

Oxford Brookes Sustainable Food Action Plan

Annual report 2022/23

Background

Oxford Brookes Sustainable and Ethical Food Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to meet the objectives of the Social Responsibility Framework, Environmental Policy and sustainability goals in partnership with Estates & Campus Services Catering.

The sustainable food agenda has always been important to Brookes, we recognise the importance of providing healthy food and the environmental, economic and social impacts surrounding food systems. Moving to more sustainable food systems will have a positive impact on the current climate and ecological crisis and meet the needs and expectations of our stakeholders. The latest IPCC report concludes that food systems contribute 40% of greenhouse gas emissions (IPCC, 2022). With the latest global extinction predictions and the central role food systems play in reaching the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, it is vital we address the wider impacts of our food systems and address the positive contribution we can make in this area.

In recognition of the huge challenges facing our food systems, the UK Government commissioned an independent review in 2018. The review was a powerful analysis of the challenges facing the food system, centred on two diagnoses – described as the 'Junk Food Cycle' and the 'Invisibility of Nature'. You can read the analysis and recommendations in detail in the [National Food Strategy for England](#), this has recently been followed up by the publication of the [Government Food Strategy](#) in June 2022, with a key emphasis on sustainable production and the need to move towards more sustainable food offerings. A key objective of the new strategy is to deliver 'a sustainable, nature-positive, affordable food system that provides choice and access to high quality products that support healthier and home-grown diets for all'. Oxfordshire County Council signed a new [Food Strategy](#) in May 2022, this strategy has been developed in partnership with organisations including Good Food Oxfordshire, district and city councils, community groups, local farmers and other food businesses, to improve Oxfordshire's food system and make it more sustainable, affordable and resilient.

This action plan will be reviewed annually by the Environmental Sustainability Team and signed off by the Estates and Campus Services senior leadership team.

ECS SLT sign off date: 12/10/2023

Sustainable and Ethical Food Strategy

VISION

To deliver and promote, in partnership with our catering contractors, a 'sustainable food offering', in line with our Social Responsibility Framework, Environmental and Sustainability goals, whilst continually striving to enhance the consumer experience.

KEY DRIVERS

1. To deliver an accessible, affordable, healthy and sustainable food offering to the highest standard
2. To inform and educate consumers on healthy and sustainable choices
3. Maintain our reputation as a sustainable and socially responsible organisation
4. Maintain legislative, regulatory and stakeholder compliance
5. To show continued leadership through the delivery and maintenance of our Fairtrade University status, and other sustainable food accreditation schemes (where appropriate)

OBJECTIVES

- Minimise foods that have negative social or environmental impacts and promote foods and practices that have a positive impact
- Ensure social and environmental factors are included in catering contract specifications
- Enhance consumer awareness
- Actively source locally grown produce and promote seasonal foods.
- Deliver a balanced food provision for the promotion of health and wellbeing
- Maintain our status as a Fairtrade University, identify areas of increased promotion and support the annual Fairtrade campaign
- Review new sustainable food accreditation schemes and maintain existing sustainable food and animal welfare accreditations, where appropriate
- Minimise unsustainable products through the procurement process
- Reduce waste and increase recycling throughout the life cycle of products

2022/23 High Level Target Reporting (KPI's):

1. Local supplier spend at 10% - **Partially achieved @ 9.7%**
2. Maintain Fairtrade University Status & 7% Fairtrade spend - **Achieved**.
3. 100% food waste for anaerobic digestion, and new SMART target for food waste - **Achieved**
4. Sustainable Restaurant Association 3* status - **Partially achieved**

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5. Plant based offerings and targets - **Partially achieved**

6. Minimise unsustainable products: - **Achieved**

Our catering suppliers Gather and Gather are now three years into their contract. They had a difficult start, with Covid-19 restrictions, reduced student numbers, staff recruitment, spiralling costs and unstable supply chains. These impacted on the delivery of our sustainability objectives, but we have progressed many aspects of the sustainability agenda this year, including:

- We have completed an application for the Sustainable Restaurant Association and are in line to receive a 3* status for all Oxford Brookes sites.
- The completion of a new 'Sustainable Palm oil' statement with timebound targets has been agreed with Gather & Gather.
- All fish product suppliers have now been reviewed and only MCS 1-3 rated fish has been procured for the last 8 months.
- We have delivered a number of sustainable food events over the last academic year, partnering with the Student Union and PRiME to expand internal and external reach.
- We also work closely with 'Good Food Oxford' and are signatories to the 'Good Food Oxford Pledge', aiming to catalyse actions by individuals and organisations that will promote a healthy, fair, ethical and environmentally sustainable food system in and around Oxford.
- We have moved away from a vegan framing approach in line with the latest research to embed vegan and vegetarian across all our menus. The Humane Society International are currently reviewing our annual product purchasing and will submit a report on GHGE reduction in the autumn to support our targets.

Deliverables will be actively managed in partnership with our catering partners G&G to progress our objectives. Areas of particular focus for this academic year include delivering Fairtrade recertification in the spring of 2024; active progression of the 3* SRA rating; an increased use of re-usable cups, supported by the introduction of a 'cup tax' and recycling of disposables; increased recycling of catering packaging in partnership with Bidfoods; active progression and reporting on our GHGE targets in partnership with HSI; active progression and delivery of our new Palm Oil statement and targets.

Aim of the Sustainable Food Action Plan:

The Sustainable Food Action Plan details actions to be taken in partnership with our caterer Gather & Gather enabling us to meet our objectives and targets. Compliance is ensured through annual internal and external compliance audits. Targets/actions have been established and detailed in Annex 1.

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ANNEX 1: SUSTAINABLE & ETHICAL FOOD ACTION PLAN:

Key – Target = Achieved. = Partially Achieved / in progress. = Not Achieved

Objectives	Owner	2022/23 Actions / Targets	Reporting on 2021/22 Actions / Targets	Agreed Actions / Targets 2023/24	Timeframe
Actively source locally grown produce	ECS Catering	10% target - new SMART target for this year until supply chains are re-established	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED 9.7% has been achieved. Maintaining a stable supply chain has been the key focus for this academic year. A 12.3% locally sourced target was achieved prior to summer schools, which relies on larger national supply chains due to volumes.	10% target	Aug 2024
To promote and give preference to Seasonal Foods.	ECS Catering	To provide and promote at least 6 seasonal products per quarter.	ACHIEVED This has been achieved throughout the academic year.	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
To maintain our Fairtrade University Status, identify areas of increased promotion and support the annual Fairtrade campaign.	ECS Catering	- Maintain status as a Fairtrade University. - Supply 7% Fairtrade food by spend.	ACHIEVED: - Recertified for 2 years in May 2022 - 10.5 % spend of total revenue.	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024

Objectives	Owner	2022/23 Actions / Targets	Reporting on 2021/22 Actions / Targets	Agreed Actions / Targets 2023/24	Timeframe
Maintain existing sustainable food and animal welfare accreditations.	ECS Catering	New SMART targets need to be established and approved.	ACHIEVED: New requirement for SRA 3* rating will account for sustainable food and animal welfare accreditations	Site specific SRA 3* rating	Aug 2024
		MCS Good fish Guide rating 1-3 only	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED: 85% Delivery - Gather & Gather have worked hard to eliminate non-sustainable fish from the menu. The 15% non-delivery was at the beginning of the reporting year, suppliers are now compliant.	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
		Sustainable Restaurant Association: - Maintain 3* status as an organisation. - Achieve 3* site status at OBU.	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED: Sustainable Restaurant Association: - Achieved - CH&CO maintain 3* status as an organisation. - An application has been completed and submitted for rating by the SRA. Provisional scoring at 3* status.	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
		Remain signed into 'Oxford Good Food Charter'.	ACHIEVED We remain signed into 'Oxford Good Food Charter' & are active members	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
To reduce waste and increase recycling through a products whole life cycle	ECS Catering	FOOD WASTE: - 100% food waste separation. - Kitchen food waste no more	ACHIEVED - 100% food waste separation.	Same as 2022/23 To establish a separate food waste baseline for	Aug 2024

Objectives	Owner	2022/23 Actions / Targets	Reporting on 2021/22 Actions / Targets	Agreed Actions / Targets 2023/24	Timeframe
		<p>than 5% of revenue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver waste prevention on prepared foods through discounting. 	<p>ACHIEVED - 2% of revenue achieved (not including summer schools and hospitality, this will be reviewed separately)</p> <p>ACHIEVED - this has been delivered across all campuses (suspended during the summer), through heavily discounted food (50%) offered after peak sales.</p>	<p>hospitality and summer schools.</p>	
		<p>DISPOSABLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver the 'cup discount' initiative to all outlets. - - Provide 'reusable mugs' where practicable - Deliver disposable cups recycling in line with the waste tender. 	<p>ACHIEVED - SU campaign, they would like a greater incentives placed on re-usable cups. A 'cup tax' has been agreed to be implemented this academic year.</p> <p>ACHIEVED - G&G have delivered 'keep cups' has at all outlets A campaign to incentivise uptake will be introduced in the autumn of 2023.</p> <p>ACHIEVED - Cup recycling disposal collection bins are present at all catering outlets. Use isn't as good as it could be, engagement opportunities will be explored with the SU, G&G and ODS this academic year.</p>	<p>Same as 2022/23</p>	<p>Aug 2024</p>
		<p>RE-USABLES: 100% Reusable Crockery/cutlery</p>	<p>ACHIEVED Eat in offers all on crockery. Taylors Yard, Abercrombie and hospitality (where practicable).</p>	<p>Same as 2022/23</p>	<p>Aug 2024</p>

Objectives	Owner	2022/23 Actions / Targets	Reporting on 2021/22 Actions / Targets	Agreed Actions / Targets 2023/24	Timeframe
		across outlets & hospitality			
		SINGLE USE PLASTICS: 10% reduction on 2022 baseline	ACHIEVED 12% reduction on 2022 baseline	15% reduction 2022 baseline Baseline summer schools use	Aug 2024
		PACKAGING WASTE: 100% takeaway packaging to be recyclable.	NOT ACHIEVED This has not progressed this year, G&G central procurement needs to progress this with Bidfoods	Target to be reviewed with a business case	Dec 2023
Minimise 'unsustainable' products through the selection process	ECS Catering	PLANT BASED: Providing a vegetarian offer at every outlet, every day.	PLANT BASED: ACHIEVED : At least one vegetarian option is offered at every outlet every day.	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
		GHGE: Reduce catering GHGE by 20% (2020 baseline)	NOT REPORTED Reporting on this has not been completed, it is now being actively progressed with HSI, who have been supplied the data set.	Reporting needs completing and a new target for 23/24 set.	Dec 23
		Sustainable Palm Oil: - Delivery of 'Palm Oil Statement' and targets and action plan.	ACHIEVED - A new palm oil statement with timebound targets has been agreed with Gather & Gather.	Delivery of new ' Palm Oil Statement ' and targets.	Aug 2024

Objectives	Owner	2022/23 Actions / Targets	Reporting on 2021/22 Actions / Targets	Agreed Actions / Targets 2023/24	Timeframe
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Champion 'Sustainable Palm Oil City' with Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS). - Gather & Gather to remain an RSPO member. 	<p>ACHIEVED - We remain as key signatories and support this initiative</p> <p>ACHIEVED - Gather & Gather remain an active RSPO member.</p>		
		<p>Health & Wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver a 'Live Well' offering to identify healthier food and drink offerings. - Deliver 'Sugar Smart' objectives in line with 'Oxford Good Food Charter'. 	<p>ACHIEVED - daily 'live well' range is delivered across all the outlets. There is a minimum of 3 offerings at each outlet daily.</p> <p>ACHIEVED - The Co-op have remapped the store to ensure alignment.</p>	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
To promote Energy conservation	ECS Catering / EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure all new equipment is purchased with an AA rating, where practicable. 	<p>ACHIEVED - delivered through CH&CO approved supplier list</p>	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024

Objectives	Owner	2022/23 Actions / Targets	Reporting on 2021/22 Actions / Targets	Agreed Actions / Targets 2023/24	Timeframe
		- Annual Staff training on energy conservation.	ACHIEVED - staff training is completed at least annually and then on an adhoc basis	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
To promote Water conservation	ECS Catering / EST	- Continue to partner with Refill Oxford. - Continue to provide drinking water across campuses.	ACHIEVED - we continue to support this initiative. ACHIEVED - free water is offered across all outlets.	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024
Enhance consumer awareness	ECS Catering / EST	Ensure all our sustainability initiatives are communicated and reported.	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED: This should be increased in 23/24, encapsulated and delivered with support of the new sustainability engagement officer (on recruitment).	Same as 2022/23	Aug 2024

ANNEX 2 : SUGAR SMART OXFORD:

This is a national campaign led by Jamie Oliver and Sustain, and Good Food Oxford is running the local initiative. As a city, we're consuming too much sugar and it's bad for our health. Sugary drinks are a particular culprit – a can of soft drink can contain 9 teaspoons of sugar and a bottle 13 teaspoons – when adults are recommended to have a maximum of 7 teaspoons a day. The result - tooth decay, sugar highs and crashes, weight gain, lack of physical fitness – which increases levels of diabetes, heart disease and other health issues. Following their public health consultation launched at Kassam Stadium, Oxford Good Food are asking organisations to sign up to one or more of the SUGAR SMART business commitments below:

- **Promote free tap water in conjunction with the [Refill Oxford](#) campaign**
- Adopt a traffic light sticker system on canteen/café drinks menus
- Make 80% of drinks offered sugar free
- **Make healthier options more visible**
- **Display sugar content information on vending machines**
- Introduce a 10p sugar tax on sales of sugary drinks in canteens/café, to go to a children's health fund
- Or other actions e.g. free fruit for staff, a cake-free day in the office, install a water station or something else.

If your business signs up to three or more commitments, you will be awarded a SUGAR SMART golden teaspoon. At Brookes we are delivering the commitments highlighted in bold via our catering contractor, Gather & Gather.