actively keen to get their hands dirty on the ground. It is more than just an 'ideological' interest. There is a strong interest amongst younger people who want to get involved in growing and farming but not in the conventional sense – they see it as a social movement and farming is too insular and isolated not just in terms of its working practices (capital intensive and labour scarce) but also in terms of being isolated from its markets. Younger people are interested in the smaller scale values driven stuff (organic, local). There are a lot of people like this who want to learn and share and make a career out of this. They are definitely not conventional farmers and they do not see themselves as farmers either.

There is therefore not a connection with farming amongst these people either in practices or in training. It is very much people coming through the community route via environmentalism or green politics, rather than through land holdings.

Significance/Relevance of AKIS

How effectively does the conventional AKIS meet the needs of the LINSAs? Do they provide relevant information? It is not at all relevant

Does the Linsas want to connect to the AKIS? Or are they already getting sufficient support/knowledge from elsewhere? The knowledge base is more about networks, holistic sustainability, co-operation, health and waste management than the technology

of food production *per se* and therefore the conventional agricultural knowledge system has little to contribute to such knowledge.

The information comes from within communities that are doing it. In the last three or four years there has been a resurgence of community organisations to help with this. This is a global movement. They are getting on with it in a DIY way, addressing problems and creating solutions. It is 'on the hoof' drawing on knowledge that is inherent in communities and community members in urban areas in particular.

There is a movement that has grown out of this through which people share and learn and much of the communication of such movements is through the internet. This is not formal learning. It is the informal sharing and exchange of knowledge. This has been massively changed recently through the growth of social network sites and the social media on the internet. Action learning and learning through doing then follow from this.

How important/relevant is the AKIS to the LINSAs? Are there other knowledge systems which are more relevant eg health care, energy, food justice? There is a long established tradition of urban food growing in B and H and this includes organisations with a commitment to adult education and training for food growing such as the Permaculture Trust, the Brighton and Hove Organic Gardening Group, Stanmer Organics and White Hawk Community Food Project, for example, who have been getting these ideas across for a long time.

The spark was Food Matters (postgraduates from City University (Tim Lang's stable)) who approached the council in 2003 to get them to commit more fully to food growing. This coincided with the Local Agenda 21 publication (for B and H) which had a food aim but no action plan.

The Food Partnership grew out of these but was situated in the Primary Care Trusts whose money facilitated education on the food agenda, but it was tied to education about broader notions of health, rather than food production.

The information and advice therefore came from a range of diverse and disparate, yet rich, sources. These were global in reach and from academic as well as practical sources.

There is no real link between BHFP and conventional farming (either practically or ideologically) but it would be nice if there were more links. Because it is a new (young) generation involved in BHFP who have not historically inherited any of the values of conventional agriculture, and they want to remain distinct from those old values. **These youngsters actually want to do things differently, to have a different model or paradigm. Given that they want to 'do things differently' it is often difficult to make links with the old ways. They positively want to be seen as different.**

Also, the farming community itself is quite an insular community, conservative, engaged with itself, and not so good at engaging with wider notions of food and new ideas. Farmers have little engagement with the end food market – they deal only in intermediaries. This means that they do not think much about food consumption in the way that the new food producers do. There is a gulf between farmers who see themselves as being in the business of food production to make money and those that

see food as an integrated social, health, environmental and nutritional system in a more holistic way

How does the LINSAs value or judge the AKIS? There is no particular judgement but there is little relevance either.

What are the views of the AKIS representatives? This issue wasn't covered. The Disconnect between the LINSAs and the AKS made this seem of little relevance.

Summary

- There are no links between the LINSAs and the AKS.
- The LINSAs requires knowledge about social innovation and the AKS tends to provide knowledge about technological and economic innovation
- Most learning comes from within the LINSAs via 'learning by doing'.
- Training traditions tend to have come through the health sector rather than the food sector.
- The 'newness' of the BHFP and its constituency makes it reluctant to assimilate its knowledge in 'old' ways and to learn about 'old' ways of doing things.