

# SFP Bronze and Silver Awards Application Form 2023

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.**



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

Please complete the following (\*= compulsory):

Name of your partnership*:
Herefordshire Food Alliance
Name and contact details of person/people leading on this application*:
Rebecca Tully - <a href="mailto:hdfsfoodalliance@gmail.com">hdfsfoodalliance@gmail.com</a>
Kristan Pritchard - <a href="mailto:kristan.pritchard@herefordshire.gov.uk">kristan.pritchard@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Geographic region which this award will represent*:
Herefordshire
Award you are applying for*:
Bronze

**Please provide us with background information about your place\*:** 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.*

Herefordshire is a unitary authority which covers 218 hectares and is largely rural, 95% of residents live in areas classified as such. It is well-known for its beautiful countryside, rolling hills, the Black Mountains as well as the River Wye which runs through Hereford city. We have the third lowest population density of any English county ([understanding Herefordshire, 2023](#)). One of the largest business sectors is food and drink, with well-known producers being based here: Tyrrells, Avara, Heineken. Herefordshire has:

- small pockets of areas of high deprivation, and rurality contributes to this.
- higher than average older age population, over a quarter of the population 65+
- lower than average children.
- relatively low wages
- relatively high house prices
- a significant fuel poverty problem - 60% of older population living in rural areas where they are at increased risk of fuel poverty due to older style housing, limited transport and restricted energy options.
- Relatively high life expectancy, though there are clear health inequalities between the most deprived and more affluent areas of the county. Healthy weight similar to nationally, is a concern locally, with obesity amongst children the latest NCMP figures indicate that 1 in 5 children in Reception year are overweight or obese, by year 6 this has risen to 1 in 3. Two thirds of adults are obese.

In the latest community wellbeing survey (2023) 77% of residents said they were eating healthy and nutritious food the same amount as before the pandemic. When asked about households' income 38% reported difficulty paying usual expense including food. Higher than the national average adults eat the recommended five portions of fruit and veg a day.

Digital exclusion: some areas have both limited mobile signal and limited internet access.

Being a rural area brings challenges as well as opportunities, often rural housing has much more space for growing your own and access to green space. But can bring geographical barriers in accessing services. Community cohesion can be stronger, people checking on their neighbours etc. Our levels of physical activity for adults is higher than the national average.

Herefordshire has historically had much interest in food and food partnerships. A line can be traced from work in the 1990's (Together for Hereford's environment) through to a food strategy in [2010](#), with the alliances creating today's work building on [that](#).

Being a small local authority provides networking and collaborative opportunity - conversations lead to many links and opportunities for cross-sector working.

**How have you considered equity, diversity and inclusion in the structure and work of your partnership\*?** Advisory word limit: 300 words

Our existing Alliance was created from the Herefordshire Food Poverty Alliance and the Herefordshire Food and Tourism Partnership (HFATP). The amalgamation naturally happened as the food poverty alliance's focus broadened and the HFATP focused more on tourism.

In 2020 a SFP coordinator role was created. The role focuses on collaboration, networking and coordinating food activity.

The development of the group and vision was created in collaboration with a wide range of partners, the shared vision includes “*where those on low incomes and in rural areas have access to affordable, healthy food*”; “*where food production, processing and distribution systems... consider the impacts of climate change*”

Public Health as a partner and funder have enabled the focus also to be broad and include many Herefordshire interests, both rural and urban.

In applying for Food Movement funding November 2022 we stated our intention to build links between Herefordshire residents, food campaigns and migrant seasonal workers but were unsuccessful with the funding. This remains an intention.

*“We will work with organisations recruiting and supporting seasonal workers in an ethical way, such as [Concordia](#), consulting them as to how we can create links with the people doing the majority of the large scale harvesting in our county - migrant workers from a range of countries including Nepal ... links to have a small lasting effect, for instance getting a representative of seasonal labour on the Alliance steering team.”*

## SECTION 2: Local food activity and impact

Please read SFP Awards: Guidance for applicants: [SFP Awards - Guidance for applicants.docx](#) 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.

**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**

In 2011 the [Herefordshire Food strategy](#) was published, From Field to Table. This was a collaborative strategy developed in Herefordshire.

A Food Poverty Alliance was subsequently established by Brightspace Foundation in January 2019, which led on the food poverty risk mapping for the county. Following this, the Food Poverty Alliance and the HFATP amalgamated, to incorporate a broader sustainable food agenda. This

followed a number of stakeholder engagement events and discussions at local groups.

**We established The current Herefordshire Food Alliance (HFA) in 2021:** a [network of individuals and organisations](#) from across the county involved in local, community and sustainable food action. Terms of reference [have been agreed](#).

**The organisations/networks represented within the Food Alliance network** include - Food Banks, Hereford Diocese, Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy, Herefordshire Green Network, Hereford Rural hub, Voluntary sector, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, Data Orchard, Herefordshire Council (HC) teams including waste, economic development, public health & Talk Community, Herefordshire NFU, Farmers, food producers/growers & Community groups.

In June 2021 Herefordshire Food Alliance achieved the set criteria and were accepted as Sustainable Food Places members.

Members of the alliance have agreed that we are all working towards the following vision:  
***Herefordshire has a thriving, healthy and environmentally benign local food economy, where those on low incomes and in rural areas have access to affordable, healthy food; where food production, processing and distribution systems contribute to landscape and wildlife diversity, minimise waste and consider the impacts of climate change; and where local communities are actively engaged in healthy living and have an increased understanding of the links between food and personal and planetary well-being.***

The Food Alliance has partnership working at its core. HFA has already proven to be an important networking and information sharing forum and has led the development of the Food Vision for Herefordshire. The HFA has developed in partnership with key external stakeholders who are embedded in relevant strategic networks in the county, providing chair or expert support, including:

- Farm Herefordshire: an alliance of 12 organisations working with the land-based sector delivering training and advice. This and the Herefordshire Rural Hub, primarily an information hub, are a conduit to the farming community.
- Herefordshire Green Network: a network of 80+ organisations and more than 300 individuals interested in “green” issues. This is a conduit to community groups.
- [Herefordshire Business Improvement District](#) connecting food business to tourism.
- HC Economic Development Team incorporating the previous Tourism Partnership. Represented on the Alliance Steering Team
- Herefordshire’s zero carbon plan and nature rich plan, specifically the food section. This is a conduit to influence strategic policies. Members are also linked into the work of Talk Community
- Food poverty support through the independent Food Banks, Hfcs Council, and existing growing projects.

In [December 2021 the Health and wellbeing board](#) (H&WBB) unanimously agreed

*a) Health and Wellbeing Board supports the work on Sustainable Food Places in Herefordshire, including the local vision, aims and actions set out in the plan*

*b) Health and Wellbeing board member organisations actively promote and engage in activity across the sustainable food places framework; Including the food charter.*

Director of Public Health for Herefordshire is the Senior Responsible Officer for work relating to Sustainable Food Places.

[Herefordshire’s Zero Carbon Nature Rich Action Plan](#) created a Climate and Nature Board Partnership which has both FOOD and LAND USE subgroup. This links the food /farming tasks identified by the Citizens Assembly (held in January 2022), to the wider Sustainable Food Places

agenda. In June 2023 The Food Alliance Coordinator was co-opted as a member of the Food Sub Group.

The steering team of the alliance is continually growing. We carried out a skills/experience audit in November 2022. Details of how to be involved in the steering team are now on our website, along with an intentionally broad criteria which we will monitor. *“We have currently agreed a broad, flexible criteria which aims to encourage as many different aspects of 'good' food as possible. We have agreed as a steering team to keep checking in on this so that it helps us keep working with purpose towards our vision. The Alliance has clear Terms of Reference and they can be found [here](#). Where there are more specific interest areas, our subgroups will take these on, providing more focus in order to action done.*

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

We have a rolling set of Alliance actions that reflect the [Herefordshire Food Alliance vision](#), reviewed at 6-weekly Steering Team meetings.

Food is a key area identified and included within [Herefordshire's Zero Carbon Nature Rich Action Plan](#). A Food specific Action Plan was developed as part of this action plan in 2021, with a Sub Group to action tasks relating to it.

In June 2023 the action plans of both the Alliance and the Food Sub Group [were streamlined](#). (See also Area 1A)

Sustainable Food Places is an action embedded within [Herefordshire's County Plan 2020-2024](#) under area CO4: *Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people*. “Develop and agree a Food Charter / Submit application for the Sustainable Food Places Bronze Award”

The Director of Public Health for Herefordshire focused his [annual report](#) and recommendations on food sustainability in 2022/23.

In July 2023 the Public Health lead and the Alliance Co-ordinator met to draft actions for 23/24 incorporating all above action plans and these were shared and agreed in the [following Steering Team meeting, 6th July 2023](#).

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

Herefordshire Health & wellbeing board endorsed the Sustainable Food Places approach in [December 2021](#)

The Alliance is closely linked with other local networks including the Herefordshire Green Network, The Great Collaboration plus many more. Networks strive to carry the same messages on their websites and social media and have links across food activity.

The strategic landscape of Herefordshire is a complex web of overlapping boards, networks, alliances in the areas of climate, land, farming and food production. The Food Alliance Chair Nick Read ( an Agricultural Chaplain) has worked alongside the Climate and Nature Board Chair James Marsden (also a farmer and cider producer) to map all these networks and clarify their purpose. It's an ongoing piece of work. Some are based along the catchments of rivers, some cross borders into Wales.

The Alliance is aware of this and has been working to use food as a space where these many and sometimes conflicting interests can find common ground.

In [June 2023](#) we won '[Local Authority Project of the year award](#)' for our Sustainable Food places work.

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

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

#### Numbers valid 31st July 2023

The Hereford Food Alliance inspires and engages the public about good food in a variety of ways -

- The HFA created and agreed [The Herefordshire Food Charter](#). *“Celebrating the actions that are happening already and pledge to make more local sustainable food possible - together.”* This is our public engagement tool, to create a conversation in the county about what we can do towards a more sustainable food system and where people can go for information. This included reaching agreement together as the key members of the alliance steering team on wording in order to build as broad a reach as possible.
- The charter now has 171 sign-ups
- Created the [Food Alliance Website](#) July 2022
- Developed a blog which is regularly updated and maintained with activity
- Currently around 150 new users a month, 1.5k in the year since established.
- Created a [mailing list](#) to continue connection with those that sign up to the charter and wish to keep in touch. 115 signed up to mailing list
- Dedicated [Food Alliance Instagram](#) account from February 2023. Currently 123 followers.
- Used Blog, Instagram and mailing list to publicise 40+ local food events and 15 local food jobs
- We utilise many partner networks e.g Talk Community, Growing Local, The Living Room

Director of Public Health report 2023 [“Good Food - Public Health Issue”](#) was focused on local, healthy sustainable food. It featured many alliance members showcasing what’s already happening and inspiring other alliance members to be able to build more public awareness.

We aim to promote activity to a wide range of individuals and organisations through as many different channels as possible.

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

Our regular alliance meetings provide the opportunity to share ideas, resources and activity.

**The Alliance has hosted the following events** to connect producers and community food initiatives with each other, both locally and further afield.

[Food Surplus Event](#) connecting community food projects, farmers and food educators to identify the areas we could both save waste and get people fed.

[Direct and Online Sales](#) event sharing wider experience from the SFP network

**Covid recovery grants in 2021/22** for community activity including food support included:

- Living Room, establishing community larder network.
- Kids Kitchen, local food / food access. Kids Kitchen representation now on Steering Team of Food Alliance.



The recent commencement of Stronger Towns funded activity and the development of a [local community garden](#) in south Hereford will support community food growing in one of our most deprived areas. This team is represented in the Alliance Steering Team.

Part of the Alliance Co-ordinator's work is **connecting similar work and finding overlaps** - these connections open new doors. Herefordshire Wildlife Trust's community organiser is now on the Alliance Steering Team, she has been championing 'grow your own' as part of a county wide mission to get people back to nature, discovering that this was a big pull for people. This now includes more connections with Leominster in Bloom and Ross Garden Share. There is a regular slot in the 6-weekly Alliance Steering Meeting for updates - many connections come out of this and it's a clear opportunity for us to 'keep tabs' on things.

The public health team are working with planning colleagues throughout the development of the various strategic policies within the new Local Area Plan. This includes a community facilities and open space policy. In addition to this, the local development of a Health Impact Assessment tool for planning applications is underway that will consider how we create and utilise spaces to grow food as well as access healthy food.

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

Alliance coordinator has researched the timeline of the Local Plan and other relevant plans, their consultation periods and their scope. This has been shared [in easily-understandable form](#) with the Alliance steering team, we are developing a Local Plan subgroup in order to be able to respond when drafts appear.

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

#### Action area A: Tackle food poverty

In 2019 grant funding was awarded to the Brightspace foundation for a food poverty mapping project, the outcome of the project was a [map](#) identifying areas of the county at high risk of food poverty.

There are a number of organisations working to tackle food poverty across the county, this includes:

- [Growing Local](#) who deliver community meals in Ross, Leominster, Hereford (eg: Low Cost 'Big Eats' in South Wye area of Hereford weekly midweek and monthly weekends)
- Food Banks and Larders are established in the market towns - Bromyard, Ross (Food Bank & Community Gardens), Leominster (Food Bank, Regular meals) and Ledbury, Hereford (Food Bank, The Living Room, Food Share) and networked with the Food Alliance, the local authority and each other. Hereford city food bank also provide outreach into the rural communities.
- Ross Community Gardens: (Haygrove) established in 2013, where during the summer months school educational visits take place. The gardens have recently expanded to include a zero waste stall, a Talk Community hub, a growing club and cooking club. In 2022:

65 volunteers support the gardens 12,542 visits to the zero waste stall

42,308 tonnes of food were handed out at the zero waste stall

756 children visited the gardens

4,045 volunteer hours

60 adults supported throughout the year through therapeutic gardening sessions

**Bulk Surplus WhatsApp group established through Alliance conversations-** Estimated 10,000 kilos of surplus food (predominantly chicken) redistributed between Feb'23 and July '23 (set up by Alliance) between food banks and larders, set up for huge, short term surplus that no one organisation can manage.

**Individual outreach:**

- Growing Local's weekly Family Recipe Box Scheme to referral families in need in 2023;
- The Kindle Centre fortnightly 'Winter Meals Service' to elderly and isolated centre users throughout winter of 2020/21.
- Kids Kitchen distributed recipe bags in Ledbury and Leominster in Winter 2023.

**The Here for Herefordshire Holidays programme** provides free activities and a meal to children and young people that are eligible for free school meals. Children and young people can access 16 hours of activities throughout the Easter and Christmas holidays and 64 hours of activities throughout the summer holidays. More than 40 activity providers delivered sessions across the county in 2022, with over 1000 children attending.

**Cooking at Home** videos produced and published on the [Council Website](#).

Public health lead on the local delivery and promotion of the Healthy start scheme, regular comms shared, face to face promotion in Asda (July 2023) and health professional training.

**HC Healthy Lifestyle Trainer Service** provide healthy eating advice to adults supporting behaviour change and events increasing fruit and veg intake and awareness of healthy diet.

Healthy Mums programme had a portion dedicated to food - including meal planning, prep, shopping tips and recipe ideas and promotion of healthy start vouchers.

**Action Area B: Promote healthy eating**

**HC Healthy Lifestyle Trainer Service** provides motivational support to groups and individual adults, helping them to make healthier choices and having a positive effect on their health and wellbeing. The service targets seldom-heard and disadvantaged groups. During 2022, over 1200 clients were supported by the service. The Council is also piloting family health coaches who provide holistic support for families that have not engaged with other services and help them make healthier changes.

Covid recovery funds supported projects promoting healthy and sustainable eating: e.g. Kids Kitchen Collective family cooking sessions and recipe club. In the past year Kids Kitchen Herefordshire Hub have -

- Distributed 70 recipe activity bags in partnership with food banks, children's centres and community centres.
- Reached over 400 families through 'stay and play' style sessions and recipe bags

HC was one of 18 local authorities participating in the national [School Food Standards pilot project](#) led by the Food Standards Agency and the Department of Education. Environmental health officers carried out additional observations on the food offer as part of their routine food hygiene



inspections and identified any red flags against the School Food Standards. Nearly 50 schools (primary and secondary) participated locally and follow-up support was offered where required.

The 'Running out of time' baton relay came through Hereford and food surplus was used by our health trainers to provide [community meals](#) in June 2023

Health trainers have been delivering food bank training – healthy food in Bromyard during July 2023 and will roll this out county-wide;

Talk Community online cooking videos, [online healthy eating pages](#) have had 328 individual visits (June 2022-May 2023) and the related Weekly Meal Plan pages 173 individual visits.

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

More case studies and partner activity around food access and healthy food are in the Public Health report here.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/25248/2022-a-recipe-for-healthy-and-sustainable-food>

Growing Local activity - <https://growinglocal.org.uk/>

The Living room - <https://www.thelivingroomhereford.co.uk/>

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

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

The [Director of Public Health](#) report highlighted the importance of food for Herefordshire's economy

Partners within the alliance have been involved in the [Marches food hub feasibility study, linking with Monmouth, Powys and T&W](#). Gloucestershire colleagues were involved in the delivery of the feasibility study.

- Food champions in Marches local authorities aim to align procurement with strategic goals for: reducing carbon; valuing local economies; fostering more sustainable production; a healthy, high quality public plate; and reducing food waste.
- Changing from existing frameworks and individual school contracts to a regional Dynamic Food Procurement System (DFPS) was proposed as a way forward. This scoping project investigated the potential for a Marches DFPS. (See Also Area 5B)
- The results have enabled Herefordshire to see what is required in order to achieve this and small steps towards the much bigger longer goal include:
- Linking with our counterpart in Gloucestershire, working together on our Bronze Award applications and comparing our systems and ways of working
- Actively working to get improved procurement in the County Hospital on the Action Plan of the Climate and Nature Board
- Sharing what we've learned in [food partnership networks](#)

Food is included in the [HC 'Big Economic Plan'](#) agreed January 2023, vision to 2050 “*The county has driven transformational change as a national leader in modern, low carbon agriculture and food production*” “*Herefordshire is a leading place in innovative approaches to land management and use to improve biodiversity, soil quality, energy use and efficiency, including in agriculture and food production*”.

Food is a key feature in our [zero carbon plan](#), a number of local producers are highlighted as good practice examples.

Across the county Farmers Markets and local food are promoted through our Eat, Sleep, Live Herefordshire [website](#) and the [Herefordshire Business Improvement District](#). There are seven farmers markets and two country markets.

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

The [Hereford food charter website](#) blog promotes local activity and businesses to consumers.

Post covid a County wide voucher/card went to every household, this provided £12 to spend in local businesses.

[Big Soup Ledbury](#) (16 Venues) and [The Big Breakfast](#): Ledbury Food Group promoted local businesses and local produce through publicised days.

Hereford Indie Food Festival showcased 15+local food businesses in 2022. In 2023 [showcased local food AND the work of the Alliance](#), allowing the Alliance to further showcase farmers and producers not represented in the stalls.

The Food Alliance, weekly newsletter and Instagram account promotes local food businesses and events. (See also 2A)

Autumn Feast Events in 2023: Creating [three \(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner\) feast events](#) across a month in the Autumn with a criteria for producer involvement that showcases river-friendly food and boosts awareness and sales. The emerging plan is [here](#). The aim beyond the feasts is a map of producers - which will also be replicated for [community gardens, and food larders / banks](#). We currently have this in [Talk Community](#) but not a map.

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

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

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

The transformation of catering and procurement has been identified as a key area for our local work, in the past small scale projects have been delivered like providing meat direct from local farmers to schools but this was not replicated on a larger scale. We have taken the time to review

the food system countywide and also consider our opportunities working across a wider area. In addition we are making small steps towards our goals, as a local authority Herefordshire council does not procure school food or any food contracts except its headquarters.

Some of our activity includes -

- As a working group the food group of the climate and nature board held focused procurement meetings with contract monitoring, facilities and catering managers of three Herefordshire Hospitals plus the outsourced catering company Sodexo. We have details now of the standards the caterer has set themselves, and the legal boundaries of times of contracts etc. These have been shared with the Food Alliance for the consideration of our next steps.
- Public Health worked with procurement and facilities departments within Herefordshire Council to procure healthier, local food within Council headquarters. Catering specification details included "To support the county-wide approach to a Sustainable Food Place" and includes minimising food waste, using wonky veg, cheap cuts, meat free and partner collaboration.
- Following the [School Food pilot project](#), training has been planned for school governors on healthy food policy, increasing meal uptake and the viability of food offer. Presentations have been provided to headteachers via a local forum and feedback gathered to support our proposed next steps.
- The above feedback from schools has been considered within the development of the [Autumn Feast Events 2023](#), and the creation of a [dedicated event free for schools](#) to enable partnership building with local catering providers.

**The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme** (4 sessions July 2022 - June 2023. 25 – 30 people/providers trained)

delivered by Herefordshire Council provided access to activities and healthy meals for children in receipt of benefits related free school meals. The aim was to equip HAF providers with knowledge to:

- Provide a healthily hot lunch based on the school food standards (where not possible, healthy cold food options)
- Offer healthy snacks and drink options throughout the day
- Improve knowledge of healthy eating by engaging children and their families in fun healthy eating activities
- Sign post families to other health related local services.
- Example feedback: *"There were many HAF children that had also attended both the morning and afternoon sessions. One child asked me what the white board was (chopping board) and had said he hadn't seen one before, many children also didn't know how to use a grater to grate the carrot. Some children had also never seen herbs before and were unaware of what they were, so we had a little sniff/taste test!"*

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

As mentioned above it is some years since the local authority commissioned school meals or any food contracts, therefore as an alliance we are working across other areas where we think we can have an impact.

**Marches Partners Working Group and Feasibility Study:** An opportunity for us as an alliance to work with our Marches partners in Monmouth, Shropshire, Powys and Telford & Wrekin.

- We met and had some discussions about the work going on across our areas and then a grant became available for us to procure a feasibility study.
- A working group was developed through Food Alliance meetings. We then worked with our Marches colleagues to develop a bid to Dixon Foundation for a study to consider a cross border Marches region system of dynamic procurement. The bid was successful and the first phase (a scoping and feasibility study) [recently completed](#).
- Herefordshire Council Public Health and Herefordshire Food Alliance shared over ten years' worth of [previous findings and activity towards this](#).
- Following this we developed our next steps and a [joint proposition template](#)

**The autumn feasts will aim to improve connections and collaboration** across local food supply chains. Autumn Feast Events Key Partners include: Dorian Kirk Rule of Tum (3 restaurants + Inie Food Fest) Wye AONB (Farmers throughout River Wye Catchment) Pasture for Life (pasture-fed meat and dairy) Herefordshire Council Economy and Environment, schools, Community Pub The Open Arms, Holme Lacy Agricultural College, Herefordshire Business Improvement District.

**The WhatsApp bulk food surplus group** was set up following both an Alliance food surplus networking event and our broad, communicative Steering meetings. This led to 10,000 kilos of chicken being used-not wasted. (See Issue 3A)

**Membership of both the Alliance and the Steering Team has increased** in number and in theme Steering Team is now 30 members covering all 6 SFP areas increasing networking and collaborative opportunities.

Herefordshire farmers and food producers will have a large presence at the September 2023 [Marches Food and Farming Conference](#), held by Shropshire Good Food and an opportunity to build more links across local supply chains. See 6A

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

We see this Alliance currently as one that is not only **doing** and **connecting** but **holding** - we know about the overlapping aims and boards within Herefordshire all trying to get things right, and we're waiting for the right times to connect these. We are not losing information, despite the time not necessarily being optimum to do something with it. For example a hospital catering contract is long running and does not have procurement aims that reflect the alliance, there is also not currently capacity to shift those caterers' aims. Our knowledge of this means that we are more flexible in the work in our other areas - eg procurement people will be invited free of charge to the Autumn feasts we are planning.

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

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

On March 8th 2019 Herefordshire council declared a climate emergency. The Herefordshire zero carbon nature rich website provides local information and action for change. Alliance partners work closely within both the food and land use sectors to align and collaborate on relevant activity. The food alliance led on the development of the food section and the creation of the food action plan. (See also 1A)

In addition a number of events promoting sustainable food production have been organised.

- A [Network event](#) delivered bringing farmers and producers in touch with community food surplus projects led to increased awareness of where surplus exists. 1) One single point established for farmers to contact to redirect surplus 2) Regional Fareshare hub connected with 10 new producers, 10 producers made aware of financial support available from Fareshare 3) Information shared on Food Alliance blog with 254 views
- Sustainable farming good practice events held: Soil Farmer of the Year walk sharing regenerative practice, 'Regen in Reality' through Catchment Sensitive Farming, and set of Future Farming Resilience events through Herefordshire Rural Hub, Sustainable Farm Tour (after 3 Acres and a Cow gig) Event record [here](#)
- Farmers farming sustainably linked up and engaging with the Food Alliance. Shared 2 sustainable food enterprise opportunities, aiming to match skills to space and land.
- [Infrastructure Networking event held](#). Small scale infrastructure was identified as a key area of action.

Alliance made the links between 8+ farmers, producers, stakeholders to [create two panels at the regional Marches Food and Farming Conference](#) for September 2023. The two panels are: Nutrient Run-Off and Growing Collectively at Scale (Alliance is chairing).

Information sharing -

- The SFP coordinator recently attended the Oxford real farming conference and [information was shared with the alliance partners](#) including infrastructure, finance, regenerative agriculture with between 65 and 90 views each.
- The alliance is connected with Save the Wye network of action campaign groups, sharing their food-related campaigns (example: Pressure on Tesco regarding purchasing chicken from phosphate-leaching farms and processors); secured funding for specific campaign; information shared on farming methods that wouldn't otherwise have been shared. Led to [this website](#) and [this election briefing](#) and this ['farming solutions' doc](#)
- Large scale alternatives to chicken muck spreading being trialled in order to avoid phosphate run-off into rivers. [Whittern Farms trial is trialing the burning of litter](#) under specific conditions, converting 1000 tonnes litter into 100 tonnes of ash and is working to collaborate with Herefordshire Council on this. The owner is a member of the Alliance steering team.

Action plan development -

The zero carbon Farming and Land Use and Food are both plans that have come out of the Climate and Nature Action Plan. They are now streamlined - see 1A. Minutes of the Climate and Nature board are [here](#)

Funding -

Stronger Towns funding secured and a [large community and market garden](#) project is underway in Hereford.

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

Herefordshire's waste strategy is [here](#) which incorporates the [national strategy ambitions](#) too. The vision is -

"Waste not, want not... we value resources and their use. We will reduce resource consumption and embrace the circular economy to maximise the life of products and materials. We treat the materials we collect as resources not waste. We will achieve this by prioritising the waste hierarchy, maximising waste prevention and reuse."

There are a number of projects redistributing food surplus, some mentioned in sections above and some below.

Strategic work in this area includes

- The Food waste hierarchy has been incorporated into the county's [Carbon Management Plan 2020-2026](#)
- New food waste collection scheme to commence within the new contract <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling/future-waste-collections>
- We have established a baseline of current household food waste levels; this is now included in [Council waste strategy](#).

Networking

A network event coordinated by alliance members bringing farmers and producers in touch with community food surplus projects led to increased awareness of where surplus exists. (See also 6B)

**Soil From The City:** City-based pilot completed [collecting food waste by bicycle](#) and converting to high nutrient compost in the city. Now happening in Hereford: processing on average 125 litres of food waste a day and producing about 75 litres of compost daily. In last year - 12 tonnes of food waste was diverted from landfill, this has a co2 saving with a multiple of 4 (as it doesn't degrade without oxygen and produce methane) so 50 tonnes of Co2 equiv saved.

**HC Healthy Lifestyle Team** (Public Health) deliver regular event and community activities (meal planning, leftover use etc) using surplus foods and feeding those in most need.

Completed 7 interventions, across local community (River Carnival, ROOT baton relay), and school events (HAF sessions, School eco events) with over **650** people attending these events (August 22-August 23), promoting healthy eating, cooking on a budget, meal planning and cooking using leftovers. For each cooking event food was sourced from local supermarkets, food shares and local restaurants and used to highlight how to cook healthy, nutritious meals from food that would have ultimately gone to landfill.

Schools

**The Big Soup pilot** delivered by Growing Local in 5 schools to 200 children using a soup recipe as a topic for talking about climate and food waste. Due to be continued in the newly established growing site, from April 2024.

**An independent consultant has worked with two schools** to transform lunchtimes and is in the process of sharing her experience. One school testimonial includes:

*"The challenges were a lack of facilities in the schools, and the local lunch providers consistently providing inadequate meals for the children...." Support given included costings, recruitment, menus, kitchen changes. "Children are now excited by new flavours... we now have superb facilities and knowledgeable staff who provide the best for our children at lunchtime."*



**Ross gardens surplus/waste food redistribution:** [over 42,000 tonnes surplus food](#) distributed (2022)

Campaigns/promotion

- Waste Transformation team updated [website](#) to provide food waste advice.
- A dedicated communications officer providing capacity for food waste promotions has been recruited within the local authority, joining up waste and zero carbon activity. This activity is in line with WRAP campaigns and within the waste strategy actions.

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

West Midland Local Authority Sustainability benchmark: Includes Carbon emissions and The Natural Environment. Herefordshire Council's work curb phosphate pollution in its rivers through wetlands and a development moratorium scored highly. (Pg17)

<https://www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/West-Midlands-Local-Authority-Sustainability-Benchmark-2022-Summary-report.pdf>

**FOR PANEL USE ONLY**

**Comments from the panel on your application:**

**Outcome of application:**

**Recommendations for onward progress:**