



**Sutherland Community Partnership**

# Sutherland Food Strategy 2020-2025

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Sutherland Food Group is a network that aims to promote and support sustainability, resilience and food security. The networks members include independent initiatives and groups implementing food related projects in communities across Sutherland. These range from established development trusts who run food projects amongst their portfolio of projects to new groups of volunteers. Sutherland Community Partnership partners are also members of the group, giving access to resources, advice and providing the opportunity to lobby politicians and decision makers.

## 1.2 Current Situation / Baseline

### Sutherland

There is limited data available for Sutherland to create a baseline for future comparison, and the data that does exist is not standard, for example some data is based on individuals while data is based on households. The following data was collected in September 2020 and gives an indication of the scale of food distribution. September is beyond the first peak, but still included some COVID related support so not entirely indicative of long-term food poverty in Sutherland.

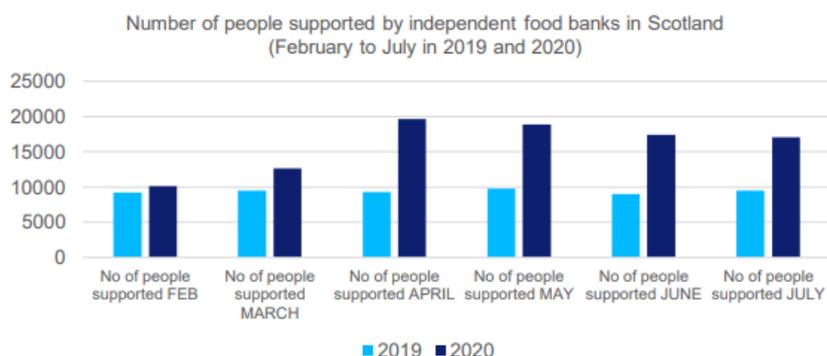
Organisation	Area	Level of support	Children 0-5yrs	Children 5-10yrs	Children 10yrs +
Helmsdale Comm. Ctr Connecting Communities	Helmsdale	60 people (approx.)	12	7	10
Brora Hub	Brora	20 family food boxes	15	25	10
Sutherland Care Forum	Golspie	148 food bags (June 2020)	4	6	N/A
St Andrews Church	Golspie	15-20 families	5	3	N/A
TYKES (The Young Karers)	Golspie	103 (All children)	2*	10*	8*
Dornoch Resilience Group	Dornoch/Embo	152 food bags (June 2020)	18	4	8
Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust	Bonar, Ardgay & Rosehall	10-20 families (food larder users)	No data	No data	No data
Assynt Centre	Lochinver	No data	10	6	4
The Storehouse, Church of Scotland	Kinlochbervie	30 (food larder users)	0	2	8
Bettyhill Resilience Group	Bettyhill, Melvich & Strathy	No data	0	3	2

\*Help with electricity, heating, clothing

Source: Sutherland Food Grp/ Abernecessities

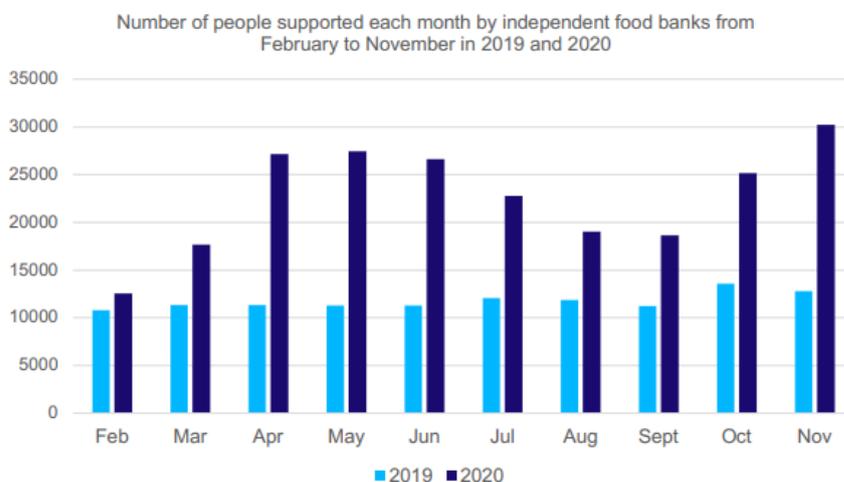
## National/ Highland

At Highland level the data is also limited. HTSI and Trussell Trust conducted a survey of food projects in Highland, but the response rate was limited and the survey was not able to draw conclusions on demand for food across Highland. There is data available for Scotland, The following graph, showing people supported by independent food banks in Scotland, shows a clear increase from March and April 2020 which even in July is still approaching double the levels for the previous year.



Source IFAN Sept 2020

For the whole of the UK, the IFAN data covers Feb-Nov 2020 – see below. The graph shows that demand dropped in Aug and Sept, but remained well above the previous year's figures for those months, before increasing again in the autumn as new COVID restrictions were introduced across many parts of the UK. Highland was largely unaffected by restrictions until Christmas so this data is not necessarily a good description of what happened in Highland. Anecdotal evidence from Sutherland partners indicated that demand has levelled off at a rate far higher than before the pandemic and in Jan 2021 Sutherland Food Group partners anticipate increasing demand as the new restrictions come into force and as financial difficulties continue to affect increasing numbers of individuals and families.



Source: IFAN Dec 2020

## **2 Sutherland Food Strategy 2020-2025**

The Sutherland Food Strategy 2020-2025 has been developed by the Sutherland Food Group to act as a framework and plan for the network's activities for the next 5 years. It represents the sum of the objectives and initiatives of its member groups who each contribute to some or all the strategy's objectives. It also represents Sutherland's contribution to Growing Our Future – Highland Community Food Growing Strategy 2020-2025.

Beyond addressing food security, the Sutherland Food Strategy aims to recognise the broader economic, environmental and social context, including

- the key role of local businesses in the food network and the importance of being sensitive to the needs and concerns of business and to work in partnership with businesses when appropriate
- The positive environmental impacts that food projects can deliver such as reducing food miles, food waste, excess packaging and improving the environment
- the health and wellbeing benefits people gain from accessing fresh and healthy food, and from participating in community activities

### **2.1 Vision**

Establish and maintain food security in Sutherland, and realise the associated environmental and wellbeing benefits

### **2.2 Aim**

To improve access to healthy food in Sutherland and make communities more resilient and aware of food issues by supporting an improved food network

### **2.3 Objectives**

#### In the short term

- 1 To meet food needs of vulnerable people affected by the COVID pandemic, and by similar emergencies in the future
  - Support and develop existing network of local projects meeting local need
- 2 To address immediate food needs of Sutherland people,
  - Develop a network of initiatives that address food poverty across Sutherland, building on the existing network and in partnership with local businesses where appropriate

- 3 To develop sustainable food projects in Sutherland,
  - Support and develop growing projects, including existing and new projects, in partnership with local businesses where appropriate
  - Develop local healthy eating initiatives

#### In the longer term

- 4 To reduce the environmental impact of food
  - Support and develop initiatives that reduce food waste and increase local food production
  - Promote healthy growing concepts that improve the natural environment

#### Ongoing

- 5 To exchange information and resources
  - Share expertise and experience especially between established and new projects
  - Share info on resource availability and coordinate food/ funding applications where appropriate
  - Advocate and provide feedback to Scottish Government, Highland Council, NHS and other agencies.
  - Develop opportunities to volunteer
  - Work with other networks and businesses within and outwith Sutherland.
  - Educate the population of Sutherland about the sustainability and security benefits from accessing fresh and healthy food locally

## 2.4 Partners / Food Related Projects

● Existing Projects

○ Planned Projects

Org	COVID response	Larder/ Food boxes	Meals delivered	Growing projects	Other
Assynt Resilience Group	●	●	●		
Scourie Community Development Co	●	●			
Kinlochbervie Storehouse	●	●		○	
Ceilidh Ho. Kinlochbervie	●		●		
NW Sutherland CAB	●	●			Benefits/ welfare advice
North Coast Connections	●	●	●	●/○	
Helmsdale Community Garden				●/○	
Helmsdale Food Larder	●	●			
Connecting Communities Helmsdale	●		●		
Brora Community Larder	●	●		●/○	
Brora Community Antivirus Group	●				
Sutherland Care Forum	●	●			
Go Golspie	●		●		
St Andrew's Church Golspie	●	●			
E Sutherland CAB	●	●			Benefits/ welfare advice
Voluntary Groups Sutherland					Funding/ Volunteering/ governance advice
Dornoch Firth Group	●	●	●		
Kyle of Suth Development Trust	●	●		○	Training
Bradbury Centre Bonar Br.	●		●		
Planet Sutherland				●	
Community Food Initiatives North East					Provision of food/ supplies groups for local distribution
Highland Council	●				Benefits/ welfare advice Food/supplies for local distn

## 2.5 Directory of Membership and Contact Details

### Assynt Resilience Group

William Smith Care Manager

The Assynt Centre

Kirk Road

Lochinver IV27 4LT

[william.smith@communitycareassynt.org.uk](mailto:william.smith@communitycareassynt.org.uk)

01541 844144

### Scourie Community Development Company

Helen Houston

Development Manager

[pm.scdc@hotmail.com](mailto:pm.scdc@hotmail.com)

075077 59842

### KLB Storehouse

Rev Andrea Boyes

Durness and Kinlochbervie Parish Church

Manse Road

Kinlochbervie

01971 521287

### Ceilidh House KLB

TBC

### North and West Sutherland Citizens Advice Bureau

Joan Mackay Manager

North and West Sutherland Citizens Advice Bureau

The Harbour Kinlochbervie IV27 4RR

01971 521730

[NWS-Bureau@NWSCAB.casonline.org.uk](mailto:NWS-Bureau@NWSCAB.casonline.org.uk)

### North Coast Connection

Dr Marion Macdougall

Chairperson, North Coast Connection

Email address: [chair@northcoastconnection.org.uk](mailto:chair@northcoastconnection.org.uk)

Contact tel No 07720 255 464

Or 01847 611392 (The Kyle Centre)

### Dornoch Firth Group.

Charles Minall, Outreach Worker,

01408 641 279 / 07533 518 399

[charles@dfgcommunity.com](mailto:charles@dfgcommunity.com)

<http://www.dornochfirthgroup.com>

Helmsdale Kitchen Garden

Peter (Fionn) Salmon (Gardener) [gardener@hddt.org](mailto:gardener@hddt.org)  
alternatively contact Rona Ellis, [bualcottage@gmail.com](mailto:bualcottage@gmail.com)

Helmsdale Food Larder

Gillian Stephenson  
Helmsdale Community Centre  
Helmsdale, KW8 6JA,  
[helmsdalecentre@gmail.com](mailto:helmsdalecentre@gmail.com)  
01431 821222

Connecting Communities

Connecting Communities,  
Helmsdale Community Centre,  
Helmsdale, KW8 6JA,  
[hello@connectingcommunities.co.uk](mailto:hello@connectingcommunities.co.uk)  
01431 821655

Brora Community Antivirus Group

Ellen Lindsay  
07831 602603

Brora Community Food Larder:

Kath Hunter  
07850 339313

Go Golspie

Alba  
Main Street  
Golspie, KW106TG  
01408 634033  
[info@gogolspie.co.uk](mailto:info@gogolspie.co.uk)

St Andrew's Church, Golspie

Isobel Murray – see below

Sutherland Care Forum

Isobel Murray  
Service Manager  
Sutherland Care Forum  
Craig House, Main Street, Golspie, KW10 6TG  
01408 634171

Mobile 07907 595962

[IsobelMurray@sutherlandcareforum.com](mailto:IsobelMurray@sutherlandcareforum.com)

East and Central Sutherland Citizens Advice Bureau

Station Road

Golspie KW10 6SN

01408 633000

[advice@ecscab.org.uk](mailto:advice@ecscab.org.uk)

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust

David Watson,

Development Manager,

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust,

01863 766190,

[david@kyleofsutherland.co.uk](mailto:david@kyleofsutherland.co.uk)

Sutherland Adaptive and Collaborative Communities Team

Gail Prince

Project Coordinator

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust

T: 01863 766190 Option 1

[gail@kyleofsutherland.co.uk](mailto:gail@kyleofsutherland.co.uk)

[www.kosdt.com](http://www.kosdt.com)

Bradbury Centre

Lorraine Askew, Manager

The Bradbury Centre

Cherry Grove

Bonar Bridge, IV24 3ER

T: 01863 766772

[bradburydaycare@btconnect.com](mailto:bradburydaycare@btconnect.com)

[www.bradburycentre.co.uk](http://www.bradburycentre.co.uk)

Planet Sutherland

Anna Patfield, Director

Mobile: 07906173993

Email: [anna@planetsutherland.com](mailto:anna@planetsutherland.com)

[www.planetsutherland.com](http://www.planetsutherland.com)

CFINE

Michael Sutherland - FareShare development worker Highlands and Islands

Community Food Initiatives North East

1 Quebec Avenue Tain Ross-shire IV191PT

07533561455

[MSutherland@Cfine.org](mailto:MSutherland@Cfine.org)  
[www.cfine.org](http://www.cfine.org) [www.fareshare.org.uk](http://www.fareshare.org.uk)

Highland Council

Phil Tomalin, Ward Manager – Sutherland,  
Highland Council,  
Drummuie, Golspie, KW10 6TA  
[phil.tomalin@highland.gov.uk](mailto:phil.tomalin@highland.gov.uk)  
01408 635335  
07747 048776

## **Appendix – Selected Partner Activities.**

### Assynt Resilience Group

- Lochinver offers a food bank (soon Food Larder) delivery usually Tuesdays, fresh veg, tinned and dry goods.
- Power cards topped up, coal or logs when available.
- Information sign posting to CAB, Doctors appointments, Covid Vaccine appointments.
- Prescription collections, weekly food shopping.
- We provide a 2 course meal delivered to your door to Assynt centre users Monday to Friday £5 per meal or on application.
- Our food larder when operational will be available to all on a timed basis daily usually 8am-8pm. It will have fresh and frozen goods and tinned and dried goods. Looking for it be open by end of February all going to plan.

### Scourie Community Food Larder

- Community Larder based in the local shop Scourie Stores. There is no free food brought into the community as it would put have negative impact on the local shop. The local shop is given a weekly fee for hosting the community food larder and there is fresh meat and vegetable available every week.

### North Coast Connection

- North Coast Connection is a charitable organisation, established April 2012, running a community well being hub based at the Kyle Centre in Tongue.
- We have a volunteer led community garden project which supports a gardening group. Produce grown in the raised beds and polytunnel located next to the Kyle Centre is used in our community lunch service which runs three days a week – this is currently a doorstep delivery service of a hot nutritious meal to the most vulnerable members of our community.
- We have supplemented the meals with healthy eating boxes and delivered food parcels to households experiencing food insecurity as a result of the response to the coronavirus pandemic. The majority of items used for this activity have been purchased at local shops.
- Our gardening group is a network of local gardeners who, when restrictions allow, meet regularly to exchange ideas, advice, expertise, seeds, plants and produce. New members are welcome and those starting out, or considering growing produce for the first time, are encouraged to join. Although Covid has curtailed the social aspects of the group, members have kept in touch and continue to exchange advice produce etc.
- We have previously run a Climate Challenge Fund project part of which involved a grow-along activity encouraging folk to grow their produce, reduce food waste and increase composting.

- We have experience of asset transfer (the Kyle Centre) and purchase of ground at market value (the ground next to the Kyle Centre).

### Helmsdale Kitchen Garden

- Helmsdale Kitchen Garden is Helmsdale & District Development Trust's community garden project. The garden aims to bring fresh, organic and tasty fruit, vegetables and herbs to the local community and businesses as well as creating a space for increasing biodiversity and habitat of local wildlife. The garden also aims to provide the opportunity for learning about various types of gardening, wildlife and climate change.
- The garden is approximately 2.8 acres and has a mixture of indoor and outdoor growing spaces, plus an orchard area and wildlife pond. The garden is quite exposed to the elements and currently there are plans to plant over 600 trees to provide shelter in the future.
- Plans for the future include increasing growing space throughout, adding outdoor events area and a compost toilet and expanding its community compost scheme.
- There are weekly volunteer sessions, suitable times to ensure social distancing can be arranged by email with Fionn.
- Produce is sold direct from the garden and at the weekly market stall.

### Sutherland Care Forum

- We provide charity food waste from Co-op shop every Wednesday and Friday morning 11am to 1pm for collection by anyone who can save it going to landfill.
- We provide food to anyone who is struggling in any form of poverty through supplies from CFine and from Abernecessity.
- We refer our clients to CAB for benefits and energy assistance and they refer clients to us.
- We have shared food with other village groups where they have run short and to that extent would welcome the once voiced idea of a WhatsApp link with all groups in the Food Resilience Group.

### Dornoch Firth Group.

- Operating a food bank from West Church Hall in Dornoch. Using delivery volunteers and volunteer bag packers. Delivering every Tuesday and Thursday. Collections by appointment only. Also has a pool of Emergency Resilience Volunteers on hand.
- Dornoch Firth Group have plenty of space to help with centralised short-term storage of deliveries of goods for distribution around Sutherland.
- Help with funding applications if required.

### Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust

- Advice and guidance based on our expertise of working on food insecurity projects such as the Food Stop Café and Community Food Larder.
- Nourish Scotland Dignity in Practice Workshops.
- Monthly volunteer training (suspended – Covid)
- Certified Training courses for volunteers if required/requested
- Assistance with submitting funding applications relating to food insecurity.

### Sutherland Adaptive and Collaborative Communities (SACC) Team

- The SACC team can offer support with Sutherland wide theme-based project planning and development, with a particular focus on projects aimed at tackling inequalities.
- The team will work with the Sutherland Food Group to identify and develop projects identified through the Strategy.
- In addition, the team will be working in the priority Locality areas to offer extra support and additional capacity to support them to drive projects forward at a local level.

### Bradbury Centre

- Creich Croick & Kincardine District Day Care is a charitable organisation, (Known as The Bradbury Centre) established in 1997, running a community well being hub in the village of Bonar Bridge.
- We provide a two course meal in the Bonar Bridge/Ardgay and Lairg area to those who wish this service (the charge is £4). The meal is delivered to the door.
- We provide food to anyone struggling in the Bonar Bridge/Ardgay and Lairg area. This is with the help of FareShare supplies
- We deliver groceries, prescriptions and food from our FareShare store to those who have a need for this service.

### Voluntary Groups Sutherland

- Third Sector Support help with Setting up – constitutions, Charitable status, Governance, PVG disclosure, Examination of accounts, Fundraising, Volunteer recruitment and management best practice

### Planet Sutherland

- Sutherland Charity focusing on Climate Change and Environmental Issues
- We aim to increase community, business, organisation and individual engagement in making changes to help reduce our detrimental impact on the planet
- Working with schools and communities to build community gardens and orchards and implement climate action projects
- Collaborating with existing local organisations to share project knowledge

- Collaborating with wider area to build networks and knowledge of various plans and to increase climate action engagement. This includes Highland Council and various business and charity organisations and networks and initiatives including The Highland Good Food Initiative, the Highland Council Growing Our Future Report and Peas Please, CRNS and CSA.
- Gathering individuals in communities to discuss, learn and take action on climate change, starting with small steps
- Our focus is working on common ground projects
- Our remit and scope is wide and may include topics such as re-use & recycling, energy, food, transport and behaviour change

#### Highland Council

- Funding support for projects through Ward Discretionary Fund, Crown Estates
- Access to land through Community Asset Transfer (lease or ownership)
- Access to policy/ advice e.g. Growing Strategy, Allotments Policy
- Potential partnerships with schools – would need to be negotiated with HTs on a school by school basis