

Resilient Greater New Brighton Community - Food availability and affordability

Executive summary

The Greater New Brighton Community expresses significant concerns regarding the rising cost of living and the economic challenges affecting many of our residents. This issue has not gone unnoticed by local food banks and community food providers, who have observed a notable increase in the demand for food assistance among vulnerable community members.

Questions have arisen about the adequacy of current food rescue and aid efforts in addressing these ongoing challenges. Our research has revealed that over 30 New Zealand-based organizations are collaborating with both central and local governments to develop a unified response to the issue of food affordability in communities across the country. However, given the complexity of the issues to address, the more immediate solutions perhaps can be found by engaging the community and people working at the grassroots.

Through research, data collection, and analysis, we aimed to shed light on the details of these critical issues. By gaining insightful understanding, we will be better equipped to develop a more secure, resilient, and healthy community. In the next chapters of this report we will discuss the research approach, existing food retail and supply environment in Greater New Brighton as well as provide more detailed insights in research findings.

The survey results have provided insights into the diverse needs of various groups within the community and their strategies for coping with these challenges. While 77% of respondents report managing their current situation, the approaches to addressing food affordability vary significantly.

The higher-income group effectively manages food affordability by seeking discounts and cost-effective products in other parts of the city, often utilizing their cars to access nearby fresh produce stores. This group maintains the quality of their nutrition and remains resilient, while expressing a desire to access quality food at lower prices within New Brighton.

The second group comprises middle/low-income households, single-income earners, retirees, ethnic communities, and migrants who face challenges in managing their weekly grocery expenses. High utility and transportation costs, along with increased mortgage and rent payments, consume a substantial portion of their income. Limited mobility, primarily due to petrol costs, often restricts their access to shopping. This group faces difficulties in affording groceries and may resort to cutting meals, substituting quality food items with lower-quality options, or avoiding grocery shopping altogether. This situation has adverse effects on their mental and physical health, leading to issues such as youth crime and social isolation. Their weekly grocery budget typically falls between \$50 to \$100.

The third group is particularly vulnerable, struggling with high food costs and falling below the poverty line. They are reliant on local food aid and food rescue organizations, with local churches providing free meals and snacks weekly.

Additionally, we gauged respondents' sentiments regarding local shopping options and whether New Brighton can be considered a "food desert." An overwhelming 96% of respondents agreed that the retail area in New Brighton lacks an adequate supply of quality groceries and presents an unwelcoming environment like a "desert." This finding is crucial for future planning in New Brighton, as it aligns with the global trend of "15-minute cities," where all essential shopping and services are accessible within a 15-minute walk or cycle. Considering this trend could greatly benefit New Brighton residents in the future.



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1. Introduction

Renew Brighton conducted research to better understand the extent of the food affordability problem within wider community, how New Brighton people deal with the high cost-of-living issues, as well as to identify potential solutions for inadequate food accessibility and affordability. We collected data from 120 community members. Particular attention was given to the Pacifica and Māori community, elderly residents, and residents from one income households. These groups are searching for ways to balance low income and high cost of living, hence often are forced to divert to reduced food intake or switch to poor-quality food choices.

Renew Brighton also conducted a range of key person interviews with the local community service groups. These people represent different slices of the Greater New Brighton Community and possess in-depth knowledge of the most common challenges.

This research provides data to foster informed decision-making on the following fronts:

- **Accessibility of Affordable, Fresh Food:** We scrutinized whether residents have easy access to reasonably priced, fresh food. The disparity in access to nourishing food was a pivotal point of our survey.
- **Affordability and Community Well-being:** Delving into the affordability aspect of food, we sought to uncover the impacts on the well-being and resilience of the community.
- **Generational Knowledge and Food Sustainability:** The question of whether the community retains access to knowledge concerning gardening and food preparation was also addressed. This component is indispensable in understanding the self-sufficiency and sustainability of our community's food resources.

2. Research hypothesis

The Greater New Brighton Community is grappling with the adverse effects of escalating food costs and a restricted availability of nutritious food options. It results in a shifting poverty line for many New Brighton residents who formerly were aiding others, but now struggle to meet their fundamental needs.

3. Research Plan

- Prepared interview questions for residents and focus groups.
- Surveyed at least 180 residents, including Māori and Pacifica and ethnic communities.
- Interviewed a key persons from the community groups that represent different slices of this community.
- Presented findings to Renew Brighton Board, the CCC Community Board and the key local Agencies
- Presented findings to stakeholder groups, such as Rata, Lotteries, DIA, CCC, Community Board

- If findings and ideas for improvement are supported, then move this project to Improve phase. This phase could include:
 - I. Discuss with funders what options could be supported.
 - II. Review best practices from elsewhere to solve the root causes.
 - III. Engage retail experts, legal and social enterprise experts to provide input based on information gathered.

The information was collected from anonymous respondents in age group from 18 years to 75 + years old living in the Greater New Brighton area. The results can be made available for anybody who wishes to access it for other projects and services.

4. Definitions

Food desert – Food deserts are areas that have a shortage of quality food sources. These can occur in and around certain neighbourhoods in urban areas and commonly in rural areas. Food deserts are characterized by the lack of supermarkets, grocery stores, and other sources of healthy food.

Food Access - refers to a person's ability to acquire food, is composed of three categories: Physical, Financial and Educational.

Physical access is the ability to physically obtain food and keep an adequate quantity and quality of food. Obstacles to physical access include distance, terrain, weather, means of transportation, ability to refrigerate, lack of cooking utensils, and living in a food desert.

Financial access is defined as the ability to afford enough quality food, pay for transportation, and pay for means of cooking and storage. Financial barriers include low income, high living costs (mainly rent), debt, vehicle repairs, and household dependents.

Educational access is defined as having the necessary knowledge about where to acquire and how to prepare healthy food in adequate quantities.

Healthy Food – Healthy food refers to any type of food that provides essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals to the body, supporting optimal functioning. It is typically low in substances that can have negative effects on health, such as excessive saturated fats, trans fats, added sugars, and excessive sodium.

5. Literature review:

The concept of resilience-building has been recognized as a pillar for community development. Unlike the traditional approach of focusing solely on disaster response, resilience-building focuses on reduction of vulnerability before adverse impacts strike. L. Boshier, and K. Chmutina in "Disaster risk reduction for the built environment" (1) defines Community resilience as a sustained ability of a community to use available resources such as **energy, communication, transportation, and food** to respond to adverse situations and global risks. In this report we investigate Greater New Brighton food security issues and its effect on the community resilience.

Food security issues have been widely researched and discussed among New Zealand academics, not for profit and the Government organizations. Before launching Greater New Brighton community food resilience study, we assessed a range of reports and food resilience case studies within New Zealand and from overseas. It is believed by many residents, that New Zealand shall remain unaffected by food insecurity because of well-established agricultural production systems. However, the food insecurity is a worldwide challenge that extends its influence on New Zealand in large extend.

Below are a few literature sources we considered when formulating survey questions and key person interviews.

Studies indicate that food insecurity within New Zealand is closely linked with a range of interconnected issues centred around poverty. These challenges encompass not only inadequate income levels but also the surging expenses linked to housing costs and the prevalence of obesity. The mounting housing costs have notably increased food insecurity in the country, as many individuals find themselves with limited financial resources to allocate for food after meeting their housing costs. The report by Derek Comeau and Jason Conklin (2) pinpointed elevated housing expenses as the main driver of income-related food insecurity.

“Assessing the Current State of Food Insecurity in New Zealand” research is an interactive qualifying project submitted to the Faculty of Worcester Polytechnic Institute by Derek Comeau and Jason Conklin, on 6 March 2020. The report provides clear definitions related to the food security, and food accessibility in early stages of Covid 19 pandemic. The definitions are included in this report to ensure consistency of terminology used in the survey, at the interviews and for presentation of research findings.

Kore Hiakai “Zero Hunger report” (3) reiterates the findings of 39 organizations working collectively to address the food security issues in New Zealand and provide policy advice to the Government agencies. Persistent food insecurity generates significant stress and adverse effects on both mental and physical well-being. This stress extends to relationships and educational abilities and diminishing the prospects of maintaining stable housing conditions.

Although New Zealand’s national and regional social service organizations, alongside social enterprises, and the food industry, have increased the distribution of food aid, it does not align fully with the growing number of New Zealanders encountering food shortages in New Zealand households. Effectively resolving the issue of hunger in New Zealand requires a systematic approach. This approach must acknowledge that food insecurity is an outcome of underlying factors such as inadequate wages, housing costs, and protected food supply chains.

In 2014 Christchurch City Council adopted Food Resilience strategy. (4) This strategy emphasizes the importance of increasing the proportion of homegrown vegetables, collaborative community gardening and, and seasonal foraging. The strategy launches ambitious plan for Christchurch to become best edible city with the extensive network of community gardens across the city.

Christchurch's efforts to enhance food reliance have included knowledge sharing, mentorship programs, and community vegetable schemes. These initiatives encourage individuals and families to grow their own vegetables in their backyards, thereby reducing their reliance on external food sources. By empowering residents with the skills to grow their food, the city has taken steps towards

building a more self-sufficient food system. While some progress has been made by the Christchurch city Council at the time, the strategy does not address the challenges relevant to current economic climate such as rapidly raising food costs, supply chain shortages and high housing related costs and lack of suitable household land area to grow vegetables. The city-wide strategy update would help to reinvigorated Christchurch urban food supply and edible city gardening vision.

CPAG 2023 report "Policy brief on food security", (5) further highlights barriers for food security issues in Aotearoa New Zealand. It recommends developing local food distribution schemes to combat artificially inflated prices and encourages building food equity by working with Iwi/ Hapu and implementing Treaty of Waitangi principles.

While the current initiatives have shown promise, challenges remain. The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) highlights the need for a more systematic approach to address food shortages effectively.

CPAG suggests that diversifying the sources of food supply beyond traditional supermarkets and exploring local grower supply schemes could lead to reduced supply costs. Such an approach would not only decrease the financial burden on vulnerable communities but also strengthen local food systems.

Report acknowledges that the food security coordination in 2023 is a challenge. More than 30 Government Agencies are involved in delivering food security strategy and solutions. The conclusions of CPAG 2023 report supports earlier findings that Aotearoa New Zealand is lacking a national food security strategy to coordinate policies for everybody involved in the food chain.

The additional information sources are listed at the end of this report.

6. Research Methods:

The project utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative research was based on 27 survey questions designed to test the hypothesis. It measured the degree of adverse effects on the residents and identified specific barriers for residents to access healthy food. The survey was available online as well as in hard copy format, displayed in public spaces for everyone to respond. The information gathering points included Vegie Co-op and the Information Centre at St Faiths, the New Brighton Saturday market, the New Brighton Library, the New Brighton Museum, three residents' associations, retail shops in the New Brighton Mall, the Bridge, and the Pacifica/Maori hub. The invitation to participate in the survey was aimed at triggering responses from people who feel that their voices are not heard or who feel adversely affected by food affordability issues.

Qualitative research aimed to test the hypothesis by gathering insights from key community leaders and social service providers. Each stakeholder represented a slice of the community across diverse social and age groups. The open-ended questions were designed to gather insights into the issues they face daily, allow participants to express their observations on food security in Greater New Brighton

area, and offer solution-based recommendations. This group provided context for data gathered via surveys. Twelve agencies took part in the interview process, including the Community Police, the CCC community adviser, Compassion Trust, The Just Dirt Trust, Youth Alive Trust, Toha Kai, Veggie Co-op, New Brighton Project, St Faiths Church, Union Church, Wellbeing Group/Blanket Bank, and Le Maota.

7.Results:

Adverse effects, and affordability

The first part of the survey measured the adverse effects on the households and how community is coping with food affordability. 13% of respondents feel severely affected by raising food prices acknowledging that it is a serious problem for their household. 77% respondents are managing the situation as best as they can. It includes:

- 15% respondents are reducing their daily food intake
- 53% shop around and seek for deals
- 71% cook from cheaper ingredients
- 48% are exploring idea how to grow own food.

When asked about main barriers to affordability, 30% respondents recognized low household income being a considerable barrier for food affordability, 67% believes that rising food prices limits household's food access, 3% could not access food due to immobility, 2% referred to social exclusion, 3% are affected because they are unemployed.

In response to the inquiry, "Do you believe you have any influence over the availability of food in your household within the current economic environment?" 47% of participants expressed a sense of lack of control.

Furthermore, 48% of the respondents conveyed feelings of uncertainty regarding their household's ability to access food in the event of an economic recession or emergency.

Local food accessibility, and mobility

The second part of the survey evaluated food accessibility locally and resident reliance on alternative food supply outside of New Brighton Area.

Survey results confirmed that four food categories are short supplied or overpriced.

53% stated that fresh produce is in short supply and overpriced. 57% respondents believe that meat and fish is overpriced and availability is limited. 40% of respondents require one or more categories of dietary products such as Gluten free, dairy free, vegan, keto or allergy free. 67% of these respondents find that dietary grocery supply to New Brighton is limited and available goods are overpriced.

An overwhelming 96% of the respondents believe that it is important to have affordable grocery supply available in New Brighton. This sentiment confirms the community's emphasis on the availability of essential food items. The primary motivations driving local shopping includes the desire

to support local businesses, connect with people, reduce transportation costs, and minimize shopping time.

96% of residents believe it is very important to have options for buying affordable groceries and fresh produce in the Greater New Brighton area. The main reasons for people to shop locally were to support locals, meet people, save on transport costs and less shopping time. Therefore, 66% respondents agreed that New Brighton can be seen as a Food desert.(see definitions)

Therefore, given the supply limitations, 63% respondents shop outside of New Brighton area mainly in Wainoni Pak N Save, Marshlands vegie market and Ferrymead Countdown.

The main barriers for people not to shop locally were limited product supply, high cost and derelict shopping area. When asked about recommendations, respondents offered a range of suggestions. See a few below that represents the majority of recommendations.

1.	<i>Fresh Produce, the co-op is great, but buying food (and not knowing if what I want will be available that week) during the work day isn't realistic for most, then I still need to go to the supermarket for everything else. Similar for NB Whole Foods, I might shop more there if it was cleaner, food looks fresher - but also if I could go somewhere else in walking distance to buy fresh meat and veges. My flatmate drives to New World to buy produce because Countdown and Pak n Save often don't stock local fruit and veg.</i>
2.	<i>More than one supermarket to shop at or at least a bigger supermarket with more choice</i>
3.	<i>Fresh produce specialty food, more options to choose</i>
4.	<i>More stores, we have countdown that doesn't stock much of a range. Vegie stall at market are good but need more availability. There is the vegie packs at the church but you can't pick in choose unless you wait for the day maybe have a few vendor carts down the mall during the week?</i>
5.	<i>Diverse food shops, but inexpensive</i>
6.	<i>Love the veggie co-op option - it would be great to expand. A more pleasant supermarket environment. Love the people in the local countdown but contrast it to Ferrymead countdown and it looks rather shabby. A pleasant low cost supermarket.</i>
7.	<i>I feel there aren't enough options for meat and produce, however I'm also aware that in recent years a butchery and produce shop tried and failed in the area. Value Meats is not on the bus route for the area and the Mad Butcher is two bus trips.</i>
8.	<i>Basically Countdown in New Brighton is classed as one of their lower socio economic stores and sells products according to that status. Their fresh produce is consistently old... if you look at the dates on the vegetables in plastic they are already days old. The cost of vegetables and fruit is too high. So we shop either online using Toha Kai or we go to Vegieland/Vegiesdirect. Both are cheaper. There is nowhere in New Brighton apart from the Sat market that I know of where you can buy fruit and vegetables at a good price. Considering the importance of a healthy diet, consisting of whole foods, fruit and vegetables,</i>

	<i>if people have no choice but to choose unhealthy options for whatever reason, we are passing on problems further down the line. New Brighton has a lot of people struggling to eat right now, if you go to St. Faiths in the morning there are queues of people at the food bank. This breaks my heart, when did it get so bad that people are relying on food banks. If it takes a community to fix this, then I fully support that.</i>
9.	<i>A supermarket that presents a lot better and provides broader range of items would lift the area. Also, some pride in how the business looks from the outside - rubbish cleared, weeding done, not looking neglected.</i>
10.	<i>Countdown offers very poor service, I am frequently overcharged for groceries and grudgingly reimbursed</i>
11.	<i>Fresh food and more choices. A bugger supermarket. Upscale the wreck that is there now. It's hideous.</i>
12.	<i>I've just listened to episode 2 of a podcast called the Good Energy project about local sustainable farming. It's an idea like many that have been floated before for red zone land use. I think we could lead the way in developing locally grown produce to feed locals. However, this takes significant investment of time and funds and is not easily resilient to climate change and flooding. Btw please note that you missed a couple of things: Food/meal delivery services are commonly used buy families that can afford them and are considered to compete with grocery/supermarket. I buy from my food bag and if you buy bigger quantities, it is quite economical. There is no choice you select Eastgate Countdown as an anywhere place that I shop. It's one of the closest supermarkets. Also, many of my friends use the warehouse club and buy basics cheaper at the warehouse like butter.</i>
13.	<i>Would be great to have a green grocer and a butcher as well we have locally is Countdown. Currently I go to Aranui Vege Markets and Value Plus Meats in Dyers Road Where is the seafood at??? I have to drive to Colombo Street to get my seafood!</i>
14.	<i>I would shop in New Brighton, but PakNSave is \$35+ cheaper a week for our 2 Beneficiary household.</i>
15.	<i>More shops like Eco Bay in Ferrymead; supermarkets getting in and maintaining personal requests; more ethnic ingredients shops; local shuttle bus; gardens nearby AvonHub be more newcomer user friendly</i>
16.	<i>New Brighton is dead. You seldom see people and every shop is closed Renovate New Brighton and bring people in</i>
17.	<i>Choice. There is a need for fresh fruit and vegetable shop, bakery, butchers and fish.</i>

Most of the respondents prefer traditional ways of shopping. Only 20% use online shopping to save shopping time and transports costs. 88% of respondents rely on car transport to access shops and 23% walk to the retail place.

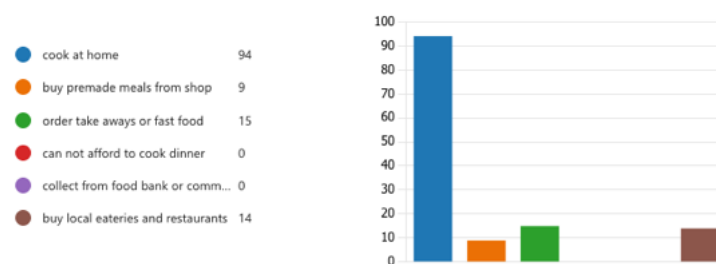
Generational knowledge

The third part of the Survey was aimed at measuring the community's confidence and skill level when it comes to food preparation and growing own produce.

These skills play a significant role in household risk management. Possessing these skills becomes an asset in an increasingly unpredictable world. Factors like climate change, economic instability, and

unforeseen circumstances can disrupt the availability and affordability of food. Hence, the ability to cultivate a garden, and practice sustainable gardening not only ensures a more stable supply of fresh produce for household, but also empowers individuals to withstand potential food shortages. In addition, understanding the art of food preparation and preservation methods such as canning, pickling, and drying can extend the shelf life of short life span items, reducing waste and offering sustenance during lean times. This generational knowledge promotes self-sufficiency and contributes to a family's overall resilience in the face of uncertainties.

A sound affirmation emerges from the survey results, with 96% of participants validated household cooking skills, and ability to be flexible with the meal preparation from the basic ingredients. Notably, this majority confirmed a high preference for in-home meal preparation as opposed to opting for pre-packaged alternatives or take-out solutions.



According to the recent survey findings, 39% of the respondents have expressed a strong interest in participating in cooking classes, tastings, or cooking demonstrations. This statistic underscores a growing enthusiasm for practical learning experiences going hand in hand with healthy living trend. The desire to engage in such interactive sessions reflects a broader trend of individuals seeking to expand their food knowledge and expertise beyond their usual routines.

The ability to grow own food plays a vital role for boosting community 's resilience. It offers a practical means of taking charge of nutritional needs and serves as a robust defence against external disruptions in the food supply chain. This way individuals and communities can navigate market uncertainties, natural disasters, and unforeseen challenges with greater adaptability. This practice requires collaboration, and resource-sharing within communities. The understanding of the processes that support life and food production contributes to the individual well-being and collective mental health. Moreover, it nurtures a strong bond with the environment.

The survey revealed that a significant portion of respondents, 56%, are presently growing their own vegetables and leafy greens. However, it's notable that 21% of individuals had attempted gardening in the past but have since discontinued. The survey findings highlight the primary obstacles faced by those interested in home gardening: limited access to suitable land, a shortage of time and the cost of acquiring seedlings. 16% of the respondents expressed their inability to garden due to a lack of knowledge or the benefits associated with it.

Specific food requirements

Among the respondents surveyed, it was revealed that 40% of individuals in Greater New Brighton cater to food allergies and specific health-related diets. These diets included diabetes, gluten-free,

allergen-free, and dairy-free preferences. This indicates a substantial portion of the population that requires specialized dietary products.

Within the group of respondents, a significant majority of 66% expressed dissatisfaction with the availability of dietary products in the local market. Large proportion of the respondents represent Pacifica community. Respondents reported that they found it challenging to locate suitable products that catered to their dietary needs. Moreover, the survey revealed that most respondents from this group (66%) found the available dietary products to be overpriced. Respondents indicated that the high costs of such products made it difficult for them to consistently consume items that met their dietary needs.

Demographic representation.

Out of all respondents, approximately 15% identified themselves as being of Indian, Asian, Maori, and Pacifica descent. This demographic group reflects the ethnic diversity present within the Greater New Brighton community and provides valuable insights into their opinions.

72% were women, 23% men, and 5% non- binary.

66% of respondents from the ethnic community found it challenging to source ingredients for their traditional cuisines. Most of these respondents advised that they needed to travel to other parts of the city to find the required ingredients. Due to high transportation costs, this inconvenience has become a notable barrier for ethnically diverse households to maintain their preferred diets.

The survey revealed that a large portion of respondents believe that the available ethnic food ingredients are overpriced. This sentiment adds to the conclusions expressed earlier, that the cost factor makes it challenging to maintain traditional diets and meet large household nutritional needs.

Stakeholder Interviews:

Organization	Community representation	Interview outcome
New Brighton Project	Represent all of New Brighton.	Noted that young people moving out of family homes often have low skills to cook or grow.
Youth Alive Trust	The Trust sees about 50 families a week, and most of these have young family members.	Very high impact with food affordability due to price increases and limited income. Many have transitioned to several part time jobs through Covid. Some don't have cars and those with cars find expense of operating high. Conditions are impacting on greater mental illness making it harder to get out to find quality, cheap food. Food eaten is often less quality and is less than before Covid. Clients who can't travel outside GNB find availability of healthy, cheap produce an issue. So local options to get quality, cheap produce is vital.

		<p>Younger cohort lack knowledge and interest in cooking and growing seasonal produce. Lack of time a big issue from multiple jobs and family commitments. Most in rental housing where there is a belief that landlords do not support them having vegetable gardens, or they would lose the investment in structures / irrigation if they had to move.</p> <p>Organised classes to learn to cook or grow food likely not to be supported.</p> <p>Having only one petrol station is also an issue.</p> <p>Seeing downward cycle: less quality food, more illness, less time, higher prices.</p> <p>Shame can be an issue if kids can't be sent to school with good food.</p>
Compassion Trust	Represent the lower and middle income residents of GNB and further afield.	<p>High impact from food affordability, mostly due to rising prices and interest (often personal and car loans). Bills paid before buying food, so last minute to get food to satisfy hunger. So often quick packet food or take-away.</p> <p>This community is building food resilience skills through coaching. Lack of fresh, healthy produce close to home an issue. Too expensive to travel to get these. Not many dietary options available locally.</p> <p>Lack of time is biggest issue to regularly cook healthy meals. Lack of knowledge is an issue to growing vegetables.</p>
NZ Community Police	Represent families that come to the attention of Police and school parents from police interaction with schools and boards.	<p>Very high impact from food affordability. Cheaper for families to buy chips and fizzy. Many lost secure incomes during Covid, so now doing several part time roles. Less time available for families and cooking. Growing number of cars without WOF as too expensive to take for testing.</p> <p>Cheaper supermarkets too far away, due to expense of driving or carting bags on the bus. Some families moving in together to help reduce costs, with resulting increased stress.</p> <p>Little store of food in houses, so in an emergency rely on food banks. GNB a food desert for healthy affordable food.</p> <p>Community needs access to healthy, affordable food without shame.</p> <p>Lack of time to cook or grow seasonal food. Translation of resources needed for Māori and Pasifika.</p> <p>This community is not sure if they are welcome at community initiatives.</p>

		Those with mental health issues find it difficult to mingle with crowds at supermarkets – small community initiatives would help.
Union Church	Community includes those attending the weekly free lunch. Community includes parishioners, which include many pensioners.	<p>Food is often a low priority for spending so often there is little left. Those living in hostels have limited cooking and food storage available.</p> <p>Highly impacted by food prices and limited incomes. Many don't have cars or find petrol prices too high to use the car. Older people find transport to and walking around supermarkets is difficult, especially if using the bus. Supermarkets are too far. Clients believe it is critical to have quality cheaper produce available closer to home.</p> <p>Community mostly can't grow their own vegetables because of renting or mobility.</p> <p>Community concerned about quality of fresh produce from supermarket and that key items like eggs may not be on the shelf.</p> <p>Pensioners have the knowledge and often have the garden space to grow their own but many limited by physical disability.</p> <p>Union church members could help the community with garden spaces or knowledge of growing, preserving and cooking seasonal food.</p> <p>Many clients have pets, so having pet food available close to home may help.</p>
The Just Dirt	Community interested in vegie growing in their homes or in their communities.	Help up to 300 households per year to set up vegie beds, provide seeds and soil. Beds are movable. MSD would help with costs if householder is renting, Gold card holder or on MSD system. Obstacles found were the knowledge on how to garden, information about MSD support, lack of knowledge what to do with excess food, how to preserve and swap with neighbours.
Toha Kai	Represent around 12 households in the area and many more in Eastern Christchurch. They provide organic produce, some grown on their own farm.	<p>Highly impacted by food affordability, mostly the price increases. Clients mostly working with a car.</p> <p>Clients now spending less at supermarkets and using seasonal food /recipes from Toha Kai. Local seasonal food lasts well.</p> <p>Clients find it hard to get organic vegetables from anywhere else, and any quality fresh produce in Greater New Brighton.</p>

		<p>Know how to cook seasonal produce. Most don't have time to grow their own. Also, the high cost of establishing a garden in sandy soils has an impact.</p> <p>Koha Tai spend \$5 on courier delivery to the home. If the GNB community can have pick up points this cost could be reduced.</p>
<p>St Faiths and the New Brighton Veggie Co-op</p>	<p>Represent 90 households who use the Cooperative Vegetable system each week.</p> <p>Represents 30 or more people each week who use the free lunch service.</p> <p>Represent their practitioners.</p>	<p>Highly impacted by food affordability. Most are working, single income households. Transport costs mean reduced travel for affordable shopping.</p> <p>Number of households buying veggie bags has doubled recently. Most use PaknSave for supermarket shopping. Clients state that vegetable quality is a key reason to shop at the coop. Clients buying more local seasonal vegetables and the coop helps with recipes. Clients mostly don't grow their own vegetables because of time and knowledge. Clients enjoy the 'gathering' time while shopping at the coop.</p> <p>Coop has expanded products to cleaning and preserves. Happy to share their food coop model.</p>
<p>Le Maota</p>	<p>Represents 300 Māori and Pacifica households.</p>	<p>Severely affected food affordability, many families live on a cheap basics, mainly rice, and bread, Limited fresh food supply and ethnic ingredients have to travel to buy cheaper items, high petrol cost is an obstacle. Work hours being reduced and part time work increasing. Bills prioritised over food, so satisfying hunger is the highest priority.</p> <p>Lack of time and suitable land to grow own produce, community has some knowledge and would like to utilize it.</p> <p>Very keen on establishing a pop-up produce shop.</p>
<p>New Brighton Blanket Bank / Wellbeing Group</p>	<p>Provide blankets, bedding and heaters for winter season</p>	<p>Cost of petrol is an obstacle for the community to get the foods from other areas, or to search for cheaper options. Clients now include those working as well as non-working.</p>
<p>The Fridge</p>	<p>Represent about 100 households where food is a critical issue.</p>	<p>Are seeing more people, even those who are working. People are now lining up to access free food.</p> <p>Users have little desire to grow their own or even cook healthy seasonal food.</p>
<p>City Mission</p>	<p>Represents the wider Christchurch community.</p>	<p>Have set up a Social Supermarket to help, but this is in the city.</p>

8. Discussion:

The summary below outlines stakeholder interview discussions around most common barriers to food availability as well as the extent of current food aid services represented in New Brighton.

Food affordability barriers

The main barriers to food accessibility are related to food quality and price, derelict shopping area, transport cost, disabilities, lack of time.

Lack of time was a constant mention when we talked to community organisations about accessing healthy, cheap food. The change in work pattern from full time to several, lower paying, part-time jobs has meant these families have less time to search out cheaper and or more healthy food options.

Most organisations mention that there are no retail local options for their community to purchase cheap healthy produce. So, people have to travel by car to PaknSave in Wainoni, the Greengrocer in Pages Road or further afield to get specialty / ethnic produce.

Many people with disabilities are prevented them from accessing cheaper, healthy food. The group includes people with mental illness and many older people who can't carry much as they walk to or around a supermarket or take the bus.

The only supermarket in Greater New Brighton has little competition, therefore has higher prices and many remark on the low produce quality. There are no other butchers or greengrocers for locals to buy from in Greater New Brighton.

Effects on the community's well being

The barriers identified have significant effects on community's mental health, physical health, social isolation, shame and distress. Many organisations that were interviewed mentioned the spiralling cycle of higher prices of food and living, fixed income, more hours needed to work, less time to travel to find cheap healthy food, less time to prepare healthy meals, less time to grow or preserve, increasing personal loans, increasing stress, increasing mental illness, increasing social isolation.

The Community Police are seeing increased crime due to unhealthy youth and people needing to feed themselves. The free food providers are seeing higher number of people accessing their services, including people who are working.

Shame is an issue for those who are struggling to feed themselves and their families. This can present as withdrawing children from school, not participating in community activities that could help and increasing stress and ill-health. Having small friendly community hubs relatively close to where people live or congregate can reduce this issue.

Barriers to growing own food

Many residents are growing own food in the backyard. Some made an attempt in the past to grow own food, but discontinued due to lack of time, suitable land or lack of know how. Some respondents referred to high costs of establishing a garden and cost of seedlings.

The older community of Greater New Brighton have knowledge of how to do this, but often they have some disability that makes it difficult to garden. This community often have a piece of land that could be used for a garden. There is opportunity for those who don't have the skills or place but have some time, to work with this older community.

Home gardening produces seasonal food, often in excess at times. The skill or systems of preserving, swapping, giving away can be developed to leverage this existing resource.

The current food security landscape in the Greater New Brighton

Greater New Brighton has many organisations that are helping with this issue. The scale of the issue continues to grow, however these organisations have limitations in scaling up.

- Community Food supply. The New Brighton Community Gardens help people from the community to learn to grow and cook food. This appeals to those with the time to donate or helping do the gardening. The size of the garden is a limitation to producing significantly more food. The organisation is not known or understood by some sectors of the community.
- Gardening and growing own vegies. The Just Dirt Trust can help households in the area get a garden built and have cheap compost delivered. They can access funds to help pay and to get the first set of plants. This service is not well known.
- Vegetable seedlings or seeds are regularly shared at the Library, and through other organisations.
- Produce Cooperatives. Toha Kai and St Faiths New Brighton Vegie co-op have developed great systems to get affordable, quality, seasonal produce to people in Greater New Brighton. Toha Kai are scaling up, and have clients over the whole city. St Faiths has had a surge in demand and would like to expand to the north and south of the coastal area, but are limited with their volunteer resources. The model is great, and they are willing to help other organisation leverage this.
- Food aid and food sharing: These organisations play a pivotal role in the local food security system. Without food aid organisations, many people would experience severe hardship, increased mental health struggles, and threats to public safety. The New Brighton Community Fridge and Pantry has been in operation for six years. It is a part of City Mission's extensive efforts to ensure a sustainable food supply for people in need. The New Brighton Fridge and Pantry serve individuals on low incomes, facing homelessness, or dealing with vulnerable circumstances. It is supported by both individuals and businesses that contribute excess food and make use of the commercial fridge to share it with those in need.
- Community lunches are served weekly at the local churches in New Brighton. These meals provide nourishment for people facing social exclusion, mental or physical disabilities, and economic deprivation.

9. Conclusion:

Community resilience is a vital aspect of a thriving Greater New Brighton. It reflects a community's ability to withstand and recover from various challenges, whether they be economic, environmental, or social in nature. One critical factor that significantly contributes to community resilience is the affordability and accessibility of food. This report explored the intricate relationship between these two components and their profound impact on the well-being and strength of the community.

Building resilient communities through improved food affordability requires a combined effort from various stakeholders, including governments, local authorities, non-profits, and businesses. This chapter outlines a range of strategies that can be implemented at different levels to address these issues. We also draw attention to successful programs and interventions that have made significant strides in enhancing food affordability and accessibility.

The collective action plan must be discussed with the Community Board, the CCC community adviser, Local MPs, and government agencies to map out joint food security solution for Greater New Brighton area.

Collective action strategies:

Foodstuffs Supply: The Countdown supermarket is part of the Woolworths chain. The main competitor is Foodstuffs South Island. New Brighton Community organisations may seek an access to food from Foodstuffs, perhaps from PaknSave Wainoni, at discounted prices, and distribute it via the community food retail outlets. Such models are being implemented by City Mission in other regions of New Zealand.

Non-Supermarket Supply (Not-for-Profit): This model is already implemented by communities in other parts of New Zealand and overseas. Establishing a community food supply scheme through collaboration with local social enterprises and not-for-profit agencies allows to avoid logistic, warehouse, and retail space costs. For instance, the current New Brighton vegie co-op serves more than 120 households in Greater New Brighton. The fresh produce is collectively purchased directly from growers and sold in pre-packed bags at fixed prices (\$10, \$15, or \$30). People pre-order a bag of fruits and vegetables and pick it up from the designated place once a week. This reduces supply chain margins and allows us to offer fresh produce at prices up to 25% lower than those in supermarkets. The model has a great degree of flexibility to include additional food items in the bag, such as dairy products, bread, meat, and dietary food items, as well as increase distribution locations.

Selling pre-packed bags of essential food products at low costs will significantly improve the accessibility of fresh and quality food for underserved communities. Existing operators like Toha Kai and FoodTogether demonstrate that the model can be scaled up and leveraged by community-based distributors operating from local hubs, gathering places, and schools."

Local Grower Supply: Creating partnerships with local growers and farmers in North Canterbury not only boosts the local economy but also contributes to localized food security. Initiatives like community-supported agriculture, vertical gardens, and local markets that facilitate direct connections between household producers (vegetable swap) and seedling growers and small farmers would allow to scale up current community gardening efforts and increase community self-sufficiency.

Education and Outreach: Initiatives listed above of this paragraph requires an educational and outreach efforts to improve home gardening practices and home-grown food production output. There are number of workshops, seminars, and online resources available for to residents. However, addressing residents' concerns about affordable sources of seedlings and suitable land for establishing community vegetable gardens is even more crucial.

The trailblazer of urban farming, the Paris Urbanism Agency (9), recommends a minimum area of 50m² to ensure an adequate supply of fruits and vegetables for a household. While New Brighton is regarded for active and highly respected community gardens, their current output falls short of meeting residents' year-round needs for reliable vegetables and fruits.

To address this gap, it would be prudent to leverage available red zone land and expand community garden areas, while also exploring the potential for hydroponic production in the Greater New Brighton Area.

Food Preservation and Distribution: Engaging in the learning of food preservation techniques, such as canning and pickling, serves to prolong the shelf life of surplus produce, thereby minimizing wastage. Furthermore, establishing a well-structured distribution network ensures that preserved foods can reach those who require them. The older members of the community possess valuable knowledge in this regard, which is currently underutilized. Matching their expertise with the needs of the community would be a meaningful project.

Alignment with the Christchurch food security strategy : The CCC Food Resilience Strategy was formally adopted in 2014, serving as a guiding document for food security initiatives throughout the city. However, it's important to emphasise that the strategy needs to be tailored specifically to the Greater New Brighton area, considering its unique characteristics and current challenges. To ensure this, it is crucial to engage in discussions with key stakeholders, including the Waitai Coastal-Burwood-Linwood Community Governance Team, local Members of Parliament (MPs), and relevant agencies. These discussions serve a dual purpose: first, they help in sharing the current findings and insights specific to Greater New Brighton, ensuring that any action taken is well-informed and contextually relevant. Second, they aim to foster collaboration and collective action among these key players.

Building food resilience requires a coordinated effort, and aligning strategies and actions is essential to achieving tangible outcomes in terms of food security for the Greater New Brighton area. This approach will enhance the area's overall food security and resilience.

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