

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY STRATEGY: FOOD SYSTEMS THEME

FEBRUARY 2022

1. FOOD FOR THE FUTURE

WHY THIS MATTERS

Food has important social and cultural meaning; this has been especially significant throughout the pandemic, when the opportunities to share meals with family, friends, colleagues, and classmates has been limited. While the council has a key role to play in growing a more **sustainable food system**, we recognise that the groups that have the most powerful influence and ability to bring about awareness and change in the borough are communities. To develop objectives and targets which consider Ealing's food system, we sought the views and opinions of members of the Ealing food community and co-produced this chapter together.

The food we eat and how that food is produced has very significant impacts on the environment and contributes to the increase in **greenhouse gas** emissions (GHG) in our atmosphere. 14.5% of all GHG *globally* come from the production of meat and dairy, most of these emissions come not from the animals themselves but the production and processing of animal feed¹. Increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables eaten in the borough and when possible, purchasing sustainably produced meat and dairy is essential to tackling **climate change** through our food system.

For some of us, food growing is one way we interact with the environment; it offers us a unique opportunity to place ourselves within the ecosystem and see the workings of nature first-hand. With this in mind we have included targets in

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "In terms of activities, feed production and processing (this includes land use change) and enteric fermentation from ruminants are the two main sources of emissions, representing 45 and 39 percent of total emissions, respectively. Manure storage and processing represent 10 percent. The remainder is attributable to the processing and transportation of animal products."

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/197623/icode/> Accessed 9 June 2021.

this chapter to enable everyone in Ealing to engage with sustainable, fresh and healthy food. We are supporting access to more food growing, educational experiences and resources and to markets, restaurants and workplaces which offer healthy, sustainable food.

Minimising our food waste is one of the most important ways which we can significantly reduce the GHG emissions from food and an area which the council has influence. The council has already committed to several targets to address food waste in the wider Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy which was adopted in January 2021. These targets can be found in the Waste chapter of this strategy.

Unlike the other themes of the climate strategy which have focused on the specific direct actions the council is able to take to move the borough towards **net zero**, the food chapter is different. The council has limited influence and control in terms of the food grown, transported, and consumed in the borough. It is the responsibility of the businesses, organisations, and individuals across Ealing to reduce their emissions related to food. However, the council understands the challenges associated with these changes and therefore the main objective of this chapter is to collaborate with **civil society organisations**, businesses, public institutions, and individuals to create an organisation called a **food partnership**. The initial remit of this partnership will be to support GHG reducing food initiatives across the borough. Without the support and ownership of these initiatives by the food partnership and those who are part of the collaboration, many of the targets and objectives of this theme cannot be met.

The council is also aware of the wide reach of food into society's biggest challenges including **food poverty** and health concerns such as malnutrition and obesity. The scope of this chapter is specifically how to reduce GHG emissions from food and therefore it has not been possible to address these challenges here - although there are co-benefits to acting on the GHG emissions from food grown, bought, and consumed in the borough. Where possible this document signposts to other council policies or initiatives which support families and individuals.

VISION

The London Borough of Ealing has an expanding food system which connects residents, food growers, businesses, community groups and the council. Together, they work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from food produced and consumed within the borough by ensuring access to and procurement of affordable, healthy, seasonal, and local food produced following low carbon principles.

CO-BENEFITS

- Increased health and wellbeing of residents with better access to affordable, healthy, seasonal, local, and sustainable food, including eating, growing, and learning about these foods.
- Eating seasonal food grown in the UK, likely means less energy and resources go into production and transportation – meaning there is a lower environmental and carbon footprint
- Growing food either in your own home or through a local community growing scheme can result in access to more affordable fruit and vegetables.
- Support of the local economy by supporting local and UK producers
- UK grown food can contribute to “**food security**” when supply chains are disrupted, or crop yields are low
- Small food growing plots can contribute to biodiversity and habitat creation
- Growing food provides opportunities for learning and knowledge transfer between age groups and cultures

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Figure 1: Sustainable development goals

WHAT IS A FOOD PARTNERSHIP?

A food partnership builds capacity and fosters relationships and connections within the community, between food enterprises/organisations and those organisations procuring this food to create a thriving local food economy. The Ealing Food Partnership will act as a repository and dispensary for food education and information within the borough and will lobby at a local, regional and, where appropriate, national level for systems change in relation to the carbon emissions from food to create a healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food system.

DELIVERING ON THESE COMMITMENTS

This chapter differs from the others in this strategy as it was co-created with members of the local community. Several of the targets and actions below can only be delivered through the commitments of these community groups with the support of Ealing Food Partnership. In order to monitor delivery, the community groups and the food partnership will need to work together to share relevant information and data to support reporting against these targets.

FOOD OBJECTIVE 1. Ealing’s food community will become more connected by creating a partnership, initially focused on reducing GHG, to bring greater visibility to healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food across the borough

F1.FOOD TARGETS

- F1.1. The council will play a leading role in developing a **food partnership** for the borough with the aim of creating the conditions within the borough to enable and support the vision, by the end of 2022.
- F1.2. The council will coordinate a food mapping exercise to understand what food initiatives and businesses are being run throughout the borough, where food is being produced and grown in the borough, and to show where there is lack of access to affordable, healthy, seasonal, local, and sustainable food, by the end of 2022.

FOOD OBJECTIVE 2. Ealing residents will have greater access to healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food

F2.FOOD TARGETS

- F2.1. Following a review of the effectiveness of current planning policies in protecting existing provision and securing access to space for community food growing within developments, an appropriate policy response will be developed as part of preparation on the new Local Plan which is due to be adopted in 2023.
- F2.2. All council food procurement contracts (including school meals contracts) must include “meat free” days a minimum of twice a week and offer at least one vegan and one vegetarian meal every day, from 2022.
- F2.3. The council will undertake a review and create a **net zero** food sources policy which will include seasonal, local, fair trade and sustainable food principles by the end of 2022.
- F2.4. Five new open days at community growing spaces (including allotments and farms) will be held in 2022.
- F2.5. Using the data from the mapping exercises (F1.2), by 2025, investigate and set up appropriate initiatives in areas of the borough which do not currently have adequate access to fresh fruit and vegetable sales. These initiatives may include new markets, working with current retailers in these areas to increase their stock of fresh fruit and vegetables, through to community supported agriculture schemes and supporting the sharing of surplus food within the borough.
- F2.6. 15% more food retailers in the borough will accept **Healthy Start vouchers** by 2024.

FOOD OBJECTIVE 3. Residents in Ealing will have access to more information about healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food systems.

Note: These targets will be owned by the Ealing Food Partnership (EFP) and therefore the deadlines set for accomplishment are dependent upon the capacity of the EFP.

F3.FOOD TARGETS

- F3.1. By the end of 2023, food education materials will be sourced and identified with the assistance of public health professionals and food educators in the borough which will cover topics including sustainability, health, culture, and budgeting.
- F3.2. By summer 2024 the borough wide food education information identified under target F3.1 will be made available through an online portal (managed by the food partnership) and in the community spaces in the borough including community centres, schools, doctors' surgeries, food banks, guides, and scout huts, allotments, and community growing spaces.
- F3.3. Increase of schools participating in food growing/cooking initiatives and schemes and including sustainable, low carbon food education on their curriculum by a percentage each year to be agreed by EFP between now and 2025.
- F3.4. Pilot a flagship educational programme with a community farm (or series of plots through the borough) which is/are open to schools and community groups to access practical education on low carbon healthy, seasonal, local and sustainably produced food.
- F3.5. The EFP and council will have developed a pilot low carbon sustainable food business programme with a rating system by 2023.
- F3.6. From 2023 the EFP will produce an annual monitoring report which will be considered by the partnerships steering group and relevant council officers.

TWO YEAR ACTION PLAN – FOOD

FOOD OBJECTIVE 1. Ealing’s food community will become more connected by creating a partnership, initially focused on reducing GHG, to bring greater visibility to healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food across the borough		
Actions	Measure of success	Timescale
Ealing Council will contact the Sustainable Food Places organisation and other established food partnerships in similar suburban/urban areas to understand better the process of setting up a food partnership , including scoping of the partnership’s role and access to funding.	Building up of contacts and capacity to develop the food partnership to feed into the project initiation document	By end of June 2022
Ealing Council will scope out the process for creating the food partnership to understand the resources needed to meet the targets set out under objective 3 of this food chapter.	Project initiation document for food partnership prepared by mixed Climate Action and Public Health Team	By September 2022
Ealing Council will review national policy and incorporate resources into the development of a food partnership.	Incorporate the relevant aspects of national policy into project initiation document	Review of policy will be on going, project initiation document finalised by September 2022
Ealing Council will initiate a working group of internal and external stakeholders to lead the food partnership	Working group created	By May 2022
Ealing Council will tender for consultants to	The appointment of consultants	By May 2022

undertake the food mapping exercise		
Ealing Council will contribute relevant business data to inform mapping exercise	Provision of this information to the consultants	According with the timetable set out during and following the tender process.

FOOD OBJECTIVE 2. Ealing residents will have greater access to healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food			
Actions	Measure of Success	Timescale	Owners
Ealing Council's Planning team will commission a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy covering the full range of green infrastructure assets required for food growing provision.	Commission of the green infrastructure strategy	Dates forthcoming- awaiting confirmation from Planning team	Planning team
Informed by the GI Strategy, prepare a draft planning policy framework which safeguards existing food growing provision (in respect of quantity and quality), secures an appropriate level of new provision within new development, and secures good quality, usable growing space which passes a functionality test.	Planning policy framework drafted	Dates forthcoming- awaiting confirmation from Planning team	Planning team

University of West London to provide resources and principles, and to support the development of the council's low carbon sustainable sources policy.	Meeting with policy drafters and provision of resources to Council	by June 2022	UWL in coordination with the Procurement team and Climate Action team
The stakeholders listed in "owner" will all work to increase the number of open days they hold in 2022.	Number of open days on food growing sites in Ealing in 2022	Throughout 2022, onward	Cultivate London; Ealing Allotment Partnership; Building Bridges; Mindfood
ActForEaling will work with the stakeholders listed in "owner" to share their organisation's events and programmes which encourage food growing, environmentally positive behaviours, and volunteering opportunities.	Events are shared with ActForEaling	2022 onwards	ActForEaling; Cultivate London; Ealing Allotment Partnership; Building Bridges; Mindfood; I Know Why It's Yum, Mum!
Ealing Council team will assist in the analysis of the mapping exercise data to identify potential physical spaces for siting local food markets.	Meet with the climate action team and review the mapping data	During 2023	Climate Action/ Economic Development
Ealing Council will support necessary planning permission applications and landowner	Communicate with landowners in appropriate spaces about the opportunity to open new market	During 2023/2024	Climate Action/ Economic Development/ Planning

communications for new markets	spaces and support an application for planning to do so		
Ealing Council to establish a baseline of the number of businesses currently accepting Healthy Start vouchers	The baseline is available in early 2022 to facilitate the increase in businesses accepting vouchers	Before the end of March 2022	Public Health
Ealing Council will engage with local businesses to understand the barriers to accepting the Healthy Start vouchers ; work to remove barriers; and increase the number of businesses in Ealing which accept Healthy Start vouchers	Engagement events held either in person or virtually with understanding of barriers to voucher use Increase in the number of businesses accepting vouchers above the baseline	Before the end of July 2023	Public Health

FOOD OBJECTIVE 3. Residents in Ealing will have access to more information about healthy, seasonal, local and sustainable food systems			
Actions	Measure of success	Timescale	Owner
Ealing Council will consider central government policy and strategy when collating the food education materials.	Central government policy and strategy is incorporated when selecting food education materials	By the end of 2022	Climate Action/ Public health
Both internal and external stakeholders will provide access to the relevant resources for use in	Provision of resource and support in their adaptation for the food partnerships need	by June 2022	UWL I Know Why It's Yum, Mum! Building Bridges MindFood

the food education information programme such as Future Plates and Public Health England.			Cultivate London Public Health
Ealing Council to support the Ealing Food Partnership by recommending the appropriate food education materials to be shared.	The provision of recommendations to the food partnerships	By end 2023	Public Health
The stakeholders listed as "owners" will provide space at their sites for physical food education programme resources (such as fliers and pamphlets) to be shared with the public.	Resources placed at all the stakeholder sites	By Summer 2024	Cultivate London Ealing Allotments Partnership Mindfood
Ealing Council will ensure that food education materials are signposted and/or made available to the Clinical Commissioning Group network newsletters.	Create the link between the Food Partnership and CCG	From the end of 2023	Public Health
Ealing Council will connect social prescribers and other health services with the	Creating and maintaining the link between the Food Partnership and these stakeholders	From the end of 2023	Public Health

Ealing Food Partnership			
Stakeholders listed as owners will develop links with schools in the borough to increase access by the schools to practical food education including for example site visits, outreach within schools, facilitating the Cultivate Ealing schools competition, Grow Some Share Some, Growing Kids and Cooking Kids programmes.	Increase from Stakeholders current baselines	From 2022 onwards	Ealing Allotments Partnership Cultivate London Mindfood Building Bridges I Know Why It's Yum, Mum!
Ealing Council will connect stakeholders with Schools Team to encourage links into schools.	Meeting arranged between relevant stakeholders, Climate Action and Schools Team	By Spring 2022	Climate Action team
Stakeholders will work with the Food Partnership to develop a schools pilot programme that will facilitate the progression of food education so that there is a continuum of learning from primary through to young adult including programmes such	Working with the Food Partnership to develop pilot programme	by Summer 2023	Cultivate London Building Bridges Horsenden Hill Farm Ealing Food Partnership

as Growing Kids and Cooking Kids.			
The stakeholders listed as owners to be part of the group working with the Food Partnership to develop the low carbon sustainable food business programme.	Participation in the Food Partnerships working group to develop the low carbon sustainable food business programme	by June 2022	UWL ActForEaling

DEFINITIONS

Climate change

A large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures.

Civil society organisations

Civil society is widely understood as the space outside the family, market and state (WEF, 2013). What constitutes civil society has developed and grown since the term first became popular in the 1980s and it now signifies a wide range of organised and organic groups including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions, social movements, grassroots organisations, online networks and communities, and faith groups (VanDyck, 2017; WEF, 2013).²

Food partnership

A local cross-sector food partnership involves public and third sector, business and community representatives that meets regularly and is committed to working together across all key food issues³.

Food poverty

The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.

Food security

There are four pillars of food security: availability of food within a community; individuals have the resources to access sufficient nutritious food; people have the ability to select, store and prepare food; and each of the previous pillars remain stable over a long period of time.

Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space and other green features, urban and rural, which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities. It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands – and also street trees, allotments, private gardens, green roofs and walls, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and soils. It includes rivers, streams, canals and other water bodies, sometimes called 'blue infrastructure'.

Greenhouse Gas

² [What is Civil Society, its Role and Value in 2018? - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/what-is-civil-society-its-role-and-value-in-2018)

³ [Food Governance and Strategy | Sustainable Food Places](#)

Greenhouse gas, any gas that has the property of absorbing infrared radiation (net heat energy) emitted from Earth's surface and reradiating it back to Earth's surface, thus contributing to the greenhouse effect. There are seven main GHGs that contribute to climate change: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃). Using the conversion factor relating to CO₂e covers all of these GHGs.

Healthy Start vouchers

Pregnant women or families with a child under 4 may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk through the Healthy Start voucher scheme.

Net zero

The term net zero means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it. This balance – or net zero – will happen when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed.

Sustainable food system

A sustainable food system is a type of food system that provides healthy food to people and creates sustainable environmental, economic and social systems that surround food.

CONTRIBUTORS

The fifth theme, Food Systems, was developed in partnership with residents, community organisations and academics who have experience and expertise in local food systems. The members of the working group included the people listed below, many thanks for the valued contributions:

Food Systems Theme Working Group, 2021	
Name	Organisation representing
Rachel Pepper	Artification
Dina Tsuru	Building Bridges
Auberon Bayley	Cultivate London
Paul Carter	Ealing Allotments Partnership, Ealing Parks Foundation
Mary Horesh	Ealing Repair Café
Trevor Sharman	Ealing Transition Initiative
Will Blake	Horsenden Hill Farm CIC
Natasha Gavin	I Know Why It's Yum Mum
Lucy Clark	MindFood
Peter Cross	University of West London
Martin Caraher	City, University of London (Ealing resident)
Cllr. Jaskiran Chohan	Ealing Council
Vanessa Hampton	Ealing Council, Parks
Evelyn Gloyn	Ealing Council, Community Engagement
Tan Afzal	Ealing Council, Community Engagement
Richard Sims	Ealing Council, Project Delivery Unit
Chris Welsh	Ealing Council, Parks
Jonathan Staples	Ealing Council, Parks
Maddy Gupta-Wright	Ealing Council, Public Health
Ian WEAKE	Ealing Council, Planning
Louise Taylor	Ealing Council, Public Health
Maria Nolan	Ealing Council, Climate Action and Sustainability (facilitator)
Jo Mortensen	Ealing Council, Climate Action and Sustainability (facilitator)