

# SFP Bronze and Silver Awards Application Form 2024

This form is for completing an SFP Bronze or Silver Award application. **If you are considering applying for a Gold Award, please contact the SFP team at [sfpawards@soilassociation.org](mailto:sfpawards@soilassociation.org) to discuss the process.**



**Before starting your application, please fully read this form as well as the following documents:**

- SFP Awards: Guidance for applicants: [SFP Awards - Guidance for applicants 2024](#).
- SFP Awards: Activity and Impact: [SFP Awards - Activity and Impact 2024](#)

*Please do not alter the formatting of this form or redesign it and only return as a Word document not a PDF. This is essential for you application to pass the initial eligibility check.*

## SECTION 1: Information about your partnership and your place

Please complete the following (\*= mandatory):

<b>Name of your partnership*:</b>
Sustainable Food Cornwall
<b>Name and contact details of person/people leading on this application*:</b>
Claire Judd (Coordinator). <a href="mailto:claire@sustainablefoodcornwall.org.uk">claire@sustainablefoodcornwall.org.uk</a> M: 07976 216038
<b>Geographic region which this award will represent*:</b>
Cornwall
<b>Award you are applying for*:</b>
Bronze

**Please provide us with background information about your place (not scored)\*:** Advisory word limit: 400 words

This is to help the panel understand the context in which you are working. *You may include (but not limited to): Population and demographic information, location/geography & economic and social challenges.*

### ANSWER:

Cornwall is one of the largest unitary authorities in England, with a population of 572,010. It is very rural and more than 70% of its land mass is farmed. Its population density sits in the lowest fifth of authorities.

Different areas of Cornwall constitute distinct and essentially unconnected communities – both culturally and geographically. Travel between them is difficult - transportation links are linear and public transport is poor. A car journey between Bude in the northeast and St Buryan in the southwest takes two and a half hours, possibly double this in the busy holiday season, and would be unthinkable by bus or train. This has practical implications for building a good food movement and for positioning ourselves as a partnership for the whole county.

The lack of functional links and interactions between places is also a barrier to the creation of critical *economic* mass. This is exacerbated by Cornwall's peninsular location: the only neighbouring county with which to develop efficiencies is Devon. This plays out in the food system as high food distribution costs for growers and retailers, and more limited access to markets. For instance, it is cheaper to drive cauliflowers grown near Helston to a regional distribution centre near Bristol and send them back again, than to deliver them direct to a local supermarket.

The agri-food sector is critical to the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly economy, representing 18% of Gross Value Added (GVA), 24% of workplaces and 27% of all jobs.

- There are more than 1,980 farms with 4,400 holdings and a workforce of nearly 11,800. Grass comprises 72% of farmland, and 60% of farms specialise in livestock (315k cattle, 487k sheep, 52k pigs and 1.085m poultry). There are some excellent examples of carbon neutral (and even carbon negative) livestock farms in Cornwall, much of it on land unsuitable for other types of farming
- The fishing industry contributes £174m of GVA to Cornwall annually, with 25% of the UK's catch. Much of the Cornish fishery is extremely sustainable

So, what counts as 'sustainable food' is arguably different in Cornwall to elsewhere in the UK; the definition could be place based. The Sustainable Food Cornwall partnership represents a broad spectrum of opinions in this respect, so it's important we take a nuanced approach.

Cornwall has high levels of deprivation and a low wage, seasonal economy. Wages are around 80% of the national average. Its rurality creates high transport costs and poor access to food outlets and other facilities for low-income households. Additionally, the costs of buying or renting property are disproportionately high:

- Cornwall has more second homes than anywhere in the UK, combined with high homelessness levels as residents are priced out by lucrative holiday rentals
- In January 2024 more than 800 families were living in emergency accommodation, and temporary accommodation – which usually has no access to cooking facilities – costs Cornwall Council £10m annually
- Approximately one in four people in Cornwall experience food insecurity - the most deprived decile of residents would need to spend 75% of their disposable income on food to follow Eatwell recommendations

**How have you considered equity, diversity and inclusion in the structure and work of your partnership (not scored)\*: Advisory word limit: 300 words**

**ANSWER:**

- Our partnership is structured along sociocratic and holacratic principles and our steering and working groups include members from a diverse range of backgrounds and organisations (see Issue 1A)
- We have developed an equality and diversity policy and our governance working group is currently leading a review of how we are performing on equality, diversity and inclusion. This is being guided by the 'REDI for Change' resource but is also taking a place-based approach considering specific demographics, inequalities and barriers to participation in different areas of Cornwall
- We have more work to do to understand how our partnership is performing and to identify where we should focus our efforts. However, we have already identified that:

- Younger people are under-represented on our steering and working groups, although significant numbers have engaged with our events and our Charter. In the past year we took steps to address this by recruiting a new director and steering group member who is a final year undergraduate and university food activist and is co-leading the next stage of our equality and diversity work. Youth Council representatives are now members of our Food in Education working group and we are beginning to engage with Young Farmers Clubs
- We are working through the Cornwall Food Access Alliance to ensure more people with lived experience of food insecurity are actively participating in our steering group and working groups
- We have work to do to encourage more stakeholders in the farming and fishing communities to engage at the core of the partnership, given their importance within Cornwall's food system

## SECTION 2: Local food activity and impact

Please read **SFP Awards: Guidance for applicants:** [SFP Awards - Guidance for applicants 2024](#) before completing this section.

Please describe the activity and impact of local food work delivered in your place within the last three years against the relevant key issues (1-6) and action areas (A and B) below.

We advise that you keep answers to within 600 words for each action area (i.e. for each A and B under the key issues). Whilst you won't be penalised for going over this limit, this will help the panel focus on your main achievements. For sections C, 250 words is the mandatory limit.

For Bronze and Silver awards, there are mandatory actions for some key issues. These are laid out in *SFP Awards - Activity and Impact*: [SFP Awards - Activity and Impact.docx](#). This document also provides a broad benchmark for each award, rationale for SFP's inclusion of each key issue, and example actions for each action area.

Only submit additional documents for food action plans and strategies related to Key Issue 1 mandatory criteria. All other additional documents will not be assessed. You may add links to online documents but always check the links and permissions as we will not be requesting changes from you after submission.

### Key Issue 1 Mandatory Criteria Checklist

*NB failure to provide Key Issue 1, Action area B mandatory criteria will result in rejection at the eligibility stage.*

- Bronze applications require a one year action plan
- Silver applications require a three year action plan

**1. Have you submitted a current food action plan or food strategy with an action plan?**

Yes

**2. How are you evidencing this action plan?**

- Attachment as a Word, PFF, **Excel** document? Yes
- Link to an only document? Yes / No
- If a link place here as well under Key Issue 1
- Action Plan link:

**3. Has the action plan less than 6 months to run?**

- No
- If less than 6 months to run what is happening after the action plan expires?  
(100 words)

## Key Issue 1: Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action

### Action area A: Establish a broad, representative, and dynamic local food partnership

#### ESTABLISHMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND ITS WORKING GROUPS

In 2021 a collective of food system activists, supported by the Director of Public Health, came together as Sustainable Food Cornwall to identify priorities and a route towards a sustainable food strategy for Cornwall. The group carried out a wide-ranging survey and workshop programme with more than 200 consultees from across Cornwall's food system, resulting in a [report](#) that formed the basis of an action plan for a fledgling food partnership.

In May 2022 a diverse interim steering group was convened from across the public, voluntary and agri-food sectors, to develop a more formalised partnership and a draft action plan based on the 2021 engagement work. The partnership joined the Sustainable Food Places network in summer 2022.

In spring 2023 the Cornwall Food Partnership was incorporated as a CIC to act as the parent infrastructure company for an independent Sustainable Food Cornwall (SFC) partnership. A coordinator was recruited and a new [governance structure](#), designed along sociocratic and holacratic principles, was ratified and implemented.

In this new structure:

- Any organisation or individual that signs the [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Food Charter](#), launched in September 2023, becomes part of our partnership and Cornwall's good food movement.
- Any partner / good food movement member is able to join, or suggest, a new working group. Working groups are linked to (but do not exactly mirror) the six Sustainable Food Places pillars and are the locus of the partnership's action on food system change. Currently, SFC working groups are:
  - Community growing
  - Strategy
  - Communications and engagement
  - Food in education
  - Governance
  - Public procurement
  - Farming
- We work on tackling food insecurity through the Cornwall Food Access Alliance (CFAA). Several individuals and organisations work across both groups and SFC's coordinator formally liaises between them.
- A Good Food Economy working group is in development, currently working as a looser affiliation

- Climate and nature-friendly food production is a cross-cutting theme which underpins *all* our working groups
- The steering group ensures general oversight and communication across the partnership and between working groups. The transition from an interim group was completed by the end of 2023, following the first Cornwall Food Systems Summit and the development of new communications channels.
- The five directors of the infrastructure company, Cornwall Food Partnership, sit on SFC's steering group, with a further nine members from public, private and voluntary sectors. All steering group members are a member of at least one working group to ensure active engagement and participation
- The steering group meets monthly in a mix of online and in-person meetings. In future it is envisaged the steering group will meet less frequently as action is increasingly devolved to working groups, which decide their own meeting frequency

## CROSS-SECTOR REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION

Our steering and working groups include members from a diverse range of backgrounds and organisations including: Cornwall Council Public Health; University of Exeter; CSA Network (Community Supported Agriculture); former Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (CloS) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP); Newquay Orchard; Cornwall Wildlife Trust Farm Advisory Team; Bosavern Community Farm; CloS Leadership Board; CloS Local Nature Partnership; Cornwall National Landscape; Gleaning Cornwall; Origin Coffee; Farm Cornwall; Chefs in Schools; Cornwall Youth Council; Volunteer Cornwall; Cornish Food Box Company; Cornwall Food and Farming Group; NHS primary and secondary care practitioners; Cornwall Food Access Alliance; Cornwall Climate Action Network; Growing Links; Fentenfenna Farm; Community Roots; Camel CSA; Goonown Growers and more. The groups also include individuals working as consultants in the food sector, for example an economic botanist and a food strategy advisor.

## RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIP BY STRATEGIC BODIES

While SFC is independent (the sole current activity of an independent CIC) it is formally recognised and actively supported by Cornwall Council and by Cornwall's other key institutions.

For example:

- The coordinator's salary, and a joint Sustainable Food Cornwall / University of Exeter sustainable school food knowledge exchange fellowship, are both co-funded by Cornwall Council Public Health
- Sustainable Food Cornwall is a workstream leader within Cornwall Council's main strategy document [The Cornwall Plan 2020 - 2050](#)
- SFC was a member and workstream leader of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Leadership Board's recent cost of living crisis strategic group, chaired by the Director of Public Health

- SFC is a stakeholder attached to the new Food Board (see Issue 4), which continues following the closure of the LEPs

## Action area B: Develop, deliver, and monitor a food strategy/action plan

### SUSTAINABLE FOOD CORNWALL ACTION PLAN AND STRATEGY

Our first action plan was based on the 2021 consultation work and subsequent input from our interim steering group, and formed the basis of our application for membership of SFP in 2022.

New working groups, together with our first food summit in 2023, enabled further development and updates of the action plan. It now exists as a working shared document in a spreadsheet 'tracker' form (attached) and is regularly reviewed and updated by working groups and the steering group. A narrative version is being developed for our website to enable engagement with the wider good food movement.

A fledgling SFC strategy working group is developing a Cornwall-wide sustainable food strategy for adoption by key institutions. The group is open to all and currently brings together senior representatives from the former CloS LEP; Cornwall Council Public Health; Cornwall Council Planning; Farm Cornwall; Cornwall Council Economic Development; Cornwall Food Access Alliance; Cornwall Food & Drink; Volunteer Cornwall; CSA Network; Cornwall Fish Producers Organisation; Cornwall Climate Action Network.

The strategy group is in the early stages of exploring ways to link and reference existing, sector-specific food strategies (e.g. agri-food; fisheries; public health) and address any gaps.

### CORNWALL AND ISLES OF SCILLY FOOD CHARTER

A first draft of the [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Food Charter](#) was co-created by our steering group in spring 2023. It was based on the priorities identified during the 2021 engagement work and summarises the 'good food principles' underpinning our action plan.

It was presented for feedback during workshops at our Cornwall Food System Summit in May 2023. The final draft was signed off by our interim steering group in July, with a decision to review annually.

The charter was publicly launched in September 2023 and at the time of writing has 152 signatories. We use it to engage in food system change and as a gateway to our action plan.

Commitments made on charter sign-ups include:

- Festival organiser: "Ensuring our festivals embrace these essential elements"
- Local NGO: "To link the charter to our organisational policies and practices"
- A large landowner: "Continue to convert estate land to agroecological food production and encourage food-based tenant businesses to source locally and sustainably produced"
- An NHS professional: "Promote the charter across NHS colleagues in Cornwall"



- A community money advice centre: “Share the charter's aims and activities with our volunteers, trustees and clients”
- A community centre: “Start a community food sharing / larder service from our centre
- A large firm of solicitors: “Buy from local and sustainable food producers”
- From individuals: commitment to buy local and sustainable produce; to start growing their own veg; to start composting; to switch some of their spend to agroecological food; to reduce food waste; to cook from scratch

Partners are working to integrate the charter into their organisations. Volunteer Cornwall is promoting good food for one and all throughout the health sector, including its Green Impact for Health Toolkit used in primary care practices.

### THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD CORNWALL BRAND AND IDENTITY



SFC’s strapline is ‘Good Food for One and All’ (‘Boes brav rag onen hag oll’ in Cornish) – building on the Cornish motto of ‘One and All’ (rag onen hag oll).

Our new logo is in the Cornish colours of black and gold and a play on the traditional heraldic coat of arms. A slice of Cornish Gouda replaces the shield and illustrations of Cornish produce feature prominently. The aim is to firmly anchor the partnership’s place-based approach and to create a distinctive brand.

**C: Other information: Other activities and context** (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

Sustainable Food Cornwall works closely with, and is represented on, a range of key strategic bodies including:

- Review group for [The Cornwall Plan 2020 - 2050](#) (see Issue 3)
- [Cornwall Food Access Alliance](#) (see Issue 3A)
- NHS Sustainable Food Group (see Issue 3B)
- Cornwall and Isles of Scilly’s new Food Board, supporting the economic development of Cornwall’s agri-food sector (see Issue 4)
- [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership](#) (see Issue 6A)
- [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Climate Commission](#) (see Issue 6A)

## Key Issue 2: Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement

**NB at Silver** we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

### Action area A: Inspire and engage the public about good food

#### SUSTAINABLE FOOD CORNWALL AWARENESS-RAISING AND COMMS

SFC's 12-month communication and engagement strategy ([viewable here](#)) sets out our approach to building the good food movement in Cornwall.

We use **social media** to share information about local and national issues and campaigns, and to promote opportunities for learning and involvement.

Our [Facebook](#) following has grown from 8 in March 2023 to 388. We have initially focused on sharing and commenting on posts, particularly from community food groups, local food businesses, food and farmers' markets, and producers, as well as key local public and health sector posts, national campaigns and initiatives.

- [LinkedIn](#) posts and shares are less frequent and are targeted primarily at business and public sector partners, highlighting significant local or national strategic and policy news. We have 270 LinkedIn followers
- We have set up an Instagram account and are working on a bank of images and reels ready to enable us to engage with a younger and different demographic

The [Sustainable Food Cornwall website](#) went live in May 2023 and is currently being revamped to provide more advanced functionality and to improve [access to key resources](#). These include research reports, videos and presentations from SFC events. We intend it to become a 'go-to' site that incorporates links, resources and event listings across Cornwall's food system.

The Sustainable Food Cornwall e-newsletter was launched in September 2023 and is currently sent monthly to 261 subscribers, then shared on Facebook and LinkedIn.

SFC also works to engage face-to-face with the public, producers and community organisations, for example:

- Direct conversations with producers and the public at Cornwall's 40+ farmers' and produce markets are leading to additional charter sign-ups and social media followers
- Steering group members worked within the 2024 Royal Cornwall Show's education zone alongside Cornwall Council's Education Business Partnership team to engage families in practical activities and conversations around access to local, seasonal, affordable food
- Two steering group members gave short talks on the links between sustainable food and farming during the Royal Cornwall Show at the Cornwall Council-led Regenerative Farming Hub

- Steering group members and partners have been Q&A panellists at screenings of Cornwall Climate Care's [Hungry For Change](#) and [Food for Thought](#) films in cinemas and community venues
- SFC delivered a workshop on the link between soil health and gut health at the 2023 Hayle Health and Wellbeing Festival

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO LEARN ABOUT, SHARE AND ENJOY HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD

Cornwall has a diverse and extensive community food sector and a vibrant local food economy.

**Large-scale commercial food and drink festivals and fairs** take place across the peninsula – including in [St Ives](#), [Porthleven](#), [Bude](#), Falmouth, Fowey and Padstow. These annual events showcase some of Cornwall's finest producers, foods and chefs, including sustainable, local food.

Around 120,000 people visit the [Royal Cornwall Show](#) over three days in June. In 2024 Sustainable Food Cornwall played a prominent role at two hubs in conjunction with partners Cornwall Council, the Local Nature Partnership and Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL).

SFC partners and the coordinator are also involved in stands and activities at other events at the Royal Cornwall Showground. The annual Farm and Country Days attract 1,500 primary school children for hands-on learning about farming, food production and countryside management [highlighted in this video](#). The free [Cornish Winter Fair](#) is a celebration of farming and food in Cornwall with some 10,000 visitors.

Smaller, **grassroots food fairs and feasts** bring people together and strengthen their local communities by focussing on ethical, agroecological and regenerative production:

- Real Food Garden: [HarFest: A celebration of regenerative food production](#)
- Three seasonal community feasts organised by [Falmouth Food Co-op](#) at its Loveland agroecological growing site
- The first community feast at [Soul Farm](#), a CSA in Flushing
- Three seasonal open days / celebrations at [Growing Links'](#) community garden site near Penzance
- Seasonal Orchard Fayres and a Wassail at [Newquay Community Orchard](#), also BIG Ramadan Cook-up, using sustainable produce grown at the Orchard and from the [CHAOS Group](#)
- Numerous public Wassails held at community orchards and CSAs
- [Truro Community Refugee Support Group](#) organised a cooking and sharing event based on recipes from Syria and Ukraine
- [The Cornwall Diversity Food Festival](#), held at New County Hall, promotes diversity, social inclusion and tolerance by bringing people together to sample different food and swap recipes from Cornwall and around the world

Some **visitor attractions** are also helping to promote sustainable food and food production to the public:

- [The Lost Gardens of Heligan](#) has over 350,000 visitors a year - around 500 varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs are grown to regenerative principles and are used in the restaurant
- At the [Eden Project](#) (which has over half a million visitors a year) a new state-of-the-art plant nursery showcases regenerative sustainability and circular systems and is producing food for on-site restaurants. Greenhouses heated by geothermal energy produced on site also enable more exotic foods to be grown and any surplus is distributed to local food banks and CHAOS Local

**Frequent and regular community lunches** are hosted by community food groups across Cornwall:

- [Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change](#) (CN4C) in Redruth and St Austell offers healthy lunch clubs
- [Whole Again Communities](#) in Penzance offers free nutritious meals at its weekly lunch clubs
- Truro Nourish Hub offers lunches and the opportunity to learn to cook low-cost, healthy meals in the community kitchen at Truro Cathedral
- [Soul Food Kitchen in Newquay](#) is a healthy cooking project
- [STAK St Austell](#), community kitchen offers support, advice and guidance for vulnerable, needy and homeless people in St Austell
- The Eden Project is the home of [The Big Lunch](#): 19 took place across Cornwall in 2024
- During the course of the Food for Life programme, 74 Get Togethers were held in Cornwall

A range of opportunities for people to learn about sustainable food, the links between planetary and human health and food system change are offered in the form of one-off **public workshops, discussions and film screenings** by a diverse range of groups:

- More than 3,000 people watched the Cornwall Climate Care films [Food for Thought](#) and [Hungry For Change](#) at in-person screenings across Cornwall in 2023. In feedback, 100% of respondents said they felt positive or inspired or keen to learn more
- [Food Troops CIC](#) facilitated regenerative food and healthy soil events which spawned a new and highly-motivated Incredible Edible Redruth group
- Treverbyn Community Hall hosted Dan Kittredge of the Bionutrient Association talking about the links between soil health and human health
- [Into Bodmin CIC](#) organised a sell-out evening of comedy and regenerative farming with Cornish comedy legend Kernow King to watch the film *Six Inches of Soil* and to taste sustainably-produced food

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERING AND TO DEVELOP FOOD SKILLS

Cornwall's 50+ **community growing schemes / spaces** form the backbone of community-based volunteering alongside food skills and training opportunities. The locations of these schemes are displayed on SFC's [Good Food Map](#).

They range from small food growing groups with a handful of volunteers to large social enterprises such as [Newquay Orchard](#). All provide formal and informal skills development as well as learning and training opportunities. Many offer volunteers the chance to be involved in preparing and sharing food, and selling and marketing it.

Community growing projects' contribution and impact to Cornwall's good food movement are examined in detail in SFC's 2023 [Community Growing in Cornwall Report](#), commissioned by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Leadership Board and co-authored with the University of Exeter. Some examples:

- [Food Troops CIC](#), a community garden, kitchen and larder / fridge in the heart of Redruth – one of the most deprived areas of Cornwall. Staff and volunteers work closely with [Grassroots Garden](#) CSA to offer weekly gardening clubs for all ages and regular cookery clubs and community lunches. They host a programme of one-off cookery workshops and in 2024 collaborated with [Smart Savings CIC](#) to run a free course over several weeks covering all aspects of eating on a budget
- [Growing Links](#) in Penzance is a social enterprise with a food store (larder / pantry), street food project, education centre, and community garden that produces food to sell, to distribute to people on low incomes and to make hot meals for vulnerably-housed people. Volunteers are engaged with all aspects of growing food; preparing, cooking, distributing and serving fresh, hot meals; selling produce at local markets and via a veg bag scheme. The Young Food Activists project provides educational opportunities to connect with nature, grow food, participate in cooking workshops and share food for 11-15-year-olds. These activities are supported by volunteer professionals within the community, youth workers and experienced youth project facilitators
- [Into Bodmin](#) has a community garden in the town centre at the Old Library and a weekly gardening group maintains and develops it.
- Alongside informal volunteer learning opportunities, a number of community growing spaces host regular free or low-cost permaculture and / or sustainable growing courses. Recently these included [Bosavern Community Farm](#) near St Just, [Community Roots](#) in Porthtowan and [Cornwall Grows CIC](#) near Bude
- A thriving network of Cornish community orchards provides opportunities for people to get involved and learn about fruit growing in their local communities. Cornwall Orchards Network supports these projects and is facilitated by [Resilient Orchards Cornwall](#), which organises hands-on free and open learning sessions around fruit tree pruning, grafting, and tree care. One is [St Ives Community Orchard](#)
- [Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change](#) (CN4C) is a community development organisation that runs On the Plot free fruit and veg growing courses on its allotment sites in St Austell and Camborne. CN4C also offers free Cook Well, Eat Well sessions, when participants learn to cook and prepare a meal to eat together

- [Edible St Austell](#) grows fruit in unused spaces across St Austell and enables learning about growing, foraging, wildlife and healthy food

Some food banks and crisis food organisations are linking and developing partnerships with market gardens and community growing spaces. They are facilitating visits to enable service users to learn about sustainable food production, develop growing skills and discover how to get involved:

- Truro Nourish Hub and [Truro Foodbank](#) have a partnering scheme with Soul Farm in Falmouth and they are now establishing a new community growing space in Truro
- [Whole Again Communities](#) partners with [Badgers Food Forest](#)
- [CHAOS at Eden](#) is based at Eden Project's regenerative market garden and is in partnership with [CHAOS Group](#), delivering work-based learning for neurodiverse adults and adults with physical and emotional impairments

[Whole Again Communities](#) in Penzance and [Liskeard & Looe Foodbank](#) (LLFB) have pioneered online cookalongs to teach cooking skills and to offer in-person cooking classes and clubs, supported by recipe bags. LLFB has developed pictorial-based recipe cards to address low literacy levels which have proved a barrier to people's participation. These recipe cards and resources are shared with other groups in the emerging [WellFed Cornwall](#) network and resources hub facilitated by Volunteer Cornwall and Sustainable Food Cornwall. (See Issue 3B.)

## **INCLUSION AND ACCESS TO VOLUNTEERING AND THE GOOD FOOD MOVEMENT**

Cornwall is far less culturally and ethnically diverse than many areas of the UK: 96.8% of residents identified as 'White' in the 2021 census with over 94% born in the UK. Some specific areas are home to relatively larger numbers of asylum seekers and / or migrant workers. Community food groups in these areas have been successful in involving and engaging people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds by actively reaching out.

Newquay Orchard works closely with Newquay Refugee Support Group, which supports 120 asylum seekers accommodated in a local hotel. Together with [DISC Newquay](#), a local charity providing crisis support, they organised Global Kitchen in May 2024, a free event to celebrate diversity through music, chat and food from Slovakia, Ukraine, Pakistan, Syria and Cornwall.

Minorca Lane near Bugle (in Cornwall's 'clay country') is a community of 15 caravan sites, between them housing approximately 270 families and individuals in 250 caravans. Traditionally a home to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, large numbers of migrant workers from Portugal, Poland, Lithuania and Romania now live there. The community is very self-contained but [Bugle Library of Things](#) (BLoT) has been successful in building relationships with residents, starting by taking crisis food support and services into the site. It has been able to involve residents in initiatives such as seed swaps, food growing and rewilding projects. The local primary school,

attended by children from Minorca Lane, has established a food and forest garden within its grounds and has worked with BLoT on some of these projects.

The same approach is being used by Liskeard and Looe Foodbank (LLFB) to involve people in its community cookery lessons. The communities it serves are extremely rural, with barriers to participation particularly around transport (very poor public transport; cost), low literacy levels and cultural stigma within close-knit and geographically isolated upland farming communities. LLFB is tackling these barriers through a schools coordinator, who works to identify families most in need of support. Families who were not previously engaged with LLFB, who have never cooked together, and who lack the most basic cooking skills, have participated in LLFB's cookalong programmes. These are run in the schools themselves, as well as in community centres and online.

LLFB is also developing mobile hubs offering a full package of support services that visit each community on a regular basis. This ensures it reaches the people most in need, breaks down barriers, builds relationships, and engages them in their community food initiatives.

Newquay Orchard works closely with the [Autistic Community Of Cornwall](#) and others to ensure its opportunities are suitable for individuals with diverse neurological needs.

## **Action Area B: Foster food citizenship and a local good food movement**

### **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE FOOD CORNWALL**

Cornwall is a large rural peninsula (see Section 1). SFC has found that community food groups, food activists and food leaders, who often work separately at considerable geographical distance, particularly value the opportunity to come together in person to network and share ideas and inspiration.

We held our first **Food System Summit near Bodmin in May 2023**, with the theme of 'Good Food for One and All'. Over 80 people attended this oversubscribed event and feedback was excellent. Face-to-face networking was one of the most highly valued aspects, and the words 'inspiration', 'motivation', 'networking' and 'learning' were most cited in feedback. Some of the presentations from the summit can be found on the [Resources page of our website](#).

In response to feedback, we are holding our second summit in autumn 2024. Thereafter we aim to hold whole system summit-type events twice a year in different locations, in addition to a number of smaller, more sector-specific events.

In spring 2024 we gathered 26 food leaders and activists from across the food system for an **Innovation in the Wild** gathering funded through the University of Exeter's Evolve Futures project. New ideas and collaborations emerged, most notably the formation of the [WellFed Cornwall Network](#) which held its first meeting in Newquay in April 2024. Facilitated by Volunteer Cornwall and SFC, it is working to embed and develop community food projects into local health commissioning as a health creation asset.

The new network brings together a rapidly growing number of community food projects, health professionals (medics, social prescribers, health and wellbeing coaches and dietitians), and supporting organisations including universities and the public health team. The WellFed network is also developing a resources hub. For instance, recipe cards used by the Food for Change programme in Cornwall, plus those developed by health coaches in individual primary care networks, and by food banks running cookery classes, are being pooled and made available to all.

## **SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY GROWING AND COMMUNITY FOOD GROUPS / ENTERPRISES**

Cornwall Council is supporting the development of the community growing sector (additional sites and support for existing projects) through the [Climate Emergency Development Plan Document \(DPD\)](#) (particularly sections AG1 and AL1) and [The Cornwall Plan 2020-2050](#).

A 2023 refresh of The Cornwall Plan 2020-2050, in which SFC were involved as workstream leaders under 'Aim 2: Sustainable Land, Food and Seas', specifically embedded community growing as a strategic priority. One of the main plan's main targets ensures that everyone in Cornwall is able to access a community growing scheme and is being measured using SFC's [Good Food Map](#). (More information under Issue 3A). Cornwall Council's Estates Team holds the function of identifying parcels of Cornwall Council-owned land.

Mid Cornwall Climate and Eco Hub in Truro is an example of how this strategic support is translating into practical action. Using the policies, commitments and support outlined above, it is working with Truro City Council and Cornwall Council to create a community food growing scheme and orchard in the grounds of New County Hall.

Similarly, a new Incredible Edible group in Redruth, which was born at a regenerative food discussion evening in 2023, has been able to garner support from both Redruth and Camborne town councils, which have identified several sites for edible planting. It is now a rapidly-growing, multi-agency group that includes community groups, horticulturalists, individual food activists, town councils and Cormac, the council contractor. They are all collaborating to build and install planters for edibles in the two town centres and on prominent parcels of council land, and to plant fruit trees and food in local parks.

SFC's 2023 [Community Growing Report](#), published in partnership with the University of Exeter, identified a need for more support for the community growing sector to help it thrive. SFC's community growing working group is now focused on implementation of the report's recommendations, and enabling delivery.

One of the key areas of need identified was training. Newquay Orchard is currently delivering the Future is Green skills and training programme, on behalf of the sector and SFC's Community Growing working group, as part of a wider initiative managed by Cornwall College. The programme is funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund and is delivering new qualifications and skills training for community growing scheme staff and volunteers in both food and land-based skills,



and 'soft' skills such as volunteer management, legal issues, fundraising; and project development and management.

**C: Other information: Other activities and context** (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

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### **Key Issue 3: Tackling food poverty and diet related ill-health and increasing access to affordable healthy food**

**NB at Silver** we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

#### **Action area A: Tackle food poverty**

### **CORNWALL FOOD ACCESS ALLIANCE**

Instead of distributing emergency food parcels during the Covid lockdowns, Cornwall Council fostered a partnership and collaboration arrangement with existing local community food organisations. It allocated £100K to these groups for capacity building, and to fund food, storage and transport costs to enable them to undertake this. The council and Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum set up [Cornwall Food Access Alliance](#) (CFAA) to facilitate these new collaborations between the many food banks, social food groups, and relevant statutory agencies.

The CFAA, of which SFC is a member, continues to be the multi-agency vehicle for cooperation between organisations working to tackle and end food poverty. Its 55 members include food banks, larders, pantries and community food organisations as well as Cornwall Council, Citizens Advice, Feeding Britain, Transformation Cornwall and local housing associations. CFAA's vision is for a 'Cornwall where no-one goes hungry' and its remit is to share knowledge, identify solutions and work together to reduce the need for emergency food provision. It serves as the locus for SFC's work in this space, instead of a separate working group, as there is considerable crossover in remit and membership.

### **CORNWALL COUNCIL SUPPORT WITH ACCESS TO FOOD**

Cornwall Council has a cash-first approach to support access to essentials for most vulnerable people, so households have choice and flexibility. Currently, one-off £80 Household Support Fund (HSF) payments are made automatically to people receiving pension credit, and adults in receipt of council funding for domiciliary care. Families with children who are living in emergency accommodation or in receipt of council tax support receive an £80-per-child payment, and the Time2Move programme continues to provide eligible children with a free nutritious meal as part of its holiday activity programmes. Additional emergency HSF payments are administered through local partner organisations that are engaged with particularly vulnerable communities or groups.

A [Help with Food map](#) is live on Cornwall Council's website to signpost people to emergency food support.

Bude-Stratton Town Council works with local schools to support families whose children are not eligible for free school meals but are struggling to afford food. The council is currently paying for meals for 20 children in two primary schools.

## FOOD BANKS AND OTHERS DELIVERING PRACTICAL HELP WITH ACCESS TO FOOD

An estimated one in four people in Cornwall are food insecure. In 2021, 180 organisations were providing food aid in Cornwall - up from 20 in just seven years, according to the Trussell Trust.

In the 12 months from April 2022 to March 2023, over 36,000 emergency food parcels were distributed by Trussell Trust foodbanks alone in Cornwall. More than 12,000 of these were for households with children under 16. These figures do not include many other community larders, fridges, pantries and other groups, some of which are sizeable operations, such as Transformation Camborne-Pool-Redruth.

Examples of the main VCSE initiatives which have provided support with access to food:

- During Covid, The Hive Cornwall transformed food surpluses generated by growers, food producers and food wholesalers into healthy cooked meals for distribution, in partnership with CFAA members. Using volunteers and borrowed facilities including school and pub kitchens, the Hive produced and distributed almost 150,000 meals between March and December 2020 alone, recovering over 20 tonnes of surplus food. The Hive was successful in attracting funding for a dedicated hub and distribution infrastructure, based at [Fentenfenna Farm](#), which is now the site of a new mid-Cornwall social food hub that is starting to receive and re-distribute food from FareShare and Gleaning Cornwall
- [Gleaning Cornwall](#) has harvested and redistributed 250 tonnes of fresh veg and some fruit from Cornish farms that would otherwise have gone to waste. Since September 2021 it has contributed over £400,000-worth of fresh, nutritious food to local food charities. Currently, Gleaning Cornwall delivers to more than 80 [locations](#) in Cornwall of which 22 are faith organisations, 11 are Trussell Trust food banks, 11 are community larders, four are community fridges and 34 are other community organisations. A further 30 organisations receive Cornish gleaned produce indirectly. Figures from recipient organisations estimate that Cornish gleaned produce is feeding over 12,000 people each week. The gleaners endeavour to harvest and deliver to their distribution hubs on the same day, so produce can go from field to plate within 12 hours. At Fentenfenna Farm in mid-Cornwall and Growing Links in west Cornwall, some gleaned food is made into hot meals before being redistributed to vulnerably-housed people. Plans are being implemented at Fentenfenna to turn more gleaned food into preserves, ferments and juices that will have a longer shelf life. With a network of seven paid coordinators and over 350 volunteers, Gleaning Cornwall claims to be the largest in Europe
- [Falmouth Food Coop Kitchen](#) has cooked and distributed more than 60,000 hot meals since the start of the pandemic, using fresh and agroecologically produced food from its Loveland growing site, online grocery and other local suppliers
- In 2023 alone, [Growing Links](#) in Penzance provided 390,000 meals to those in need via meals at its Street Food Project for homeless people; meals for people in emergency accommodation; weekly shopping bags for those in crisis; and lunches at its community garden. Like Falmouth Food Coop, Growing Links has a policy of only distributing and providing healthy, nutritious and ethically sourced food from its own garden, from Gleaning Cornwall, and from local sustainable suppliers

- Camborne, Pool, Redruth Foodbank (Transformation CPR) currently has more than 50 volunteers helping to distribute food to 540 families every week. Faced with declining donations in the face of sustained need, CPR is increasingly having to buy food in, and is engaging through the CFAA to identify ways of sourcing locally, sustainably and ethically produced food
- Similarly, Liskeard & Looe Foodbank, which supported 4,124 people in 2022, is increasingly needing to buy food in. It serves rural farming and coastal communities. It is acutely aware that many of its food bank users are themselves low-paid food producers, whose fluctuating seasonal income works to their disadvantage within the benefits system and leaves them very vulnerable. The team is committed to buying food from sources that pay their producers and workers fairly, and it is currently working (supported by SFC and others) to identify suppliers of local agroecological and ethically produced food for seasonal food bags. These are being paid for through fundraising, and distributed alongside support to prepare and cook unfamiliar items

## LONGER-TERM, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR TACKLING FOOD POVERTY

At a strategic level, tackling food insecurity (beyond meeting immediate emergency needs) is identified as a priority in [Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Leadership Board's](#) vision document: [The Cornwall Plan 2020-2050](#). In 2022 a Civic Lantern consultation with civic and civil society leaders drew up a list of priorities to deliver on this.

The top priority identified by the Civic Lantern exercise was: “To give land and support for every community to have a sustainable community growing scheme.”

A multi-agency Cost of Living Crisis Strategic Group, chaired by the Director of Public Health and bringing together Cornwall Council, Citizens Advice, Department of Work and Pensions, SFC, the CFAA and others, was set up to report on and monitor progress against the priorities identified by the Civic Lantern exercise. SFC led the workstream on access to food and community growing.

At the same time, a community growing working group was set up to deliver on the practical priorities. In 2023 the [Community Growing in Cornwall Report](#) by SFC and the University of Exeter represented the completion of the first research stage. Its recommendations were endorsed by the Leadership Board and the Cornwall Plan 2020-2050 was refreshed to adopt a new target to guarantee: “Everyone in Cornwall is able to access a community growing scheme, helping to ensure no-one in Cornwall is reliant on food banks.” This will be measured using SFC’s map of community growing schemes in the [Good Food Map](#).

The community growing working group is now focusing on implementing the recommendations of the report. Progress is being made against two recommendations, in particular:

- Supporting community growing schemes with training and access to mentoring and support. This is underway through Newquay Orchard’s Future is Green programme (see Issue 2B)

- Making more land available for community growing. The senior planning policy manager for Cornwall Council is providing support and guidance through participation in SFC's community growing and strategy working groups, which are engaging with opportunities through the review process for the Local Plan. SFC is promoting the new [SW Land Match](#) programme, launched by Tamar Grow Local and the Landworkers Alliance in 2023, to landowners and land seekers
- As noted under Issue 2, local groups are managing to translate Cornwall Council's strategic and policy-level support into practical action, with the early-stage establishment of new schemes on council-owned land. SFC is supporting this by putting new groups in touch with community growers who can mentor them

## **INCOME AS THE ANSWER TO FOOD INSECURITY: THE REAL LIVING WAGE**

The Civic Lantern exercise identified implementing a real living wage and fairer hours and contracts across Cornwall in its top five priorities.

Cornwall Council is a Real Living Wage (RLW) employer and requires its suppliers to pay it. The council's Good Growth Strategy & Programme is being used to tackle the low income that underlies food insecurity: paying the RLW is an eligibility condition for businesses applying for levelling-up funding through the programme.

In 2023, 28.4% of employed workers in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly were paid less than the Real Living Wage, compared to the UK average of 20.2%. This equates to 68,000 people and does not include the higher-than-average number of self-employed people (including farmers and growers) who are earning less than the RLW equivalent.

Also in 2023, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum, Newquay Foodbank, Truro Foodbank, Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum and End Hunger Cornwall started a campaign for Cornwall to be the first in the UK to be recognised as a Real Living Wage Place by the Real Living Wage Foundation. Some of Cornwall's anchor institutions, the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, and many individual businesses support this.

The Real Living Wage campaign was the headline theme for Challenge Poverty Week 2023 in Cornwall ([Report here.](#)) A week of visits to food banks, pantries, larders and other social food organisations for Cornwall Council's cabinet, senior leadership team, and several prospective parliamentary candidates, culminated in an in-person event that brought together over 100 decision makers, business leaders and community activists to focus on the benefits of the Real Living Wage. This gained considerable media attention, including coverage on BBC Spotlight SW.

## Action Area B: Promote healthy eating

### CORNWALL COUNCIL / PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTION

Two thirds of adults in Cornwall are overweight or living with obesity. Cornwall Council's public health team is currently piloting a systems approach to designing a healthier weight strategy for Cornwall. This aims to identify and change the environmental and societal factors driving obesity.

An initial pilot is focusing on the St Austell area, recognising the need for a place-based approach to address specific wider determinants in a given locality. A group of healthcare workers from both primary and secondary care settings, dietitians, health visitors, social prescribers, community and voluntary sector representatives, leisure industry professionals, and SFC, has been convened by the public health team to help design the strategy. The group met for the first time in January 2024.

[Healthy Cornwall](#), Cornwall Council's health promotion service, runs a range of healthy eating programmes including:

- [SUGAR SMART | Local \(sugarsmartuk.org\)](#)
- In-person and online/interactive workshops focused on weaning babies with healthy foods: [Ready, Steady... Eat - An introduction to solid food - Healthy Cornwall](#)
- [Time2Move Food Provision](#), a holiday food programme focusing on food and activities and fully funded for children on free school meals. Cornwall Council has taken national guidance further and the programme aims to develop and strengthen knowledge and skills around food. Its 2021-22 [annual report](#) reveals that out of 11,000 children who took part, 9,084 were in receipt of income-related free school meals and 61,511 healthy meals were provided in total
- Free online and in person [Healthy Eating and Healthy Weight](#) workshops, providing provides support and resources for people of all ages
- New short [Food and Mood Workshops](#). SFC is engaging with trainers to signpost participants to community food organisations and growing schemes, so they can access healthy food and opportunities to participate in activities that can boost wellbeing and mood
- The Food in Schools programme takes a whole-school approach, focusing on school meals, curriculum and a healthy food culture. Specific initiatives include:
  - The [Healthy School Award: Food in Schools](#) supports schools and assesses them on increasing staff confidence, knowledge and skills in nutrition; raising the profile of nutrition across the school community; promoting and facilitating healthy choices in school; how students are taught about nutrition; meeting the School Food Standards, staying updated with guidance, and ensuring nutritious meals are provided in school; making opportunities available to pupils to learn about cooking and growing both inside and outside the classroom; embedding healthy eating initiatives throughout school life; consulting with pupils to establish their thoughts and feelings about nutrition and acting on this
  - [Food in Schools Resources - Healthy Cornwall](#) provides healthy eating resources

- Breastfeeding support. Cornwall Council is registered with the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative and in 2024 the county's health visitor teams were again [commended for a 'very high standard of care'](#).

## NHS

In contrast with many hospital trusts, which buy in all meals for patients, the Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (RCHT) has its own in-house food production unit called Sustenation. It employs 30 people and undertakes to produce meals from scratch by devising menus to British Dietetic Association (BDA) standards with input from hospital trust dietitians; buying in food (with a high proportion from local suppliers – see Issue 5); preparing and cooking; and blast-freezing. Meals are reheated using regeneration ovens on the ward and plated up before being served to patients. Each ward has a catering assistant who helps people order meals, serves them and deals with any waste.

Menus are seasonal and frequently reviewed. Two years ago, patient feedback led a move to more traditional menus to reflect mainstream tastes in Cornwall. However, Sustenation still serves a limited international range and is about to launch a vegan range of 10 meals that are made in-house, using fresh produce. Rate My Hospital Plate now rates RCHT meals as 'outstanding'.

An NHS Sustainable Food group, chaired by the professional lead for dietetics for the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust (RCHT) and Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust (CPFT), was started in 2023. It brings together clinicians, catering and procurement professionals, facilities managers, allied health professional, and sustainability officers from across both Cornish NHS Trusts, as well as Volunteer Cornwall, the Greener Practice Network (see below) and SFC. The group works to raise awareness of healthy and sustainable food through staff training and engagement with both staff and patients, and to embed food sustainability initiatives into NHS estates, facilities and procurement practices. (See Issue 5 for an example of an engagement campaign.)

## PUBLIC AND VCSE PARTNERSHIPS WORKING ON DIET AND HEALTH

The UK [Greener Practice Network](#) (GPN) supports action on sustainability in NHS primary care. Cornwall GPN has a strong focus on food for human and planetary health and is supported by Volunteer Cornwall through its climate resilience programme, co-funded by Cornwall's Integrated Care Board. Its programme manager was one of the driving forces behind the establishment of SFC and co-leads SFC's food for health working group alongside a public health practitioner.

Volunteer Cornwall's climate resilience team has supported a range of initiatives which showcase how human health and planetary health can be created (and sickness prevented) through food – and most particularly through working with community food organisations. These include:

- Trials of GP prescriptions of CSA-grown veg boxes for pre-diabetic patients or those with early-stage Type II diabetes, funded by Public Health. The first of these took place in

Newquay in 2022-23. The better-than-prescription-drugs results were set out at SFC's 2023 food summit (in a video [here](#)) by Newquay GP and Cornwall Greener Practice Network (GPN) chair Kath Brown. Following the success of the Newquay trial it is being extended, and eight further small-scale pilots are currently underway or being rolled out within different practices and PCNs in Cornwall (again funded by Public Health). SFC's [Good Food Map](#) of community growing projects is being used to gradually connect every GP practice in Cornwall with their local community growing scheme for access to food and social prescription opportunities

- A successful trial of prescription veg boxes for patients with early-stage liver disease by the hepatology department of Royal Cornwall Hospital (RCHT) Treliske
- Peer-to-peer networking and learning opportunities around food for health and sustainability for health professionals - clinician-led sessions have focused on topics including the benefits of plant-based diets for human and planetary health, and the health and wellbeing benefits generated by social prescribing within community growing schemes
- The establishment of community growing spaces on the NHS estate through the [String of Green Pearls](#) project (partly but not exclusively focused on edibles), at Stennack Surgery in St Ives, Trevillis House in Liskeard and on the Royal Cornwall Hospital site at Treliske in Truro. At Treliske a new green ranger is engaging staff and patients in growing schemes and green spaces on site, and is jointly managed by the hospital and Volunteer Cornwall's climate and resilience lead

Greener Practice Network (GPN) and NHS Sustainable Food group members are part of the new [WellFed Cornwall Network](#), set up and facilitated by Volunteer Cornwall and SFC (see Section 2B).

- The network brings together 60+ community food projects, health professionals (including medics, social prescribers, health and wellbeing coaches, diabetes nurses and dietitians) and supporting organisations including Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum, universities, and the public health team
- It is working to
  - facilitate collaboration between community food projects and health practitioners for health creation (e.g. healthy food on prescription with support to prepare it and social prescribing opportunities)
  - develop a model where these collaborations are valued as an asset and embedded into local health commissioning
- Its steering group is made up of Volunteer Cornwall, SFC, Cornwall Council Public Health, Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum (whose CEO sits on the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly ICB) and the GPN chair (the GP who led the first prescription veg box trial)
- It is working with university academics from Bath and Cardiff to gather data which will evidence the full range of health, wellbeing, social and environmental benefits associated with participation in community food programmes. The aim is to make the case for current trials to become a permanent feature of a new holistic health creation programme, rolled out in every PCN. The ambition is for the ICB to allocate £3m to this as it shifts to upstream investment in community-based health care and health creation.



- The WellFed network is also building a resources hub. Cornwall Food Foundation's Food for Change programme, SFC, health coaches in individual PCNs, and food banks are pooling recipe cards and making them available to all

## SUPPORT TO COOK HEALTHY FOOD

Liskeard and Looe Foodbank, Liskeard Together and Eccabi have developed a comprehensive programme of healthy cookery lessons over the past three years for people in need of support in southeast Cornwall. All ingredients are provided free of charge.

- The first [Feed the family online cookery course](#) was delivered in 2021. Learning took place in small groups and with two-way video, enabling tutor feedback and interaction. It covered a basic repertoire of affordable and easy meals. Liaison with [local schools](#) enabled them to increase the reach and impact of these courses. During the Covid lockdown 101 households participated, with many learning to cook with fresh ingredients for the first time
- The same approach was used to deliver Cooking with Children sessions online during the school summer holidays from 2021. This pilot trained 13 children in eight families, with extremely enthusiastic feedback
- From 2022, LLFB ran in-school cookery sessions for families, including the Eat Well for Less programme. At two sessions in Dobwalls School it demonstrated making banana oaties and carrot flapjacks, linking to the school's sugar-free lunchbox initiative. Each participating family was given a recipe bag to make the food at home. More than 170 children attended a school assembly session and 70 people a second after-school session, with very positive feedback. A single father who had never previously cooked with his daughter reported that they were now loving cooking together regularly
- Based on this success, LLFB recruited a dedicated schools coordinator in 2023 to enable it to further extend their reach and impact
- In early 2024 it launched a six-month programme of weekly, in-person cookery classes at a local community centre, focusing on budget-friendly and healthy meals. As the foodbank buys in, the focus is increasingly on using food that is seasonal, sustainable, locally produced and ethically sourced (see Issue 3A.) Resources such as recipe cards have been fine-tuned too after learning that the average reading age of its adult participants is seven. So far 42 people have benefited from five sessions

LLFB is only one organisation among many offering support with cooking skills in Cornwall but arguably has the most comprehensive and wide-scale approach. Similar successful programmes are being rolled out in other areas, with resources and know-how shared through the WellFed Cornwall Network and also through other peer-to-peer routes.

**C: Other information: Other activities and context** (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

The SFC food in education working group, supported by a joint University of Exeter / SFC sustainable school food Knowledge Exchange Fellowship (KEF), is working to build a healthier and more sustainable school food system and culture and to improve food education.

Through the KEF, school catering arrangements, as well as opinions and aspirations of school kitchen staff, teachers, pupils and local agroecological food producers, were mapped in 2023. Four pilot workshops were held in and with schools at growing sites, in which pupils learned about healthy and sustainable diets and cooked with local agroecological produce. The workshops are being used to develop case studies and develop a strategy for potential wider school food transformation in Cornwall.

Our partnership's work on school catering and procurement is outlined under Issue 5. Healthy eating examples of work being carried out by SFC working group members include:

- Chefs in Schools started working with Cornish schools in 2023, including Camborne Science and International Academy, to train school chefs and transform school kitchens over the next four years
- Camborne Science and International Academy is running Family Cook-Along sessions. Families are supported to cook a meal together using ingredients from local suppliers including Trink Dairy, Riviera Produce, Cornhill Eggs and Cornwall Pasta Company

#### **Key Issue 4: Creating a vibrant, prosperous, and diverse sustainable food economy**

**NB at Silver** we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

#### **Action area A: Put good food enterprise at the heart of local economic development**

### **STRATEGIC AND STRUCTURAL SUPPORT FOR A GOOD FOOD ECONOMY**

Prior to 2024 and the advent of agri-food sector support through the Shared Prosperity Fund (see below), the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (CloS LEP) and Cornwall Council supported the sector through a specialist LEP rural group, made up of strategic supply chain partners.

This group commissioned a farming, fisheries and food insights [report](#), published in March 2024. It aims to inform the new CloS Growth Strategy and to provide insights into the agri-food sector and fisheries industry as well as the main factors likely to influence sustainable growth.

Around 75 businesses, organisations and individuals (including SFC directors, partners and the coordinator) were interviewed or attended workshops to inform findings and recommendations. The report identifies five key focus areas:

- High welfare / low carbon livestock farming becoming the UK's most sustainable grazed livestock sector
- Increasing production of sustainable fish and seafood, capitalising on Cornwall's highly sustainable small boat fleet
- Growing and diversifying the fresh produce and horticulture sector (including by making the most of low carbon technology)
- Using food and drink to add value to tourism and extend the season
- Increasing added-value food and drink processing to target new markets – generating a further £4-£5 in processing, marketing and logistics for every £1 of GVA in agriculture or fishing

Cornwall Food and Drink launched [Raising the Bar](#) in February 2024. Funded by a £554,000 investment from the CloS Good Growth Programme, this project aims to build the success and resilience of Cornwall's food, drink, farming and fishing sectors and to make it the UK's number one region for low impact food production.

The project provides:

- Access to support and advice for food businesses to start up, grow, boost performance and productivity, attract new talent, find new customers and try new markets. This is accessible via a resources hub and a panel of industry experts providing information, know-how and a sounding board
- A quick, easy-access delegated business grant scheme with £5,000 available for 50% of capital and / or revenue costs. Businesses are supported to access this funding

- A focus on raising the profile of the sector as a career choice by showcasing opportunities and earnings potential. A new Great Cornish Food Academy is engaging with schools and colleges, providing business and skills support for budding food entrepreneurs, creating have-a-go experiences for career seekers and helping employers to hire and retain the right people. Intervention examples include:
  - A networking event for 30+ women involved in food and drink in Cornwall to celebrate International Women’s Day, with inspiration and learning from successful female food entrepreneurs
  - A St Piran’s Day event where Year 5 children from a school in a deprived catchment area met local suppliers of Cornish foods (pasties, clotted cream, saffron buns, fairings) and butchers, a cheesemonger, and a fishmonger, to learn about food, ingredients and where they come from. Very few of the group were previously able to identify specific vegetables or seen whole fish or carcass meat
- Showcasing and promoting best practice and innovation through the [Great Cornish Food Awards](#) (see section below on promotion of good food business)
- Developing out-of-season food tourism events in conjunction with wider sector partners such as Visit Cornwall
- In response to the closure of the LEP, hosting a Food Board to create a new agri-food sector growth strategy, feeding into the wider CloS Growth Strategy, and drawing on the recent farming, fisheries and food insight report (see above)

The [True Value of Seafood Report](#) published by the Cornish Fish Producers Organisation (CFPO) in January 2024 demonstrated that the Cornish fishing industry contributes £174m of GVA to the Cornish economy and employs 8,000 people. The sector is around four times more important economically to CloS than elsewhere in the UK. The report was commissioned to inform regional and national decision making and to help drive strategic investment.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT SHORTER AND VALUE-BASED SUPPLY CHAINS**

[Cornwall Gateway CIC](#) is a project initiated by Bodmin Chamber of Commerce to provide vital infrastructure for Cornish food producers to develop, process and add value to their products within Cornwall and ultimately to scale up production.

The vision is to create development kitchens, incubator units, a research and development lab, and processing and distribution infrastructure at a new agri-food and drink industrial resource near Bodmin. A Phase 1 feasibility study is underway and will be completed by the end of this year. The project team is combining the results of a producer survey with the findings of the farming, fisheries and food insights report commissioned by CloS LEP (cited above) to develop a blueprint for the site, using a £63,000 grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

[The Good Food Loop](#) is a not-for-profit wholesaler, facilitated by [Tamar Grow Local](#). It supports collaboration between sustainable and agroecological producers and develops and strengthens short supply chains between these producers and customers in east Cornwall and west Devon. A collaboration between SFC, [The Organic Research Centre](#), Tamar Grow Local, Fentenfenna Farm,

Falmouth Food Co-op and a group of mainly fruit and veg producers is currently developing a version of the Good Food Loop for north, mid and west Cornwall through the Joining the Dots project. Initial feasibility studies and scoping exercises were carried out in 2022-24 and a practical pilot is currently being designed.

## **CORNWALL COUNCIL FARMS ESTATE**

Cornwall's Council Farms estate is just under 4370.6 hectares (10,800 acres), made up of 87 holdings, dominated by dairy and stock farming. The [Council farms strategy and business plan 2019-39](#) sets out four strategic priorities for council farms:

- Farming futures: council farms as a gateway into farming for new entrants, with measures to provide more and better opportunities, and support to start and progress
- Environmental growth: improving habitat and biodiversity, water management, soils and carbon sequestration in line with Cornwall Council's [Environmental Growth Strategy](#), which is premised upon environmental net gain
- Sustainable estate: creating employment and sustaining dynamic rural businesses, encouraging opportunities to add value and to meet local market needs, adopting innovative practices and meeting high animal health and welfare standards
- Vibrant communities: in addition to creating good employment opportunities, increasing public understanding of food production, better public access to farms (including through CSAs on council farms), and delivery of health and wellbeing benefits to local communities

[Fentenfenna Farm](#) is a council farm which was taken on by the current tenants in 2020 and is becoming a rural enterprise hub based on "circular economy principles, social values, and environmental enhancement". Its core enterprises include: Grown by Newquay Orchard, a 7-acre agroecological CSA; a social food hub redistributing food from Cornwall Gleaning Network and FareShare (described under Issue 3); a circular economy craft cider and juice making business using surplus apples from Cornish orchards; a sustainable mushroom-growing enterprise; and a plastic and pesticide-free native tree nursery that supplies the [Forest for Cornwall](#) programme (see Issue 6). Farm start / incubator opportunities are being planned on an additional 30 acres. A much longer than standard tenancy was negotiated to ensure the level of investment and commitment needed for the venture.

## **PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCERS**

Good Growth (Shared Prosperity) funding in Cornwall is providing £137m of support across three priorities: support for local business, community and place, and people and skills. Raising the Bar has been allocated £554,000, and Cornwall Gateway £63,000, as outlined above. Additional funding support for sustainable food enterprises over the last 12 months includes a barn for [Community Roots](#) CSA; the [Agri Carbon Kernow](#) programme (see Issue 6); the Future is Green programme that Newquay Orchard is using to deliver support to the community growing sector

(see Issue 3); infrastructure for seaweed cultivation and processing; and Food Troops CIC's Cook, Grow, Thrive community cooking and gardening skills programme (see Issue 2).

Since 2021, [Business Information Point](#) (BIP) and [Farm Cornwall](#) have been delivering DEFRA-funded support to help farmers navigate the agricultural transitions to the Environmental Land Management | Scheme (ELMS).

- Farm Cornwall's Farm for the Future Programme provides training about the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), grant aid, landscape recovery, and Farming in Protected landscapes (FiPL). It offers support with countryside stewardship and farm business skills, through tailored one-to-one advice, webinars, and business skills development workshops. Over the last two years, more than 180 farms have received assistance
- BIP's Future Farm Resilience programme provides online and on-farm workshops, one-to-one on-farm advice from qualified advisors, and digital / business skills training. Hundreds of participants have benefited from workshops covering topics from soil management, herbal leys and hedgerow management to online accounting systems, farm management software, and how to apply for SFI funding

[Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Growth Hub](#) supports inclusive and green growth and has provided food businesses – including egg producers, a fruit grower, a catering start-up and Growing Links (see Issue 3) - with grant funding, and funded skills and net zero/decarbonisation support.

TEVI (Cornish for 'grow') was an ERDF-funded University of Exeter (UoE) circular economy project that provided significant funding and capacity-building support to food enterprises and sustainable food initiatives until 2023. SFC's first Cornwall Food Systems Summit (2023) our [Good Food Map](#) and a sustainable food procurement conference, for example, were TEVI funded, and businesses including [The Cornish Food Box Company](#) also benefited from support. The university's [Arca](#) circular economy project ran from 2021 to 2023 and also benefited the food sector, with a focus on developing skills, networking and peer-to-peer learning. Interventions included a sold-out workshop on business skills for community growers in autumn 2023 (building on SFC's and University of Exeter's Community Growing report), and an MSc sustainability internship to focus on waste at Origin Coffee that subsequently developed into a permanent job.

## **INDEPENDENT AND VALUE-BASED FOOD RETAIL**

[Great Cornish Food Store](#) is an independent food retailer and café that sells over 90% Cornish food and drink. In 2022 it became employee-owned. It sits alongside Truro's Waitrose store and is the first example in Britain of a major supermarket sharing its premises with a completely independent local food retailer. The store's position ensures excellent exposure and encourages new customers and those who wish to do all their food shopping in one place. It currently has over 200 producers and suppliers.

Behind the scenes, Great Cornish Food offers support and advice to smaller and start-up suppliers, particularly around marketing, pricing, labelling, distribution, and product quality. The

team is providing significant support to develop the Cornish agri-food sector through its Raising the Bar project (see above).

[The Cornish Food Box Company](#) was started by two sisters from a Cornish farming background with the ambition of making it as easy as possible for people to buy sustainable Cornish food. They deliver to customers throughout Cornwall (and further afield) a range of local grass-fed, free-range meat and poultry, sustainably caught fish and seafood, and fruit and veg, alongside a range of ethically sourced pantry staples. They work with over 200 local farmers and suppliers. Nearly all their range is from Cornwall, although they buy in a limited amount from ethical suppliers outside Cornwall (such as Riverford) to ensure customers can continue their 'main shop' with the company. In July 2023 the doorstep milk delivery service Lillie Brothers, which has been providing local customers for nearly 50 years, became part of Cornish Food Box Company's home delivery operation.

[Penryn Produce](#) is a student-led organisation that facilitates access to local, seasonal, agroecological, organic and minimally packaged food for students at the University of Exeter. The organisation works in partnership with local growers and producers and acts as a retail collection point / hub for students to order and collect their food every week.

[Falmouth Food Co-op](#) grocery is a collective online shopping platform that connects local people with local suppliers and producers of sustainable, agroecological and ethical food. The co-op sells veg and some fruit (including from its Loveland growing site), alongside dairy, eggs, meat, honey and chilled and baked goods from 40 local suppliers, and pantry staples from an ethical wholesaler.

## **Action Area B: Promote healthy, sustainable, and independent food businesses to consumers**

### **HELPING CONSUMERS TO FIND GOOD FOOD**

[Food From Cornwall – Your Comprehensive Guide to Cornish Food & Drink](#) is published by our partners at Cornwall Food and Farming Group and provides a directory of direct producer to consumer (B2C) supply routes. SFC's [Good Food Map](#) focuses specifically on agroecological producers but is currently more of a B2B tool than a consumer-facing resource. We link to the Food from Cornwall website from our own map, and regularly reference it. We are working together to identify potential ways of synergising the two resources.

The [Seafood Cornwall](#) website provides details of fishers selling direct to the public, local independent fishmongers, fish merchants, chefs and restaurants supplying Cornish fish - all searchable by postcode or on a map.

The [Cornwall Good Seafood Guide](#) (more information under Issue 6A) provides a [Where to buy directory and map](#) and guides buyers to sustainable fishers selling direct as well as independent retailers and hospitality outlets selling sustainable Cornish seafood.

## SUPPORTING DIRECT (B2C) SALES

[#FishToYourDoor](#) is a Seafood Cornwall initiative that was launched in 2020 as a response to the pandemic. Since then it has matched over 3,000 seafood consumers with Cornish fishers and suppliers, using a merchant matchmaker tool based on their preferences and postcode. If customers live in Cornwall, this could be close by. Customers further afield are matched with a supplier who delivers nationally.

[Better Food Traders](#) has several members in Cornwall whom they promote and support with online training, around marketing for example. The BFT regional coordinator, based in Cornwall, is engaged with the SFC partnership and BFT are involved in the Joining the Dots project (described above).

A member of the SFC steering group has started to engage at grassroots level with Farmers Movement Cornwall members and has a growing list of producers who have an aspiration to start selling direct and / or into public procurement routes. This work will feed into the next review of our action plan.

## PROMOTING LOCAL GOOD FOOD BUSINESSES TO THE PUBLIC

Great Cornish Food Store holds regular promotional tasting sessions and events and showcases new launches and seasonal produce to consumers in its regular [blog](#).

[Seafood Cornwall](#) is a marketing and promotion initiative led by the Cornish Fish Producers Association (CFPO) and brings together fish producers and the other businesses that depend on Cornish fish and seafood (retailers, hospitality, tourism). It aims to connect people with healthy and sustainable Cornish seafood, developing and strengthening the local and domestic market.

Some of the most sustainable and locally abundant seafood species, which represent a great potential source of low carbon and healthy protein, are unloved by UK consumers and sold mainly abroad. Faced with additional trade barriers related to Brexit, a cross-supply-chain focus group is working to break down some of the cultural barriers adversely impacting these species' popularity, to increase domestic take-up. One example is the spider crab, recently rebranded as the Cornish King Crab and the subject of a major marketing campaign by Seafood Cornwall and retail partners such as Great Cornish Food Store and Cornish Food Box Company.

The [Made in Cornwall](#) Approved Origin scheme was launched by Cornwall Council in 1991 to provide more reliable information on provenance and to ensure greater transparency and consumer confidence. It is the largest such scheme in the country with more than 250 members, many of them food businesses listed [here](#),

To carry the Made in Cornwall logo, products are assessed by Trading Standards to ensure that they are indeed being made in Cornwall; that the business attempts to source ingredients or raw



materials from within Cornwall (with extra merit given to those that do); and that the finished products comply with all relevant regulations.

Food tourism is huge in Cornwall, and the visitor market is key to the survival of many Cornish food producers and businesses. Visit Cornwall is Cornwall's official tourist board and works closely with the agri-food sector and economic development bodies to promote and support Cornish food and drink. A [food and drink directory on the Visit Cornwall website](#) directs people to a wide range of Cornish food retailers, produce and farmers' markets, hospitality outlets specialising in local produce, and 'foodie experiences' including food festivals.

Cornwall's many food festivals (see Issue 2A) play an important role in promoting Cornish food and drink. In 2023 visitor numbers reached 30,000 for Porthleven Food Festival and 40,000 for Falmouth Oyster festival.

The [Great Cornish Food Awards](#) are new awards designed to showcase food businesses and organisations that excel in eight award categories - farming for the future; fishing for the future; food for the future; raising the bar; growing people; making a mark; in it together; and winner of winners.

SFC steering group members have been engaging face-to face with stallholders at farmers' and produce markets across Cornwall to talk about our charter. We regularly share markets' posts on social media and recently published a news item on our website about the growing number of local markets - [Farmers' and produce markets are booming in Cornwall](#)

SFC also shares updates and news pieces from independent Cornish food retailers and farm shops on our social media feeds, including [Great Cornish Food Store](#), [Cornish Food Box Company](#) (both founding partners of SFC) and smaller businesses like [un rap](#), [Incredible Bulk Mobile Zero Waste Shop](#), [Archie Browns](#), [Sprout Health Foods](#), [Cusgarne Organic Farm Shop](#) and [St Buryan Farm Shop](#).

**C: Other information: Other activities and context** (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

The Cornish sardine fishery is highly sustainable, made up of 15 vessels under 15m in length, usually consisting of a skipper and two crew. The vessels use ring nets, and fish from Newlyn, Mevagissey, Falmouth and Plymouth.

Cornish Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)-certified sardines have previously only been available in UK supermarkets on fresh fish counters or in frozen or chilled packs. Most sardines consumed in the UK are canned and come from a non MSC-certified Moroccan fishery. Cornish sardines are now being canned by International Fish Cannery, the UK's only fish cannery, and are available at Tesco.

## Key Issue 5: Transforming catering and procurement and revitalising local and sustainable food supply chains

**NB at Silver** we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

### Action area A: Change policy and practice to put good food on people's plates

#### CORNWALL COUNCIL FOOD PROCUREMENT

In May 2023 Cornwall Council passed a [motion in favour of local food procurement](#). The original proposal was designed to protect Cornwall's livestock farmers, against a backdrop of other local authorities adopting exclusively plant-based approaches. SFC was able to successfully lobby for amendments to the motion to: i) support procurement from low or zero carbon and nature-friendly farmers and producers – as opposed to just 'local' producers; ii) embed recognition that Cornwall's climate and nature aspirations can be achieved partly through food procurement (whether plant or animal based – depending on the nuances of *how and where* that food is produced in addition to *what* it is); and iii) include reference to 'growers' alongside 'farmers'.

SFC was specifically named in the amendments which included: a focus on seasonality; a commitment to investigate establishing a sustainable farming certification system in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS); and a commitment to investigate and promote a sustainable food procurement policy.

Since then, we have worked to hold officers to account on implementation, working closely with members of Cornwall Council's audit committee. But despite our efforts, the motion has not yet translated into tangible policy or action.

Through our Food for the Planet grant and project, a member of our procurement working group participated in an external review of Cornwall Council's Scope 3 emissions earlier this year. The review was commissioned by the Carbon Neutral Cornwall team to feed into the development of a new sustainable procurement policy. However, food was not included in the main review due to the limited extent of food procurement by Cornwall Council (no procurement on behalf of schools, for example – see below). Despite this, we continue to engage with Cornwall Council's procurement and Carbon Neutral Cornwall teams, to underline in-principle potential and the importance of leading by example to achieve change elsewhere.

As a result of the Scope 3 engagement, SFC was invited to participate in Cornwall Council's annual Supplier Summit in March 2024 and was able to engage senior leaders directly in discussion of sustainable food procurement opportunities, and to push for a specific framework to be developed for this within new policies. We feel that progress is frustratingly slow but continue to focus on relationship building with key decision makers, while simultaneously working to support the potential to supply at scale (see Issue 5B).

Cornwall Council has worked closely with the University of Exeter and SFC in support of the Knowledge Exchange Fellowship on sustainable school food (see Issue 5B). A barrier is Cornwall's

high levels of school academisation: only 55 of its 273 state-funded schools are local authority maintained, and of those 55 all but eight are run through a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. As a result, Cornwall Council's direct leverage over school food procurement is extremely limited.

## CORNWALL NHS FOOD PROCUREMENT AND CATERING

In contrast with most hospital trusts, which buy in all patient meals, the Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (RCHT) has a dedicated food production unit. 'Sustentation' employs 30 people and undertakes all stages of patient meal production in-house – from menu planning to cooking and blast freezing. (See Issue 3B above.) 'Rate my Hospital Plate', which has 350,000 users, has rated RCHT food as outstanding.

RCHT food procurement works through the NHS Supply Chain Framework, in line with wider NHS policy that seeks to ensure full traceability and best price. Sustentation has been keen to prioritise quality and local supply as far as possible and has worked with the (supportive) procurement team to find mechanisms within the framework that enable contracting with local suppliers. From a total of 18 suppliers:

- Five are Cornish producers: [St. Ewe Free Range Eggs](#) (all eggs, including liquid); [Rodda's](#) for milk (the highest spend of any single product); [Matthew Stevens Cornish Fish](#); [Prima Bakeries](#) (bread - and retail baked goods sold in hospital shops) and [Callestick Farm](#) ice cream
- A further six are Cornwall-based suppliers that source from further afield, as well as within Cornwall. For example, wholesalers [WestCountry](#) are used for fruit and vegetables and catering butcher [Score Foods Ltd](#) provides meat

Until recently, vegan meals have been prepared and supplied externally as demand is limited, making in-house batch cooking less viable. A new range of 10 vegan meals devised and prepared in-house is currently at the tasting and testing phase and is due to be launched soon. They will be frozen as individual meals.

Communication and engagement campaigns, such as the posters displayed in hospital canteens and restaurants in 2023, aim to raise awareness of sustainable food sources among patients and staff. Some examples are below.



## Action Area B: Improving connections and collaboration across the local supply chain

SFC has established a working group on public sector procurement. The group is in its infancy but is focusing on:

- Engaging (and recruiting to the working group) individuals identified as key in public sector procurement by SFC's Food for the Planet project
- Mapping existing opportunities to supply into public procurement
- Mapping producers' existing capacity to supply, and their willingness to do so
- Identifying the support needed for producers to scale up, diversify and /or collaborate to maximise public procurement opportunities

Research carried out through the University of Exeter / SFC Knowledge Exchange Fellowship on sustainable school food in 2023 mapped current school food procurement and catering practices. The research generated insights into schools' aspirations, with nearly all saying they would like to source more locally and to link with local producers. Key motivations were children's health, environmental sustainability and supporting local businesses. Barriers were chiefly a (real or perceived) lack of choice / control related to high levels of academisation or being PFI-managed, with catering mainly centrally outsourced to one of a small number of national school caterers with established wholesaler contracts.

This research is being disseminated widely, and is being used locally to create a strategy for sustainable school food that aims to connect schools, caterers and local agroecological food producers, and which will inform SFC's work on school food procurement.

The Joining the Dots project outlined under Issue 4A is working to create a version of the Good Food Loop for mid and west Cornwall, focusing initially on B2B collaboration and supply (as opposed to B2C). The Phase 1 feasibility study has identified a range of product gaps where box schemes, retailers and wholesalers are having to buy in from outside Cornwall to meet existing demand. This has two implications for our partnership's work on procurement:

- Initial producer collaborations on buying in produce through Joining the Dots are creating the confidence and conditions for individual producers to move toward closer cooperation. Ultimately the aim is for a cooperative or collaborative group to engage with procurers as a single contracting partner (like a cooperative wholesaler), which could be more attractive to larger buyers
- The product gaps identified in Phase 1 represent challenges to supply in procurement terms, but also opportunities for new entrants to the market and for diversification. One area of under-production is agroecologically-grown field-scale veg staples like maincrop potatoes, roots and brassicas. Skills and equipment for such production still exist in Cornwall but are largely under- or unutilised as larger farms have been forced to specialise. Our farming and community growing working groups are working to set up skills and equipment shares, and sales, between larger farms and smaller growers. Supported by Newquay Orchard's Future is Green project, they want to rebuild some of this capacity and enable smaller producers to scale up

SFC feels that hospital caterer Sustenation's approach (see Issue 5A: in-house, seasonal menu design; a preference for contracting with local suppliers) offers opportunities to build further good practice. We are in early talks with Sustenation and local producers to try and facilitate this. The ambition is to:

- Help increase the proportion of Cornish (and particularly Cornish agroecological) food supply – especially fruit and vegetables
- Support Sustenation to bring their higher-value meal model into other public institutions that currently buy other ready-prepared meals, particularly where these must comply with nutritional guidelines or standards, for instance in care homes or schools. Sustenation currently supplies a small number of care home and schools, with capacity to expand.

**C: Other information: Other activities and context** (Please see Section 2 above for guidance) (Mandatory word limit: 250).

**Key Issue 6: Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food & farming and an end to food waste**

**NB at Silver** we require evidence that your food partnership has catalysed, influenced or delivered activity. That the food partnership has created additionality. At Silver simply mapping activity is not sufficient. The 'value added' of the partnership must be demonstrated.

**Action area A: Promote sustainable food production and consumption and resource efficiency**

**STRATEGIC-LEVEL COMMITMENTS**

Cornwall's anchor institutions have declared climate and nature emergencies:

- Cornwall Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and an ecological emergency in 2022
- The University of Exeter (in Penryn) declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019
- Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (RCHT) and Cornwall Primary Foundation Trust (CPFT) declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2020

Commitments to sustainable food and farming are embedded into key strategies and policies designed to deliver Cornwall's target of net zero by 2030 – ahead of the national target - and to tackle the climate and nature emergency.

- [The Cornwall Plan 2020-2050](#) is owned by [Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Leadership Board](#). 'Sustainable food, land and seas' is one of six transitions to deliver a greener and fairer Cornwall. SFC are part of the group which in 2023 reviewed and set detailed outcomes and measures for the plan, which were subsequently adopted and published. Key outcomes (measured annually) include:
  - Farming, food and drink processing, and land management in Cornwall is profitable through... promotion of sustainable local produce (measures include reduction of CO2 emissions from agriculture measured in Mt)
  - Community growing schemes are established across all communities in Cornwall (measured by numbers of active schemes; data held by SFC, who lead this workstream)
  - Farming, food and drink processing, and land management in Cornwall, are delivering demonstrable improvements in nature recovery (measured by % of land in positive management for environmental growth. Data held by Environmental Growth Strategy)
  - Fishing in Cornwall is profitable through... promotion of sustainable local produce while also delivering demonstrable improvements in nature recovery (measured by % of fish landed in Cornish ports recommended as sustainable, with data held by Environmental Growth Strategy)
- Cornwall's [Environmental Growth Strategy](#) is premised on environmental net gain and sets out in detail how the Cornwall Plan transitions to 'sustainable food, land and seas',

outlined above, are delivered. It is owned by the [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership](#) (LNP). It contains commitments to:

- support local farmers and landowners to deliver nature recovery through the ELMS and provision of public money for public goods
  - a new Land Management Advice Service
  - promote local producers (including small-scale)
  - champion pollinator-friendly practices
  - champion food and seed security
  - encourage regenerative, low input and organic local production, good soil-management and agroforestry
  - encourage land management techniques which support carbon sequestration
- Cornwall's [Climate Emergency Development Plan Document \(DPD\)](#) (2023) sets out how planning policy will support and prioritise low-carbon, regenerative agriculture and food production. It is modelled on the Wales One Planet DPD and embeds soil protection and regeneration as key in tackling climate change. Two policies in particular promote sustainable food production: AG1 - Rural Development and Diversification; and AL1 - Regenerative, Low-Impact Development
  - The Council Farms Strategy was outlined above
  - The [Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Nature Recovery Strategy](#) is a spatial strategy for growing and recovering nature. It aims for 30% of CloS to be well-managed for nature by 2030. It is being developed by Cornwall Council and the Local Nature Partnership. Farming occupies 70% of Cornwall's land mass, so there is recognition that the nature recovery target will only be achieved if farming is at the core of the strategy. Farming-focused resources and a dedicated farm liaison officer are in place to engage and support farmers and farm advisors

Sustainable Food Cornwall is closely connected to the newly forming [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Climate Commission](#), an independent strategic body created to provide scrutiny, advice and advocacy for the region's climate targets and progress. This will create additional opportunities to inform and influence Cornwall's strategic approach to a sustainable future.

## **PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR MORE SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION PRACTICES**

Local organisations that provide farmers and growers with support to farm for and with nature and to reduce their farm's carbon footprint include SFC partners [Duchy College Rural Business School](#), [Farm Carbon Toolkit](#), [Westcountry Rivers Trust](#) and the [Cornwall Wildlife Trust](#) farm advice team.

In addition to the research and support programmes they deliver individually, they are working together on [Agri Carbon Kernow](#), funded by the CloS Good Growth Fund. By collaborating, the

organisations can provide participating farmers and growers with holistic and comprehensive farm assessments and action plans across three critical areas:

- Carbon footprint reduction - for each farm, an expert evaluation of a farm's carbon footprint, a personalised decarbonisation plan and actionable carbon reduction strategies guide farmers towards achieving net zero status
- Water resilience - detailed assessments provide farmers with insights into their water usage practices and impact on watercourses. Farmers are supported to improve water resilience and to access funding to implement new strategies
- Environmental management - farmers are helped to evaluate their farm's natural environment, identify opportunities for nature recovery and biodiversity enhancement and to navigate initiatives such as the Sustainable Farming Incentive

[Farm Net Zero](#) (2021-26) aims to show how it's possible for all types of farming to contribute to achieving net zero. A network of 40+ demonstration and monitor farms – with very different conditions and systems – is being used to trial and share the impact of various management techniques. It is also promoting information sharing, peer-to-peer learning, and mentoring and community engagement. [This video](#) shows the achievements of five different Cornish farms on their journey towards net zero, while producing nutritious, quality food. Farm Net Zero contributed to SFC's food summit last year, as well as to the 2024 Oxford Real Farming Conference and the 2024 Cornwall Real Food and Farming Conference.

[Regenerative Farming UK](#) was started and is run by SFC founding partners and steering group members. The organisation supports a Facebook group for farmers “to help and inspire other farmers along their journey” and has over 2,400 members providing support and peer-to-peer learning about regenerative agriculture. It also carries out research and gives presentations around the links between soil, gut and planetary health and soil carbon capture.

The [Cornish Fish Producers Organisation](#) (CFPO) was started by fishers and is a voice for the sector. It supports its members to fish in ways that are economically and environmentally sustainable. Examples of impact from the last three years include:

- CFPO and its members worked with scientists and using sustainable fishing practices to achieve Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification for the Cornish gill-net hake fishery, with hake now heralded as one of the UK's most sustainable species. Stock numbers have doubled from a state of early decline
- Securing funding from the UK Seafood Innovation Fund, alongside Seafood Cornwall, Ocean Fish, and Cornish chef and author James Strawbridge, to explore ways of increasing consumption of sustainably caught Cornish fish and shellfish. The project focused on two under-loved species, Cornish sole and Cornish king crab (spider crab) and identified ways to bring more sustainable, value-added products to the UK market
- In 2022, the association established a new voluntary minimum landing size for Cornish crawfish (spiny lobster). It is now pushing for this local and voluntary minimum landing size to become a national regulation to improve crawfish reproduction and recruitment (the ability of stocks to produce offspring). To help fishers with the new measure, CFPO



and Fishy Filaments, an innovative organisation recycling fishing nets, have made gauges from recycled gillnets and issued them to fishers targeting crawfish.

[Forest for Cornwall](#) exists to encourage everyone to plant trees in Cornwall and supports many farmers and landholders with access to funding, consultancy expertise and site design. In 2023 it funded 25 hectares of agroforestry planting at Rosuick Organic Farm, a mixed arable, cattle and sheep farm on the Lizard peninsula. Alleys of fruit and nut crops, trees for shelter, new hedgerows and parkland trees for timber production were all established.

It has also funded and supported 41 community orchards to plant Cornish fruit varieties. Volunteer gleaners have planted FFC-funded shelter belts in gratitude to some farms that contribute to Gleaning Cornwall.

Cornwall National Landscape (AONB) consists of 75% farmed land in 12 areas. The [Farming in Protected Landscapes \(FiPL\)](#) programme provides DEFRA funding for farmers. It helps them to identify and understand their natural capital and ecosystem services, to increase biodiversity, to sequester and store carbon, and to improve natural flood management, alongside producing food. FiPL programme managers have been part of the SFC partnership since its inception and are key contributors to our farming working group. Examples of the ways FiPL has supported more sustainable farming and food production in the last three years include:

- At Leyonne Farm near Fowey, a grant enabled establishment of silvopasture, creation of scrub blocks and grazing systems, transformation of intensively managed pasture into a parkland-style landscape, trialling of mineral rich 'tree hay' forage, and creation of over-seeded grass leys
- The Pasture and Profit in Protected Landscapes Project promotes farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing, learning and community-building through events such as farm walks / visits and seminars

In 2020, Cornwall Council invested £1.58m in a first-of-its-kind [multi-farm pilot to trial the production, aggregation and use / sale of biomethane fuel made from cow manure slurry](#). Cornish company Bennaman is in the process of installing covered slurry pits and biomethane capture technology on six tenant dairy farms on the council farms estate. Captured methane is processed into compressed fugitive methane gas (CFM) or liquefied fugitive methane fuel (LFM) that can be used to power vehicles, for heating and cooling, or for electricity. For the pilot, LFM will be used to power Cornwall Council's road maintenance fleet. The slurry digestate left after methane extraction can be used as a soil conditioner. The pilot's aim is to prove success and roll out the technology to small-scale farms across the county, creating opportunities for farmers to drastically reduce on-farm emissions while diversifying their income streams. In 2023 Bennaman unveiled the first prototype LFM-powered tractor.

[Cornwall Orchard Network](#) supports independent Cornish orchard owners and groups in Cornwall with networking, mentoring and best practice, ensuring Cornwall's orchards are protected, celebrated and managed sustainably.

[Some Interesting Apples](#) was launched in 2019 and records and preserves wild apple trees that have grown from discarded apple cores. Having grown and thrived in difficult growing conditions, these trees present an opportunity to propagate hardy new cultivars that may be more resilient and better adapted to future climates than many heritage varieties.

To date, the project has focussed on central and west Cornwall and has recorded over 330 novel varieties. In partnership with the National Trust and with funding from Forest for Cornwall, the Wilding Mother Orchard is being created to provide a home for 80 trees, selected for desirable features. The University of Exeter is researching the genetic characteristics of the apples.

## PROMOTING AND SHOWCASING SUSTAINABLE FARMING AND FISHING

The [Cornwall Good Seafood Guide](#) helps consumers and businesses make environmentally informed decisions when purchasing Cornish seafood. In addition to detailed and accurate information about each species, and recommendations around which to choose (and avoid), a [where to buy directory and map](#) guides buyers to fishers selling direct, as well as independent retailers and hospitality outlets selling sustainable Cornish seafood.

The [Cornwall Real Food & Farming Conference](#) is farmer-led and takes place in February. In 2024, sessions included: building soil health and wealth; bringing landscape recovery to life; growing and transferring a successful business; food for thought; and The Toolbox of Multispecies Swards (TOMS) project. On the second day, a farm walk and on-farm Q&A took an in-depth look at herbal leys. Bursaries are provided to encourage new entrants and young farmers to participate, resulting in high attendance and excellent engagement from this cohort in 2024. Recordings of the conference are available [here](#).

In terms of the promotion and celebration of more sustainable farming practices, Cornwall has many progressive and pioneering farms (in addition to those in the Farm Net Zero video above) which are leading the way in showcasing best practice. For example:

- [Higher Keigwin Organic Farm](#) in west Cornwall describes itself as a beef and wildlife farm and was featured in Cornwall Climate Care's film *Food for Thought*. The farm offers regular visits and farm walks aimed primarily at other farmers (through Pasture for Life and FiPL) to explore resilient farming practices
- [Woodland Valley Farm](#) in mid-Cornwall is a 170-acre working organic farm and events / activities venue and home of the Cornwall Beaver Project. The farm is one of many in Cornwall which play a pivotal role in educating the public – particularly schoolchildren – about nature-friendly farming and sustainable food production. In addition to activity days and residentials for schools, businesses and the public, the farm runs 25 free-of-charge day visits for schools every year. The farm also runs open days and farm walks for farmers to learn more about regenerative practices
- Leyonne is a regenerative dairy and beef farm near Fowey in east Cornwall which has won numerous sustainability awards including the 2023 Otter Award from FWAG South West. It has become a producer of carbon negative milk, sold through Trewithen Dairy. The

team has been trained by CEVAS, LEAF Farmer Time and NFU Farmers for Schools to host and visit schools and community groups to promote regenerative farming

[The Duke of Cornwall's Award for Farm Business Sustainability in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly](#)

recognises farm businesses that deliver a sustainable approach to farming, forestry and / or food production. The award “reflects the key role of farming and food production in the sustainable stewardship of our land” and rewards “a creative and balanced approach to farming, whilst also maintaining or enhancing nature and moving towards net zero.” It is judged on performance on soil health; reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing sequestration; water and wetland management, natural habitat management and creation; improving opportunities to benefit the public’s / community’s mental and physical health through access; collaboration on landscape-scale sustainable farming and commercial viability / sustainability. This focus is new for 2024.

Against this backdrop of regenerative farming success stories, large numbers of Cornish farmers and producers are facing unprecedented challenges and many report feeling unsupported and demonised, with their livelihoods precarious. In these circumstances, a perception that nature recovery and “net zero madness” are pitted against food production and fuelled by social media, regrettably risks creating increasing division and polarisation.

SFC feels that in parallel to championing the benefits of nature-friendly and regenerative farming and working most closely with organisations that are showcasing best practice, it is important to engage directly with producers whose perception of the sustainable food and farming agenda is less positive. As a result:

- SFC steering group members have engaged with Farmers Movement Cornwall at grassroots level to listen and to identify areas where there is potential to collaborate positively. For example, a spreadsheet of producers selling direct to consumers is being created as the first step to promote them
- Through these contacts we have also started to identify farmers who would be keen to sell into local public procurement. This is also being fed into our action plan
- We are working to find positive ways of addressing the perception that too much land is being taken out of food production for renewable energy provision. Cornwall’s location means that it has more than average field-scale solar installations and there is increasing competition for land. We lobbied a local MP and member of the Select Committee for Rural Affairs to request that, wherever possible, field scale renewable installations are designed to ensure land used for energy production is combined with farming – for example by raising panel height to enable sheep grazing or by vertical installation. Our partnership also wants to capitalise on Cornwall’s good vegetable-growing conditions

In our engagement and communications around farming and with farmers we are adopting a compassionate approach which celebrates small steps towards greater sustainability, rather than just recognising ‘gold star’ producers.

## Action Area B: Reduce, redirect, and recycle food, packaging, and related waste

### FOOD WASTE STRATEGY

Cornwall Council published a [Resources and waste strategy](#) in 2018. This is based on the waste hierarchy and incorporates a Materials (Resources and Waste) Charter, developed in conjunction with the Local Nature Partnership and premised on circular economy principles.

SFC feels the strategy needs to be updated and more ambitious and detailed in its approach to food waste. In 2023 SFC researched and produced our own detailed draft report setting out the extent of food waste at all stages of production and consumption in Cornwall, alongside recommendations for ways to reduce it. We are currently liaising with Cornwall Council's environmental and waste policy team and with their encouragement pursuing these recommendations as far as possible through our action plan.

### AVOIDANCE OF WASTE – CONSUMABLE / USEABLE FOOD

[Gleaning Cornwall](#) was initiated by an SFC steering group member in 2021. In March 2024 alone they gleaned five tonnes of potatoes, 327 crates of cauliflower, 109 crates of cabbages, 211 crates of spring greens and 60 sacks of leeks that would otherwise have gone to waste on Cornish farms. In total, the network has rescued over 250 tonnes of veg and some fruit, equating to a saving of 120 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. It has distributed over £400,000-worth of fresh, nutritious gleaned food to local food charities (see Issue 3A) and claims to be the largest such group in Europe. Gleaning Cornwall carries out support and capacity-building work with other UK gleaning groups and works with more than 20 farms of all sizes. The largest is Riviera Produce, which farms more than 8,000 acres in Cornwall and produces the lion's share of the UK's cauliflowers.

FareShare's [Surplus with Purpose](#) scheme saved just over 100 tonnes of produce from Cornish farms in 2022 by paying farmers to harvest or process food that would otherwise have gone to waste. This was used to feed people in need outside Cornwall. FareShare's main farming partner in Cornwall is Southern England Farms (alongside Riviera Produce, one of the two largest growing groups in Cornwall).

Gleaning Cornwall is collaborating with Fentenfenna Farm on a new project to turn surplus fresh food into preserves, ferments, stocks, powders and juices to prolong shelf life. It is also reusing hessian sacks from a Cornish coffee importer to redistribute slightly out-of-date coffee to community organisations to offer to their volunteers, and to deliver chaff (coffee husks high in nitrogen) to local growers to integrate with compost.

In 2023 Gleaning Cornwall was able to link some Cornish pig farmers with Riviera Produce to broker a supply of vegetable waste (leaves, stalks and parts not suitable for human consumption) for animal feed. While this does not fatten animals (meaning that one larger pig farmer opted not to take part), it does supply variety and nutrition. The collaboration is in its infancy.

[Wasted Apple](#) was formed in response to large quantities of Cornish apples being unused / wasted each year. The organisation works with orchard owners to harvest and collect donated apples from Cornish orchards and turn them into cider or juice. Local volunteers get involved in all stages of the project and they (and orchard owners) receive a share of the product. Wasted Apple has moved its base to Fentenfenna Farm and is upscaling its operation. Its new production unit can produce up to 50,000 litres per year, and has full manual bottling and canning capability, enabling it to accept more apples. It also plans to incorporate produce grown at Fentenfenna Farm and expand the range.

[Western Waste](#) is a specialist fish and shellfish waste recycling company based on a farm business in west Cornwall. The bones they collect from Cornish fish processing facilities are currently crushed and put onto their own land, but they are investing in a better crusher to create finer material that can be sold locally as an alternative to lime.

Just under 50 Cornish food processors and manufacturers were contacted during the research for SFC's 2023 food waste report. The contacts made during the research led to new collaborations between Furniss Biscuits, Rodda's Creamery, and Gleaning Cornwall, which now collects broken / short sell-by-date biscuits and butter and cream for redistribution through its community food partners.

## **AVOIDANCE OF WASTE - FOOD PACKAGING**

Some town councils, including Camelford, Bude, St Ives and St Austell, have installed water refill stations in town centres. In 2021, Cornwall Council awarded £67,000 to charity [Our Only World](#) to manufacture and install water bottle refill stations in locations including beaches, the coast path, car parks and outside public toilets. The 17 stations, manufactured from recycled marine plastic, were installed in 2022 and 2023 and their locations are shown on [this map](#).

ReFILL Cornwall, part of the [Refill](#) network, has distributed thousands of refillable water bottles, provided by South West Water, to Cornish charities and community groups. It provides ReFILL stickers to businesses – locatable via an app - that sign up to provide a refill service. Hundreds of businesses in Cornwall participate.

Some communities have started plastic free campaigns. Plastic Free Padstow has worked with the hospitality industry, encouraging business to participate in refill schemes and to sell water in cans or cartons rather than bottles, to avoid disposable cups, and to wrap take-away sandwiches in paper.

Until recently, Cornwall's hospitals used disposable food trays for patient meals. In the past two years, all hospitals in both Trusts have implemented food tray recycling systems and are working to push treatment of food trays further up the waste hierarchy. Cornwall's main hospital at Treリス has introduced bring-your-own-cup schemes with discounts on drinks in cafes and canteens. 10,350 disposable cups have been avoided / saved since July 2022. A new project initiated by a dietician in critical care is enabling thousands of previously incinerated enteral feed

bottles (for IV feeding), and supplement feed bottles, to be collected separately and recycled into domestic milk bottles. This project is now live on five wards, with some 11-12 tonnes of plastic (an estimated 32 tonnes of carbon) projected to be saved annually. The NHS sustainable food group is working to roll out the scheme across Treliske and in Cornwall's other hospitals, as well as in community settings / patients' homes.

## COMPOSTING AND REPURPOSING OF WASTE FOOD

Cornwall Council started rolling out weekly domestic food waste collections (for anaerobic digestion in Devon) in 2023. The scheme is now live in two of the five rollout areas with the third going live in July 2024 and the process set for completion in 2025. The roll-out is being supported by media campaigns, road shows and community drop-in sessions. Once fully operational, it is anticipated that 20,000 tonnes of food waste will be diverted from incineration annually. The council previously subsidised home composting bins.

Commercial food waste collections are offered in Cornwall by:

- Olleco: currently collecting around 12 metric tonnes from Cornwall every week for AD in Devon
- Keenan Recycling, who collected 236 tonnes from Cornwall in 2022, for AD in Plymouth
- ReFood - collecting smaller quantities
- Holiday Home Waste Collection - holiday lets and self-catering accommodation are not legally entitled to use the council's household collection service

Community composting has less take-up in Cornwall than elsewhere in the UK, perhaps because it is largely rural. Some community organisations have set up community composting schemes:

- St Ives Community Orchard has established a neighbourhood waste collection point for composting at its site, and a collection scheme where volunteers on e-bikes collect compostable waste from participating restaurants and cafes. One of these is the Yallah Coffee kiosk, which previously disposed of food waste alongside general waste
- Cafe Abundance CIC near Torpoint set up community composting facilities in 2021, using a bank of Ridan composters. Local businesses previously putting waste food into general waste can subscribe for collection and the local community are able to participate and buy the compost
- In 2021, LovePortreath Climate Action Network volunteers set up a community composting area at the end of a village street. The group uses its Facebook page for composting campaigns, posting home composting tips and support

Westcountry Rivers Trust (WRT) and Farm Net Zero's 'Soil Superheroes' project links soil health with climate change. In 2022, public workshops held for gardeners and allotmenters at Camel CSA featured compost making and its application on no-dig veg beds, and how to apply compost extracts, using the CSA's solar-powered extractor. Loveland, Grown at Newquay Orchard, Nourish Kernow, and Community Roots are among other community growing spaces that have hosted workshops for the project.

**C: Other information: Other activities and context** (Please see Section 2 above for guidance)  
(Mandatory word limit: 250).

Sir Robert Geffery's primary school in Landrake has an on-site farm and allotment. The children have weekly enrichment lessons where they help to clean out and care for animals, plant seeds and tend the allotment. They have been awarded Bronze Demonstrator School status by LEAF Education.