

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 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.docx](#)
- SFP Awards: Activity and Impact: [SFP Awards - Activity and Impact.docx](#)

SECTION 1: Information about your partnership and your place

Please complete the following (*= compulsory):

Name of your partnership*:
ShefFood (https://sheffood.org.uk/)
Name and contact details of person/people leading on this application*:
Selina Treuherz, info@sheffood.org.uk Rene Meijer rene@thefoodworks.org
Geographic region which this award will represent*:
Sheffield

Award you are applying for*:

Silver

Sheffield’s food scene is flourishing. Since ShefFood won a Bronze award in 2021, we have worked with Sheffield City Council to develop their [Food Strategy \(Fairer, Healthier, Greener\)](#) and expanded our membership with more than [70 signatories to our Food Charter](#). Over 100 organisations participated in the co-production of the [The Local Food Action Plan for Sheffield](#). The Local Food Action Plan [launch event](#) on 15 June 2023 was attended by 120 residents, evidencing the scale, effort, enthusiasm and ambition of the flourishing local food community.

ShefFood has taken a leading role in building the partnerships required to support the achievement of a city-wide transformation to achieve a healthier and more sustainable food system. We are proud of how the city has backed the #SheftoSilver campaign over the past year, and excited about the next steps towards building a better food system for Sheffield. We hope this application for the Sustainable Food Places Silver Award provides evidence of Sheffield's range of actions and impacts in all six of the key areas below.

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.*

ANSWER:

Sheffield is the 7th largest city in the UK, with a population of 556,500 ([ONS, 2021](#)). There is significant diversity within this population, which “influence(s) how Sheffielders experience the city” ([Race Equality Commission 2022, 24](#)). Sheffield is a city built on 7 hills, and is often known as ‘a collection of villages’. Each of these geographical areas are unique with much to be celebrated, but there are also deep rooted geographical inequalities. Some areas in Sheffield’s South and West are amongst the most affluent in the country, while other areas

concentrated in the North and East are amongst the most deprived in the country. These inequalities have significant repercussions for health, education, and employment outcomes across the city. This is simultaneously a cause and effect of unequal access to healthy, sustainable and affordable food. For example, in 2021, 22% of adults in Sheffield had experienced food insecurity and 2.5% reported going hungry due to the unaffordability and inaccessibility of food ([Blake and Moreti, 2021](#)), and we know from national data that people with disabilities, people who are Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and younger families are likely to be disproportionately represented in this group ([Sheffield City Council and ShefFood, 2022](#)). At the same time, Sheffield is noted for its particularly strong VCFS sector, with many organisations across the ShefFood partnership and beyond working hard to collectively address these challenges despite a difficult funding environment.

In recent years, Sheffield has become known as the ‘outdoor city’ and was officially recognised as the [UK’s greenest city](#) in 2021, in part due to its 22,600 acres of green space. While this equates to 155m² per resident, access to and the benefits of green space are not evenly distributed across the city and between populations. Nevertheless, the abundance of green space represents significant potential for food growing in the city, as does the peri-urban land on the fringe of the city, particularly in the Moss Valley to the South East of Sheffield ([Halsall et al, 2021](#)).

The city is governed by one local authority, Sheffield City Council, which is the third largest local authority in the UK. When ShefFood set out on the pathway from Bronze to Silver in 2021, there had been limited engagement with Sheffield City Council. During the last 2 years this relationship has been transformed with council representatives actively engaged in the 5 ShefFood working groups and on the steering group, enabling significant progress which would otherwise have not been possible. Following Covid-19, the [Sheffield Street Trees Inquiry](#) and the [Race Equality Commission](#) amongst other factors, Sheffield City Council have adopted a more collaborative, less paternalistic relationship with other networks in the city including food networks.

Sheffield is the centre of the wider metropolitan region of South Yorkshire, which has a population of 1,396,000 people. Sheffield was the first area in South Yorkshire to receive a SFP Bronze Award, and we are committed to working with our counterparts across the region to contribute to making South Yorkshire a sustainable food region, as highlighted through action 54 of the Local Food Action Plan for Sheffield, to support the development of a regional food partnership, and in our new Synergy Project (*see section 1c*).

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

ANSWER:

Sheffield is a diverse city. A key priority that cuts across ShefFood's work is to ensure that it fully and accurately represents the city it serves, celebrates differences, builds trusting relationships with those working on the ground, and builds capacity for grassroots communities to influence policy and research.

All of our working group meetings are open to anyone interested, and are actively promoted online and through our regular articles in The Star and the Sheffield Telegraph. Meetings are hosted at appropriate times and locations for the working group that they serve to ensure meetings are accessible, and those attending feel comfortable. In addition, the 'Good Food Movement' working group is designed and facilitated to act as a space for ShefFood to be accessible to, and held accountable by, individuals and organisations across the city who may not otherwise be involved in ShefFood's work. We are in the process of developing a Safer Spaces Policy for Working Group meetings, to formalise the inclusive atmosphere that we have already proactively established.

Over the past year, as ShefFood has increased its membership, we are fortunate to have built new relationships with organisations who work with communities previously under-represented in the ShefFood network including Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) communities, and areas of the city scoring highly on indices of multiple deprivation.

However, this is certainly only a start. The Local Food Action Plan (see below) sets out several commitments regarding diversity, inclusion and food citizenship. Over the next year, one of ShefFood's priorities is active outreach to build stronger relationships with under-represented and/or marginalised communities. In addition to increasing the diversity of the ShefFood partnership and our working groups, this outreach work will help us to better understand, support and amplify the work of these communities. We have already made progress on this via mapping and analysis of our existing partnership to identify areas of the city, types of organisation, and demographic groups that are currently under-represented, and we have compiled a list of organisations to build relationships with going forwards. In addition, diversity and inclusion is a key theme of our new Synergy project, and we are hosting a half-day workshop on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in October 2023 as part of this work (*see section 1c*).

Aim	#	Actions	Organisations Involved
Enhance participation in local food policy making.	35	Enhance grassroots and local organisations' involvement in local food policy through meetings, promotion of opportunities, and facilitating links to policymakers in the city.	Food Works, Sheffield City Council, ShefFood, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA)
	36	Undertake public consultation to gather perceptions and experiences regarding access to healthy and sustainable food, and identify local measures that Sheffield residents would support and prioritise.	Sheffield City Council, ShefFood
	37	Support young people to influence their food environment, through increasing participation in the School Food and Community Food Champions programmes, and collaboration between the Bite Back 2030 Youth Board and Sheffield City Council.	Bite Back 2030, Bite Back 2030 Youth Board, Sheffield City Council
Proactively expand the Good Food Movement to include under-represented communities and areas of the city.	46	Ensure that the Good Food Movement in Sheffield celebrates differences in the city and successfully represents the city by reaching out to under-represented voices. Create spaces to listen to the lived experience of residents by hosting and organising meetings in conjunction with communities across Sheffield.	Food Works, ShefFood, Voluntary Action Sheffield
	47	Develop partner connections to support work in under-represented areas in Sheffield with a focus on grassroots organising.	ShefFood, Voluntary Action Sheffield
Develop transparent and resilient governance and finance structures within the ShefFood partnership.	48	Continue to host regular steering group meetings to ensure transparency and accountability.	ShefFood
	49	Develop a work plan for ShefFood and Good Food Movement meetings to design processes that enable ShefFood to grow into a decentralised, representative and resilient city-wide network, where working groups can function independently of central structures.	ShefFood

A key part of increasing inclusion and building trust has been to recognise and celebrate the diversity of relationships people may have to food, which may relate to differences in health, disability, culture, class, personal choice or other factors. Examples of this include prioritising access to culturally appropriate foods as part of our work on food sourcing with Sheffield City Council and local food banks (examples of requests include chickpeas, rice, and blackcurrant squash, as opposed to lime). Additionally, ShefFood has been working to support organisations such as [United Women Affiliation](#) and the [Hadfield Institute](#) who are growing culturally appropriate food with residents from refugee and migrant backgrounds. ShefFood have connected these and other organisations up with other relevant

organisations to share knowledge, and have [used our communication platforms to raise awareness of the importance of culturally appropriate crops](#). In addition, we are aware that food movements can often be middle-class dominated, but at the heart of Sheffield's food system and ShefFood's work is ensuring good food for families and communities on all incomes and from all backgrounds, highlighted most clearly through the work of the Food Ladders working group (*see section 3a*).

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

Silver Benchmark:

- Your partnership is diverse, robust, embedded, and sustainable.
- A 3-year strategy and/or action plan covering all key issues that is endorsed and supported by the local authority
- Evidence that policies, strategies, and plans are effectively promoting healthy and sustainable food.

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

- *Establish a local cross-sector food partnership involving public and third sector, business and community representatives that meets regularly and is committed to working together across all key food issues (mandatory at Bronze).*
- *The partnership has clear terms of reference and operates in an open, transparent, and democratic way. Members represent a wide range of sectors and communities including those with lived experience of food issues as well as organisations and institutions (mandatory at bronze).*
- *Key institutions, including the local authority and other strategic bodies recognise and endorse the local food partnership and actively support its efforts through policy, strategy, and planning and by providing funding and/or other support (mandatory at Silver).*
- *Establish working groups linked to the core food partnership to enable those with specific interests, skills, and remits to lead on and work together to tackle key food issues, supporting them and others to be effective ambassadors more effectively for the partnership's work.*

ShefFood is a **broad, cross-sector food partnership**. This partnership is underpinned by a strong working group structure with involvement from key institutions including local public agencies, businesses, individuals, academic and community organisations, all committed to working together to create a more sustainable food system for Sheffield.

- **The Food Ladders Working Group** (also known as the Food Ladders Network) is made up of over 40 food banks, food pantries and social eating spaces as well as representatives from Sheffield City Council (notably Public Health and Community Development) , [Voluntary Action Sheffield \(VAS\)](#), Academics and [Citizens Advice](#). The aim of the group is to provide a space to share advice and support on food aid across the city, as previously organisations were often working in silos in their corner of the city. In addition, we are trying to create a safe space for community food leaders to engage with Sheffield City Council, to make sure policy responds to their needs. *This group has met 10 times in the past year.*
- **The Growing and Composting Working Group** is made up of community growing groups, organic and nature-friendly market gardens, parks and allotment officers from Sheffield City Council, and academics from the University of Sheffield. This Working Group aims to support the upscaling of low impact urban and peri-urban food production and composting in Sheffield through education and collaborative projects. *This group has met 8 times in the past year.*
- **The Good Food Economy and Procurement Working Group** aims to support the development of more sustainable food policies in Sheffield's food businesses and public institutions including through more local food procurement and better food waste management. The Working Group meetings bring together representatives from food businesses, public institutions including universities and hospitals, with food producers, Sheffield City Council and [South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority \(SYMCA\)](#). *This group has met 5 times in the past year.*
- **The Good Food Movement Working Group** aims to support the expansion of an inclusive, multisector food movement that links residents, initiatives, organisations, and networks across the city. The Working Group meetings bring together Sheffield residents with representatives from non-governmental organisations and Sheffield City Council to build and strengthen food networks in the City. *This group has met 5 times in the past year.*
- **The Food, Health and Obesity Working Group** contributes to ensuring everyone in Sheffield can access and enjoy nutritious food and support to overcome barriers to healthy eating behaviours in a place and format that is compassionate, accessible, and culturally appropriate. The Working Group brings together individuals and organisations including a range of services within Sheffield City Council, representatives from both universities, the hospitals and community health and wellbeing groups. This group sits under Sheffield's [Joint Health and Wellbeing](#)

[Board](#) and has oversight of the implementation of Sheffield City Council's *Fairer Healthier Greener Food Strategy (See section 1b)*. *This group meets every quarter.*

In addition, ShefFood has a committed steering group supported by an [updated Terms of Reference for 2023](#). The Steering Group is made up of representatives from [The University of Sheffield](#), [Food Works](#), [Sheffield City Council](#), [Sheffield Hallam University](#), [Regather Cooperative](#), Sustainable Food Places and ShefFood. Collectively they ensure the continuity and long term strategy of the partnership, and provide transparency and accountability with finances. *This group meets every two months.*

Financial Structure

Sheffield City Council has committed £10k per year in recurring funding in its budget for the next 6 years on the basis that ShefFood is seen as a key development and implementation partner for food policy in the city. Further support is provided from the [Institute for Sustainable Food](#) (one of the University of Sheffield's four 'flagship' research institutes) via individual research project grants. These include grants from the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) and Research England's QR fund which have supported ShefFood's work with Regather and Sheffield City Council. This provides a minimum level of continuity for ShefFood, which is further expanded by incidental grant funding.

In addition, ShefFood is supported by Food Works, who have kindly waived their HR and admin costs as they currently function as the accountable body for ShefFood.

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

- *Your food partnership develops, publishes, and regularly reviews a food strategy and/or action plan (mandatory 12 months at Bronze and minimum 3 years at Silver) that covers all key food issues and is based on an open consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.*
- *The food strategy/action plan is being delivered, with the food partnership helping to coalesce and coordinate action as well as measuring progress in terms of both activity and outcomes (mandatory at Bronze and Silver).*
- *Develop and promote a food charter, manifesto or equivalent that encapsulates the food vision, principles and ambitions for your place and get individuals and organisations to commit to action that will help to achieve those ambitions.*
- *Develop and promote an identity (brand/logo/strapline) for your initiative and use this as an umbrella to connect and promote all the inspiring work on healthy and sustainable food happening in your place.*

#ShefftoSilver and The ShefFood Charter

In July 2022, ShefFood launched the [#ShefftoSilver](#) campaign towards a Silver SFP award. As part of this, ShefFood launched the [Sheffield Food Charter](#). This outlines 4 broad

commitments which organisations can pledge towards making a more sustainable food system in Sheffield. To date, **74 organisations** have signed the ShefFood charter. The charter has proved an effective tool to celebrate and promote food-centred organisations' actions and achievements, while also inviting them to become involved in ShefFood and relevant working groups. In addition, it has enabled ShefFood to easily promote all of the fantastic work happening in the city that is aligned with the principles of the charter, via our social media pages, newsletter, blog, and fortnightly print articles in the Sheffield Star and Telegraph



SHEF FOOD
Sheffield's Food Partnership
Partner for #ShefToSilver

Sheffield's Food Charter

Together we will build a food system for Sheffield that:

- 1** Makes sure everyone in Sheffield has, by default, access to healthy, sustainable and affordable food. 
- 2** Uses the power of good food to bring people together, creating cohesive communities through celebrating experiences and sharing knowledge. 
- 3** Encourages a diverse and vibrant food economy that promotes and prioritises local producers, boosts the local economy and treats customers, workers and nature well. 
- 4** Develops resilient, practices from farm to fork and beyond, which reduce levels of emissions and waste, to feed tomorrow as well as today. 

I and/or the organisation I represent, pledge to actively pursue the charter's aims and build a better food system for Sheffield.

Signed:

Sheffield's Food Strategy 2023-2030

In August 2022, Sheffield City Council published a draft of [Fairer, Healthier Greener, a food strategy for Sheffield](#). This included a fantastic **vision** of what Sheffield's Food System should look like by 2030. In addition, the strategy affirms Sheffield City Council's commitment to the food agenda by focusing on **strategic and structural commitments to tackle challenges which exist at a population level**. The strategy frames this broadly within 3 themes regarding food access: **financial access**; **physical access** (including protection from harmful commercial influences); and **future access** (including being resilient to global shocks and minimising the negative impact food production can have on our planet). ShefFood worked with Sheffield City Council to co-develop the strategy, including identification of key levers which have since led to significant policy developments, notably in relation to **food access, food growing and procurement**. **The strategy was endorsed by Sheffield's Joint Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2023, and formally [approved at the Council's Strategy and Resources Policy committee](#) in July 2023.**

The Local Food Action Plan for Sheffield

However, Fairer, Healthier Greener only set out to outline the vision and commitments of Sheffield City Council (in collaboration with other partners). Therefore, in January 2023, ShefFood set out on the ambitious task of writing the [7-year Local Food action Plan for Sheffield](#) with support from Sheffield City Council. This was achieved through a successful collaboration with [Fix our Food](#) (a research project based at the University of York), which allowed ShefFood to hire a deputy coordinator to support the development of the action plan. [Between January and April 2023, ShefFood hosted 12 special workshops](#) across the 5 working groups to lead the formation and development of an action plan, which is structured across 5 cross-cutting strategies.

Five Strategies

to Transform Sheffield's Food System...

We organise the actions into five strategies. These strategies cut across the current and planned work of the five Working Groups. While the Working Groups remain as vital spaces for sharing, collaborating, and ultimately delivering these actions, our aim is to show that these are not silos, and that strategic actions to transform Sheffield's food system can build upon each other to enhance impact across the city.



18 Sheffield's Local Food Action Plan for Sheffield

1

Strengthen food networks by developing skills and learning together

Extending and deepening collaborations across Sheffield's diverse food networks by sharing knowledge and skills and co-developing training resources to transform Sheffield's food system.

2

Build collective capacity to share and use data on Sheffield's food system

Learning together how to access, use and share information such as maps to support on-the-ground decision-making in Sheffield.

3

Participate in making and delivering ambitious local food policy

Continuing to advocate for and deliver food systems change across public sector and anchor institutions while enhancing engagement with under-represented groups.

4

Build an inclusive food movement

Connecting Sheffield's vibrant food networks and ensuring the participation of all communities and areas of the city.

5

Leverage spaces for food initiatives

Supporting organisations and initiatives across Sheffield to access the physical spaces necessary to grow, process and distribute healthy and sustainable food.

SheffFood's Local Food Action Plan for Sheffield 19

Structuring the plan around 5 cross-cutting strategies enabled us to highlight how actions within each working group do not happen in silos, and that strategic actions to transform Sheffield's food system can build upon each other to enhance impact across the city.

The action plan included 73 commitments to action from 69 organisations across the city. It is practical and deliverable because it was **co-authored by grassroots organisations** and it **leverages collaboration** rather than requiring new funding streams and other limited resources for implementation. Forming the action plan certainly developed stronger connections within and across the partnership and has also delivered clear work plans for each working group. The collective successes and visioning also contribute towards a clear agenda for the city.

The action plan is organised in a way to highlight which organisations are involved with each of the actions, and most of the actions are works in progress or already happening now. Monitoring will be undertaken by the steering group and via our participation in the Synergy project, funded via UKRI's ['Transforming UK Food Systems' programme](#). The Synergy project aims to share good practice with other local partnerships and, with support from Sustainable Food Places, to consider the role of local partnerships in wider (regional and national) scale food system transformation.

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

Transforming UK Food Systems Synergy Project

ShefFood is excited to be working on a project with two other local food partnerships (Bristol and Rotherham), in collaboration with the [University of Sheffield's H3 project](#).

The project aims to understand how the work of local food partnerships can be 'scaled up' to achieve transformative impact at the regional or national scale. This will be done by sharing learning among local food partnerships at different stages of their development. Additionally, it is an opportunity to develop some more regional activities given that 2 of the partners (Sheffield and [Rotherham](#)) are key constituents of the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).

Outputs will include a 'good practice' guide and a road map (visualisation) for other organisations to use in developing and implementing their local food strategies, and an academic paper on the transformative potential of values-based food systems.

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

Silver Benchmark:

- Widespread public participation in food-related community activity, underpinned by a connected network of community food initiatives which support a dynamic [good food movement, involving people from all walks of life.

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

- *Raise public awareness of food, health, and sustainability issues through a variety of communication channels.*
- *Provide a wide range of free opportunities for people to learn about, share and enjoy healthy and sustainable food - e.g., workshops, competitions, food festivals.*
- *Provide training and volunteering opportunities to develop food growing, cooking, processing, and enterprise skills.*
- *Ensure opportunities to actively participate in community food initiatives are promoted to people from all social and cultural backgrounds.*
- *Develop a public facing umbrella-campaign to encourage individuals and organisations to take (and register) action in support of healthy and sustainable food, for example through the development of an on-line platform.*

Communication Channels and Media Coverage

ShefFood now has established clear communication channels to engage with groups and individuals across Sheffield. Our [Instagram](#) (1366 Followers), [Twitter](#) (1999 Followers) and

[Facebook](#) (774 Followers) are updated twice a week by Lorna Middleton Marketing, who coordinates all ShefFood communications. ShefFood promotes food issues on our own [ShefFood blog](#), and in the local press and media. This includes a **fortnightly print article published in The Star and Sheffield Telegraph**, ad-hoc pieces in publications such as [Now Then](#), and appearances on local radio stations including **Sheffield Live** and **BBC Radio Sheffield**, [recently including a cookalong with the ShefFood Partnership Coordinator](#). Please see section 1b for info about the ShefFood Charter, our way of engaging food centred organisations in Sheffield to take and register positive action.

Food Events

ShefFood's communication channels provide a strong platform to promote food events, workshops and learning opportunities across the city. For example, in May 2023, [Sheffield Food Festival](#) was attended by 30,000 people, with stalls from over 50 food businesses and community groups including ShefFood. In addition, [The Sheffield Wheat Experiment's](#) events programme has inspired Sheffield citizens about everything from pulses to chapatis, the importance of good bread, soil and power in the food system. Similarly, at the recent [Migration Matters Festival](#), food was a significant theme- including an event on the lost foods of India, hosted by academics at the University of Sheffield trying to save lost heritage varieties of rice. Sheffield is also home to [Madame Zucchini](#), a vegetable entertainer who inspires adults and children alike about healthy eating and wellbeing through creative activities.

Developing Growing Skills

There are many opportunities to develop food growing skills in Sheffield. Children, young people and their families are supported to grow food in school gardens through projects such as the [Eat Smart Sheffield programme](#), [Kids Plant Trees' 'Green Schools'](#) project, and the ['An Even Better Arbourthorne'](#) project in a community primary school where pupils face significant challenges associated with food poverty.

Commercial and community growing organisations across the city offer volunteering opportunities which benefit citizens in a variety of ways including learning horticultural and land management skills, taking local produce home to share with their families and communities, and boosting wellbeing.

Many projects use food growing to support people experiencing structural disadvantage. For example, [Sheffield Organic Growers' 'Growing Experience'](#) project provides supported volunteer placements to adults with learning disabilities; [Percy Street CIC](#) helps young people experiencing a range of challenges to realise their potential through caring for a herb garden; [SAGE Greenfingers](#) offers horticultural programmes for people affected by mental illness, and [Green City Action](#) and [United Women Affiliation](#) work with people

from migrant and refugee backgrounds, supporting them to grow culturally appropriate crops that are often too expensive or unavailable in Sheffield supermarkets.

Training in Food Growing

To develop horticulture skills in a more structured environment and pursue careers in the sector, people can obtain training via [L1 and L2 horticulture courses at The Sheffield College](#), Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust's [working for Nature trainee programme](#), and through organisations like [Grow UK](#), who offer paid work experience for young people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

There remain gaps in the city's food growing training offering. ShefFood have responded to this gap by bringing together a new working group which has met twice to date, to develop and fund pathways into food growing careers.

Developing Cooking Skills

Opportunities to develop cooking skills are available at [St Marys](#), [ShipShape](#), [Longley 4 Greens](#), [Open Kitchen Social Club](#), [FoodCycle](#) and [Bags of Taste](#). In these spaces, people come together once a week either to cook food for a social meal or to learn how to cook with the food available to them. [Social Pickle](#) brings people together to share the joys of and learn about foraging, fermenting, pickling and producing. There are also a variety of cooking skills opportunities open to children and young people in the city, for example the [Eat Smart Sheffield](#) programme, and through organisations such as [Endeavour](#) who provide cooking and food hygiene sessions to young people.

Engaging individuals with ShefFood

As mentioned in section 1b, the ShefFood Charter is primarily focused on getting organisations involved. However, from Autumn 2023, we will be opening the ShefFood Charter up to signatures from individuals to make pledges to action on healthy and sustainable food. We have also run campaigns to encourage individuals to buy more local food, and frequently use our communications channels to highlight actions individuals can take. Individuals not affiliated to any organisation are actively welcomed to all of our working group meetings, and it is a key action (#45) in the Local Food Action Plan to continue identifying more ways for individuals to become involved in ShefFood.

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

- *Establish a network for community food initiatives and leaders that provides on-line and face to face opportunities to share inspiration, ideas, and resources and to work together on a range of food initiatives (mandatory at silver).*
- *Support communities to access and take control of land, infrastructure and other community assets that can be used for food social enterprises and community food projects, for example by mapping available assets or offering special lease options.*

- *Support local community food initiatives through a small grants programme and access to tools and resources, as well as through advice and training on project planning, raising money and working with volunteers.*
- *Increase participation in food growing and related activities through increased allotment provision, the incorporation of growing sites into new and existing developments, the development of edible landscapes and through initiatives such as Incredible Edible.*

Fostering food citizenship in Sheffield

ShefFood now has established networks within the community food sector. We have a quarterly open meeting, open to everyone in the city interested in food. The open meeting workshops have varied from spaces of accountability for the new ShefFood terms of reference, to bistro nights to foster conversations over food, and a storytelling workshop to equip citizens with the skills to mobilise their voices and experiences for change.

[Bite Back 2030](#) are leading the way on supporting young food citizens, working with their Youth Board, and their School and Community Champions programmes to support people in Sheffield to influence their food environments. The Youth Board have identified and delivered a series of policy recommendations to the Public Health department of Sheffield City Council for improvements to the food offer/environment in council-owned spaces where young people spend time; the School Champions are advocating for change at a school level; and the Community Champions are working to tackle junk food marketing in sports sponsorship in the city, while also seeking to improve the food offer in Sheffield's football stadiums. In Autumn 2023, ShefFood will be publishing a series of blog posts authored by the young people involved in Bite Back's work.

Also, see detail regarding the **Food Ladders Network** in section 3a.

The Food Ladders report

In January 2022, Sheffield City Council commissioned the **Food Ladders report**, mapping the geographies of community food organisations in Sheffield onto the Food Ladders Model ([For info see Megan Blake's Food Ladders Approach](#)). The council's leadership in asking community food organisations their needs in a post-Covid context was vital to this collaboration. It also led to £200k being available to tackle food poverty via the [Food Access Plan](#). £20k of this has been put aside for **grants**, organised by the Food Development worker for Voluntary Action Sheffield. Accessing these grants initially happens through a text, phonecall, voice note or email and makes sure that even those who are time limited can access these resources. The Food Development worker also **collects data from the network and supports projects to access training and support available in the city.**

Growing Food Citizenship

One of the clearest examples of city-wide food citizenship is the [Food Works Grow-a-Row scheme](#), which has allowed individual allotment plot holders, home growers and community or commercial growers to dedicate a row or a bed to ‘grow-a-row’ of the food needed most by food provision projects. The scheme, which has been running since 2020, has created a city wide network, forging more direct connections between those involved in food production and food provision. In 2022, Grow-a-Row participants supplied 1682kg of fresh, hyper-local produce to low income residents via Food Works’ cafes, frozen meals, and market boxes.

In addition, Sheffield’s City Council’s allotments department has committed, both in their own strategy and in the Local Food Action Plan, to increasing allotment provision in the city to meet the strong demand from citizens for growing space.

Mapping Sheffield’s Food Assets

The Local Food Action Plan recognises the importance of collating and sharing data on Sheffield’s food system. As part of this, actions 21-27 of the Action Plan all relate to mapping activities, including: continuing to map [community food provision](#) to signpost people experiencing financial hardship to food-related support, mapping [local suppliers](#) to support caterers in procuring local food, and developing information streams about healthy eating and weight services for NHS Staff, which will help these services identify and take steps to reach underserved populations. In all this work, we have taken steps to ensure existing (and future) maps are **developed collaboratively and are made widely available**, so as to be maximally useful to the communities that may need them.

C: Other information: Other activities and context

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

Silver Benchmark:

- A wide range of initiatives working to tackle food poverty and diet-related ill health are reaching most social groups, settings, and neighbourhoods, particularly amongst those groups most at risk, and demonstrating positive impact.

Action area A: Tackle food poverty:

- *Establish a multi-agency partnership involving key organisations as well as people with lived experience, to identify and tackle the full range of issues that contribute to food poverty in a joined-up strategic way.*
- *Ensure high quality social food provision for people who might otherwise go hungry or suffer malnutrition, for example through the Healthy Start voucher scheme; Rose Vouchers;*

free school meals; breakfast, after school and holiday meal provision; lunch clubs and meals on wheels.

- *Promote fair wages through local authority adoption of the real Living Wage for its own staff and for contractors and via campaigns to raise other employers' awareness and adoption of the Living Wage and the benefits this brings.*
- *Train health professionals, welfare advisers, housing, and voluntary organisations in food poverty issues so they can effectively direct those experiencing food poverty to welfare support and local hardship funds, as well as to emergency food aid at times of crisis.*
- *Food access providers design and deliver their work in ways that uphold the dignity of service users, for example through principles outlined by Nourish Scotland's Dignity in Practice project.*

A Strong cross-sector partnerships to tackle food poverty

The [Food Ladders Network](#) was established post-Covid to bring multiple networks of **food pantries, food banks and social eating spaces** together. The network has developed clearer communication between food groups across all corners of the city, but also between **Sheffield City Council , SYMCA, and leaders in the voluntary sector.**

Communications and relationships across the Food Ladders network has led to more open and transparent conversation about what assets that the city has, where, who owns them and if/how they can be shared. The Food Ladders network has been working towards creating a space that is centred around trust, and recognises the needs of smaller independent community food organisations in the city.

The **Food Ladders Network** and the **Food Health and Obesity Board** (*see Section 1a*) combine to form the most comprehensive network to tackle food poverty that Sheffield has had. This is seen clearly in examples of collaborative actions for both of the working groups in the Local Food Action plan for Sheffield, for example around mapping community food provision and local healthy eating and weight services (*see section 2b*).

Working beyond the Food Ladders model in policy and practice

The current approach underpinning the Food Ladders network recognises the importance of food banks in the current political and economic climate in supporting those in crisis. However, there is a collective acknowledgement that we must **invest in long term infrastructure to improve food security rather than just short term sticking plasters, particularly for children and young people in the city.**

A clear example of this longer-term approach at a strategic level is a recent **£150k** investment to tackle food poverty from **SYMCA**, **£102k** of which was awarded to [Food Works](#) to create **6 pop up affordable food hubs in the city** (*see more below*). This approach will complement existing projects at the city level such as S6 Food bank, who fed 33,470 adults and 20,196 Children between April 2022 and March 2023, and Food Works,

who provided 69,987 shops of food in the same period. In addition, many projects are working at the community level to meet the needs of their area including:

- [PXI's food hub](#), where anyone from the community can come to access food for free without referrals and is practising what the right to food could look like.
- [Longley 4 Greens](#), who have been partnering with the Sheffield Wheat Experiment to bake heritage grain bread in their kitchen alongside their social supermarket.
- [S2 Food Bank](#) who have now secured a second premises to start an affordable shop, changing the food desert landscape of Fairleigh.
- [High Green Development Trust \(HGDT\)](#) who kept their food hub running through the difficult 22/3 winter and are now looking at how a social supermarket could work for the community alongside their kitchen and growing projects.
- [The Hadfield institute](#), who will be partnering with the Women's Institute of Technology to understand how hydroponics would work to supply fresh vegetables and herbs to the centre.
- [The Link community](#) hub, where their newly acquired estate flat is being used to hold community cooking and baking sessions.
- [Now Church](#), who have moved from a food bank to a food pantry with a pay it forward scheme to create a redistribution of wealth in the area.
- [Stannington food bank](#), who held their community together during the Stannington floods earlier this year and are now becoming registered as a CIC to maintain their position in the community.

City-wide communal Food Sourcing

Through policy developments in the Food Ladders Network in partnership with Sheffield City Council, [Food Works](#) is creating **6 pop up affordable food hubs in the city**. The Food Works pantries were initially a response to decreasing surplus donations from supermarkets and Fareshare Yorkshire and increasing demand for these initiatives, and was funded through a grant from SYMCA. In addition, S6 Foodbank will be doing more deliveries and food sourcing purchases for smaller independent food banks in the city as they are willing to share resources. This will leave **more time for those on the ground to focus on their community, rather than worrying where they will source their food from.**

Tackling food poverty at the community level

As the Food Ladders Network strengthens, efforts are increasing to make sure future investments are led by communities. For example, we are currently in the process of recruiting an organiser via [Cooperation Town](#) to lead on the development of food co-ops across the city. Each food co-op will be formed of up to 20 households and located in areas with the most potential to benefit from low cost fresh food. This is an exciting development, as the cooperative approach will ensure **agency and control of food**

remains hyperlocal, as each co-op controls their own supply. The food co-ops should also **benefit local businesses in the city**, such as the Sheffield Parkway Markets.

In addition, Sheffield City Council is promoting the Healthy Start voucher scheme to all front line services that support families with young children, in order to increase uptake.

Adoption of the real living wage across Sheffield

[Sheffield City Council](#) and [The University of Sheffield](#) have both adopted the **real living wage**. Sheffield, like the rest of the country in 2023, has engaged in strikes for fair pay and better working conditions for lecturers, nurses, rail workers, teachers and junior doctors, with strong support from the rest of the city.

Lunch Clubs

Sheffield City Council currently hosts over 40 [lunch clubs](#) across Sheffield. Lunch clubs have had a long standing role in preventing isolation alongside feeding communities within Sheffield. Those administering the scheme are aware that in their current form, lunch clubs are often not accessible to marginalised communities. Going forwards, the SheFood partnership will be working with Sheffield City Council and VAS around outreach and relationship building, to ensure that **future allocation of resources will support current and future social eating projects in marginalised and currently under-served communities.**

Support for those eligible for Free School Meals

Sheffield City Council is one of only a handful of UK councils to have introduced [auto-enrolment in Free School Meals](#) for families in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support. Auto-enrolment enables these children to access free school meals without having to apply, thereby increasing take-up, reducing stigma, and giving many children access to a free 2-course nutritious school meal everyday, while saving parents and caregivers up to £400 per year. Since introducing auto-enrolment, an additional **3,285** primary and secondary aged children have been awarded FSM, and **2,118** Early Years children have been identified as eligible for FSM when they reach school age.

The work to introduce Auto Award has also resulted in significant additional Pupil Premium funding for schools. Since 2016, an additional **£3.8m** has been generated for schools to provide targeted support to improve the life chances of disadvantaged children and young people. This will help children from low-income families to reach their full potential and progress on to further and higher education, and ultimately lead to improved employment opportunities in the future.

Food Access during School Holidays

Sheffield City Council have used the Household Support Fund to provide Food vouchers for FSM eligible children in the school holidays. The Auto Award process has enabled more families to benefit from the food vouchers during the cost-of-living crisis.

Sheffield City Council, in partnership with over **100 community providers, also delivers the [Holiday Activities and Food programme \(HAF\)](#)**. This programme supports a range of outcomes including ensuring that children from families of lower incomes continue to have access to a nutritional meal during the school holidays. HAF has confirmed funding up to 2024 (**£2.8 million / year**).

[Food Works](#) have provided children from all backgrounds with free hot and frozen healthy meals during the 2023 summer holidays.

Action Area B: Promote healthy eating

- *Activity could include but is not limited to the following: Run healthy eating and drinking campaigns including Sugar Smart (SFP), Veg Places (SFP), Change4Life, and Baby Friendly; and give preferential treatment to healthy food ads, for example by offering them free advertising space, while restricting junk food ads.*
- *Provide and promote a wide range of healthy eating and healthy weight support services and initiatives, including diet and nutrition advice and support, cooking skills training, exercise, and social prescribing programmes.*
- *Promote the adoption of holistic healthy food culture transformation programmes - such as those developed by Food for Life - in a range of settings such as nurseries, schools, colleges, hospitals, care homes and workplaces.*
- *Map access to healthy food against transportation routes, income, health data, proximity to schools etc. and work to prevent the proliferation of unhealthy food outlets as well as to ensure people can access affordable healthy food/drink near to where they live, work and play*.*

A city wide response-

There is a coordinated, city-wide approach to promoting healthy eating via the Sheffield Joint Health and Wellbeing Board and the Food Health and Obesity Board (Working Group) (see Section 1a).

UNICEF baby friendly accreditation

- In 2019, Sheffield City Council became the [first standalone local authority in the UK to achieve UNICEF Baby Friendly Gold award](#).
- Sheffield's [0-19 Health Visiting service](#), hosted by The Sheffield Children's Hospital NHS foundation, has BFI Gold Award and operates a range of services that support breast feeding, healthy weaning and healthy diet in early years.

- The [Neonatal Unit at The Jessop Wing \(Sheffield Teaching Hospitals\)](#) was awarded a Stage 1 Baby Friendly accreditation in January 2023, with intent to achieve Stage 2 accreditation by 2025.

Addressing the wider social determinants of health

The Fairer, Healthier Greener food strategy for Sheffield explicitly recognises that our food choices are heavily influenced by what is available in the commercial food environment.

The strategy commits to creating everyday food environments where healthy and sustainable food choices are possible, easy, affordable, and culturally appropriate and where people are protected from harmful commercial influences.

- The [draft Local Plan for Sheffield](#) proposes a hot food takeaways planning policy which would prevent the opening of new takeaways within 800m of schools in Sheffield or in shopping centres where more than 25% of units are already hot food takeaways.
- Sheffield City Council are in the process of developing an advertising and sponsorship policy that reflects the council's role as a public health organisation by restricting junk food advertising on council owned spaces and promoting brands associated with healthy food via events sponsorship.
- Sheffield City Council commissions organisations to deliver a number of leisure and entertainment venues on their behalf including leisure centres, sports facilities including the [English Institute of Sport](#), [Sheffield Arena](#) and [Sheffield City Hall](#). The contracts for these includes a requirement for any food served to comply with the Government Buying Standards for Food. Entertainment venues must meet the core standards whilst sports and leisure facilities must meet the enhanced standards. This will ensure nutrition, sustainability and ethical standards are met when food is being procured and served.
- All early years settings in the city are encouraged and supported by the council to achieve a locally developed Healthy Early Years awards scheme. Criteria include creating breastfeeding friendly environments, ensuring food served is nutritious and incorporating healthy eating and oral health information into the curriculum.

Healthy weight support services

Sheffield City Council commission healthy weight support services for young people and adults, and have just approved funding from the public health grant of £390k a year for 5 years to continue delivering this until 2029.

[Live Lighter](#) is the current council funded free and inclusive weight management service providing practical support and guidance on a range of healthy eating topics.

The [Start Well Sheffield Family](#) programme supports parents and carers with preschool children to adopt healthy lifestyles through 5 sessions and a toolkit for participants to continue using at home.

[SHINE healthy academy](#) supports young people aged 10-17 with weight management through nutritional therapy, physical activity, behavioural modification and psychological therapies in a non-judgmental setting, with support tailored to individual circumstances.

The [South Yorkshire Eating Disorders Association \(SYEDA\)](#) provides a range of non-judgmental services to people with eating disorders and their families.

Learning about nutrition and healthy eating

Food for Life, in partnership with Sheffield City Council and [Learn Sheffield](#) are delivering the [Eat Smart Sheffield programme](#) which is a whole school approach to food and nutrition, supporting children, families and communities to grow, cook and enjoy good quality affordable food. The Eat Smart programme is funded until 2029, and as of Summer 2023, 70 schools were successfully enrolled in Food for Life, over 70 teachers have accessed training to integrate good food throughout schools, and 70% of children in the city have access to Food for Life Served Here certified meals, which guarantees freshness, welfare, and local and sustainable ingredients.

Sheffield Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust have committed to cooking all inpatient meals from scratch using as many UK-based suppliers as possible.

Sheffield Hallam University is [a leading provider of Undergraduate and Masters degrees in Food and Nutrition](#) with students often having the opportunity to complete placements with health and nutrition organisations in the city.

The [Sheffield's Sweet enough](#) campaign, run by Sheffield City Council and partners, is helping local families, food businesses, schools and healthcare professionals tackle the harms caused by eating too much sugar.

See section 2a for details of organisations delivering support via cooking programmes.

See section 3a for details of the HAF programme, FSM auto-award, and Food Works' summer holiday offer.

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

ShefFood is also a named partner in a multi-million £ bid for a UKRI-funded population health cluster on diet-related health inequalities across the lifecourse, led from the University of Sheffield (outcome expected Oct 2023).

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

Silver Benchmark:

- Sustainable food enterprises have become a significant part of your local food economy and are positively reshaping the high street and wider food environment.

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

- *Retail, tourism, planning and economic development strategies, policies and services actively support the development and long-term success of healthy and sustainable food businesses and a circular food economy.*
- *Protect and/or re-establish vital sustainable food infrastructure to support shorter and value-based supply chains, such as local processing and wholesale businesses, food markets, livestock markets, food hubs, and distribution networks.*
- *Protect county/council farms and ensure they are used for sustainable food production, and the development of sustainable enterprises.*
- *Support sustainable farmers, retailers, and other entrepreneurs by providing vocational training, business planning advice, grants and financial advice, and access to land and premises through special loan and lease options and business rates reductions and holidays.*
- *Work to improve the diversity of the retail offer by supporting more independent retail and market stalls and more value-based retail, such as Better Food Traders and the Pantry model.*

Food at the heart of city- centre redevelopment in Sheffield

As part of the Council's flagship redevelopment scheme, £470m has been injected into the [Heart of the City](#) with [food and drink being a key part](#) of this redevelopment, including Cambridge Street Collective which will be a 27,000sq ft food hall [hosting over 24 kitchens, a cookery school and more](#).

Kommune, which was part of a previous redevelopment of Sheffield City Centre, has recently been named [the best street food market outside of London](#), hosting a 16,000sq ft space for 11 different food vendors.

Other examples of food at the heart of the city's redevelopment include a [new food hall recently given the go ahead](#) by Sheffield City Council to revitalise a vacant Debenhams department store.

Business Sheffield

Sheffield has frequently been [ranked in the top cities UK-wide for starting a business](#); key to this is the work of [Business Sheffield](#) to support those wanting to start a business to get going. Food businesses benefitting from this to-date have included [Sheffield MADE](#), [Sheffield's Cheesemasters](#), and the [Chakra Lounge cafe](#).

In addition, [Marketing Sheffield](#), a branch of Business Sheffield who promote the city to newcomers and tourists have committed in the Local Food Action Plan to 'Promote sustainable food and nature-friendly food growing as an important part of '[Living in Sheffield](#)', via the Welcome to Sheffield website'.

Strengthening local value supply chains

Regather is a founder member of ShefFood and its founding director Gareth Roberts serves on the ShefFood steering group. Regather is values-based food in action. Regather runs a Soil Association certified fruit & vegetable box scheme supplying ~800 households per week with fresh Sheffield produce from [Regather Farm](#), [High Riggs](#), [Sheffield Organic Growers](#), and regional wholesalers [Organic North](#) and [The Organic Pantry](#), and Sheffield-made food products from [Forge Bakehouse](#), [Perfectionery](#), [Twin Cafe](#), [Birdhouse Tea](#), [Our Cow Molly](#), [Sheffield Honey](#) and [Just Preserves](#). Regather is a community benefit society, managed on cooperative principles, governed by members and pays the real living wage.

Regather has been working on a number of projects with the South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre surrounding local supply chains. They are currently consulting on the plans for a new food/ sustainability 'hub' in the Callow Mount area of Gleadless Valley. This development could provide a physical facility for food and/or environment-based businesses and social enterprises to strengthen their activities in the area. One of the key objectives of the Sustainability Centre (Theme 2) is to develop a regional food strategy. This will help to build intersectoral collaboration, and enable greater cohesion around supply chain policy and governance. Regather is also spearheading the creation of a farming cluster in the Moss Valley to unite growers in the area.

In addition, as part of the Synergy project (outlined above) ShefFood will be producing a paper on values-based food systems, targeted at the [journal of Agriculture and Human Values](#), based on our collaboration with [Bristol](#) and [Rotherham](#) Food Networks.

Food manufacturing in Sheffield and South Yorkshire

The [National Centre of Excellence for Food Engineering \(NCFE\)](#) at Sheffield Hallam University has recently commissioned research to better understand the food manufacturing landscape in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. Through this research, the NCFE has ambitions to collaborate with local food and drink manufacturers on health and sustainability innovations, for example via the NCFE's 'open innovation space' where SMEs can pilot innovative sustainable technologies to get these ready for market.

Manufacturer [Zeck](#) based in nearby Doncaster have already benefited from this collaboration in their journey to zero-carbon confectionery production.

Ethical retailers

There are many zero-waste, ethical shops across the city, including [Bare Alternative](#), [All Carrot no Stick](#), [Our Zero Waste Shop](#), [Unwrapped](#), [It's all about eco](#), [Down to Earth](#), [Beanies](#), [Refill Tree](#) and [Lembas](#), a speciality vegetarian and vegan wholefoods wholesaler that turned 40 this year. In addition, family-run international food retailer [Ozmen](#), a partner of Sheffood, has 3 stores across the city, stocking food from over 160 countries to ensure access to culturally appropriate foods.

Better food traders

[Better Food Traders](#) have increased their support and involvement in Sheffield, with [Bara Organics](#), All Carrot no Stick and Regather all now part of their network. In addition, Better Food Traders attended recent Good Food Economy and Procurement meetings to support the large scale caterers in the city to increase the amount of local food being used, using their experience of Food Hubs from down south (*see section 4b*).

Cooking for good

There are many enterprises cooking for good in Sheffield. For example, [Blend Kitchen](#) is a restaurant that cooks great food using lots of local produce and creates unique hospitality training and work experience opportunities for people marginalised by a lack of access to rights, resources and opportunities. Similarly, [Chef's Counter](#) runs ticketed food events from underused community spaces to keep them going and provide investment. Food Works hosts monthly bistro's, using surplus food to create a delicious 3 course meal for members of their community.

In addition, many restaurants are being nationally recognised for their outstanding service and commitment to using local food. This includes [Tonco](#), [Orange Bird](#), [Bench](#), [Juke and Loe](#) and [Joro](#).

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

- *Enable consumers to find local producers, shops, markets, cafes, and restaurants selling healthy and sustainable food via a well-promoted, easy to use on-line directory of local good food businesses.*
- *Promote local good food businesses to the public using a range of communication tools, including media features and promotions, 'restaurant weeks', food awards and other marketing, branding and business recognition schemes.*

- *Promote greater consumer spending in local independent and sustainable food businesses through the introduction of local currency and loyalty schemes and via promotional campaigns.*
- *Provide local producers with increased opportunities to promote and sell their produce directly to consumers through on-line platforms and the creation of new regular or permanent markets, box schemes, meet-the-producer events, and other initiatives.*

A thriving food scene

Sheffield is fortunate to have a thriving food scene, supported by increasingly strong networks to promote and drive the local economy. Observer Food Monthly recently named Sheffield "[the UK's Foodie Hotspot](#)" on their front cover, and there was a strong showing of Sheffield Businesses in the [Observer Food Monthly 2022 Awards](#). Consumer body [Which? is the latest to celebrate the city, listing Sheffield No.2 in their Top UK Cities for Food & Drink](#), highlighting Kelham Island, Sharrow Vale and Abbeydale Road as key food districts. [Sheffield also came 2nd on Time Out's 2023 list of 18 best city-break destinations](#), referencing the city's food scene as a key part of this.

[Welcome to Sheffield](#), who promote the city to an increasing number of tourists and budding-Sheffielders, have a fantastic directory of great food places, for tourists and locals alike. In addition, [DINE Sheffield](#), has a directory of restaurants in Sheffield city centre, and will host their 7th restaurant week in October 2023. This, coupled with the ever-increasing number of [ShefFood partners](#) who run fantastic sustainable food businesses in the city, provides many opportunities to get to know, and promote, Sheffield's food scene.

Box Schemes

Sheffield is home to numerous box schemes, which increased in popularity during lockdown. These include Regather (see 4a), [Beanies](#), [Sheffield Organic Growers](#), [Moss Valley Market Garden](#), [Barra Organics](#) and [Stannington Fruit and Veg](#). All of these schemes source veg locally, many organic, and are members of the ShefFood partnership.

Groak Food Discovery App

An [app](#) is in the progress of being developed to connect local growers with businesses in the city.

Sheffield Markets

Sheffield is home to 2 main [markets](#), run by Sheffield City Council, which have a proud history. Moor Market has over 90 independent food retailers, and Crystal Peaks, which recently turned 30, has over 100 independent retailers. In addition, following [plans recently passed by Sheffield Council](#) to work with vendors, new "mini street food markets"

are set to be created in Sheffield in a bid to draw visitors to the city centre to stimulate "a vibrant street food scene".

These markets are complemented by the independent businesses such as [Peddler Market](#) and [Steelyard in Kelham Island](#), and [Kommune food court](#) in the city centre (see section 4a). Including Kommune, Sheffield is home to 4 food-halls, with the [4th having just opened in July 2023](#).

Food Events

For the last 10 years, [Sheffield Food Festival](#) has drawn tens of thousands of visitors to Sheffield City Centre to celebrate food and drink in the region and beyond. This year was no different, with new festival producers Swan Events bringing even more energy to this year's event and 90% of traders being local. Their community section in the Winter Gardens allowed community food organisations to have a presence at the event, and encourage passers by to learn and engage with Sheffield's Food System.

In addition, 2023 was the first year of [Soundbite Sheffield](#), a small food and drink festival in the city centre, hosting six street food vendors alongside music from up and coming artists in Sheffield.

Local Sheffield Brands

There are many fantastic brands which come from the city including [Henderson's Relish](#), [Our Cow Molly](#), [Sheffield Honey Company](#), [Yee Kwan Ice Cream](#), [Yorkshire Crisps](#), [Sheffield Cheese Masters](#), [Beres Pork Shop](#), [Moss Valley Fine Meats](#), to name a few.

Sheffield MADE

[Sheffield MADE](#) ensures local traders can always offer their products to a wide market, and also supports the vitality and sustainability of Sheffield's independent food scene, by delivering products from Sheffield's independent stores straight to consumers via their online store.

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

Silver Benchmark:

- Healthy and sustainable food catering is becoming the norm across a full range of institutions, supported by strong local authority leadership.
- Evidence that significant levels of procurement by a range of institutions are benefitting local, sustainable, independent, and smaller scale producers and other food businesses.

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

- *The Council develops and formally adopts a sustainable food procurement policy and strategy that promotes healthy and planet friendly diets and incorporates specific commitments to source sustainable, local, and ethical products.*
- *Individual public sector bodies adopt healthy and sustainable food policies, including nutrition standards; healthy catering and vending; 'tap water only; local, organic, and other climate/nature friendly produce; responsibly caught/farmed fish; less but better meat and ethical standards such as Fairtrade.*
- *Public sector organisations and large private caterers achieve recognised healthy, sustainable, and ethical food accreditation, such as Food for Life Served Here, Marine Stewardship Council and Compassion in World Farming awards.*
- *Restaurants and other small-scale catering outlets improve their food offering as part of national accreditation schemes such as Food for Life Served Here.*

ShefFood's Good Food Economy and Procurement Working Group

Anchor institutions across Sheffield are all committed, individually and collectively, to build more sustainable supply chains for the city.

Collectively, [Sheffield Teaching Hospitals](#), [UNICUS](#) (The University of Sheffield's catering company), [Sheffield College](#), and [Taylor Shaw](#) (who hold the school food contract for most of the city) attend regular meetings as part of the good food economy and procurement working group. They are joined by members of [Business Sheffield](#) from both the local authority (who help consider how SMEs can upscale and work with large caterers) and [SYMCA](#) (who consider regional opportunities for investment and collaboration).

A good example of this collaboration was the May 2023 meeting where we were joined by representatives from Sheffield City Council, and advisors from the Soil Association's Food for Life programme. We were considering what a **city wide standard for catering** would look like, as well as offering **support to caterers writing their food plans and policies for the coming years**. This meeting is certainly the start to creating city-wide policies around sustainable food procurement.

Nationally Recognised Sustainable Procurement

- [UNICUS](#) has been working with Sheffield Dairy **Our Cow Molly** to reduce its plastic waste by 87,000 plastic bottles a year by replacing them with milk churns. They have also been working on a [UKRI project called 'many happy returns'](#), collaborating with Vytal to encourage the uptake of reusable cups and bowls. In addition, **Tap water is available for free** on the University campus.
- [Sheffield Hallam University](#) distributes **free reusable cups** at their welcome week, and then gives customers a 20p discount. They have also installed a **biodigester** in their catering facility. It consumes 100 kg of food waste, saving 5 tonnes of food from general waste disposal each year. Hallam also uses **Our Cow Molly**, Bread from local baker [Roses](#) and cookies from Sheffield Hallam Graduate [Dough Boy](#).
- [Sheffield Teaching Hospitals](#) is often a case study for Love British Food. They have committed to **cooking all in-patient meals from scratch** and using as many **UK based suppliers as possible**. They offer a wider variety of options for different medical needs, such as **texture modified meals**.
- UNICUS, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals, Sheffield Hallam and Sheffield College all purchase coffee from [Cafeology](#) who source all of their coffee directly from the growers, and try to be '100% ethical in everything [they] do'.
- MSC certified fish is used by UNICUS, Taylor Shaw, Sheffield College and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals.
- [Taylor Shaw](#) holds the Sheffield schools catering contract, providing meals in 95 schools, nurseries and children's centres across the city. They source food **regionally and locally** wherever possible and give preference to **fair trade** and **fresh in-season ingredients**. Meals include **farm assured meats, free range eggs, sustainably sourced fish** and are designed to **maximise students' fruit and veg consumption**
- [Eat Smart](#), as run by learn Sheffield, focuses on a **whole school approach to food and nutrition**. It aims to give schools the tools they need to make long term changes to their food culture and curriculum to support healthy behaviours. The programme places a particular focus on the **20% most deprived areas** of the city. They work closely with **Food for Life** and encourage schools towards their awards. This has proved a great way to demonstrate that a school is doing fantastic work to provide healthy school meals, great lunchtimes and food education that has a positive impact on both pupils and the wider community.

Sustainable Food in Sheffield City Council

At a council level, Sheffield City Council, Fairer Healthier Greener, outlines the council's commitment to consider how they can adopt sustainable standards for internal catering.

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

Increasing collaborations

The formation of the Good Food Economy and procurement working group has created significant opportunities for collaborations. In meetings, caterers are able to share and help solve their problems: from where to source the cheapest eco cups, to their struggle to find enough free range eggs in recent months.

Since the first meeting, there has been a clear overarching agenda to increase local supply chains. This would have major impacts in Sheffield's economy as collectively they feed over 150,000 meals per week.

Mapping 'local' suppliers and understanding routes to market

ShefFood worked with a geography student at The University of Sheffield to [map all suppliers of the local caterers](#), creating an accessible directory of local suppliers.

Through working with Business Sheffield, we are able to understand how routes to market work for food-based SMEs in Sheffield, and try to connect dots to understand what support they might need, as well as promoting opportunities to tender for large scale caterers in their newsletter, which goes out to thousands of businesses across South Yorkshire. Further, as most caterers see 'local' as South Yorkshire, and NHS procurement through the ICB happens at a South Yorkshire level, we have been working closely with supply chain specialists in SYMCA to develop a proposal for a food hub in Sheffield (*see below*).

A Food Hub for Sheffield

We have developed a draft plan for a feasibility study for food hubs for Sheffield. We are aiming to commence the feasibility study by the end of September, to understand the needs of caterers in Sheffield, and then will follow with appropriate next steps.

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

Silver Benchmark:

- Effective strategic and systemic responses, including by the local authority, to address the negative climate and nature impacts of the local food system.

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

- Declare a climate and nature emergency and work with public sector institutions, businesses and citizens to deliver a joint strategy to drastically reduce the climate and nature impact of your local food system, as outlined in the 'Every Mouthful Counts' Declaration and Guide.

- Develop and deliver a land use and management strategy that protects, enhances, and makes available land for both community growing and commercial sustainable agriculture.
- Protect county/council farms and ensure they are used for sustainable food production and sustainable enterprise development.
- Provide farmers, growers and land managers with training, advice, and support on how to adopt agroecological production and management techniques
- Provide food businesses with support to improve resource efficiency and sustainability across all aspects of their business.
- Deliver place-wide campaigns to promote a mainstream shift to sustainable food – including (but not limited to) Veg Places (SFP), Food for the Planet (SFP) and Fair Trade campaigns.
- Use planning policy to protect food production and consumption, e.g., create a planning designation for assets of value to producing, transporting, and selling sustainable food (e.g., land, infrastructure, retail units).
- Assess the impact of the intensive agriculture in the area against the targets set out in the Environment Act and Water Framework Directives, and work towards placing a moratorium on new intensive industrial animal farming.

Declaring a climate emergency: 10 point plan.

Sheffield City Council [declared a Climate Emergency](#) in 2019, and a Biodiversity and Ecological Emergency in 2021. Alongside the climate emergency declaration, Sheffield City Council launched a 10-point plan for climate action which explicitly recognises land and food, as well as other relevant sectors as those to be prioritised for decarbonisation.

A Sustainable land use strategy and management plan

Sheffield City Council has set [a target for the city to be zero carbon by 2030](#). This includes a commitment to supporting businesses in the city to reduce emissions, the decarbonisation of vehicles, and various actions on land use such as increasing tree cover, peatland restoration, natural flood management, and relaxing mowing.

In addition to council-owned land in urban areas, Sheffield City Council's Rural Estate comprises 3,000ha. [In 2022, Carter Jonas published a new Rural Estate Management Plan \(REMP\)](#). In the consultation that informed the report, the use of land for food production was identified as the 3rd most popular choice for the council's use of its Rural Estate after contributing to net zero targets and offsetting biodiversity loss/landscape recovery.

The REMP sets out a strategic ambition to contribute towards the council's net zero, environmental and sustainability targets via objectives such as working with tenants to make use of schemes that will deliver environmental outcomes (e.g. ELMS), encouraging tenants to incorporate educational activities into farm diversification, and enhancing biodiversity across the Estate.

Fairer, Healthier, Greener

In July 2023, Sheffield City Council's Strategy and Resources Policy Committee [formally approved 'Fairer, Healthier, Greener - A Food Strategy for Sheffield'](#) written in partnership with key food leaders in the city, including ShefFood. One of 3 core strands in this strategy is a commitment to future access to food by safeguarding our food system. The strategy sets out several 'priorities for action' for Sheffield City Council in this regard including:

- Setting out a consistent approach to incorporating climate impacts into contracts as part of the SCC 2030 route map.
- Consider adopting sustainable standards for internal catering.
- Participate in the Eat Trees Sheffield fruit tree and agroforestry project.
- Work with partners to identify spaces where food production and provision can be accommodated.

In light of the above commitment to accommodating food production on council-owned land, Sheffield City Council Parks and Countryside service are currently working with ShefFood and partner organisations to bring a disused plant nursery site back into productive use for food growing with benefit to Sheffield's local food supply chains and its local communities.

A city-wide response to the climate crisis

Beyond the remit of Sheffield City Council, many organisations across the city are working to address the negative climate and nature impacts of the local food system, many of which are partners of ShefFood. For example:

- There is a cluster of small scale agro ecological horticulturalists - Sheffield Organic Growers, Moss Valley Market Garden, and Regather Farm - in the Moss Valley in the South East of the city, and Freeman Bio-dynamic garden in the North of the city, all of which contribute to the low-carbon nature-friendly food agenda by growing organic fruit and vegetables distributed via short supply chains while working in partnership with nature.
- As of July 2023, [Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust have acquired Ughill Farm](#), a 132ha site on the Western Edge of the city which will be run as a 'nature-friendly farm', both facilitating nature recovery and generating learning to support the wider farming community to adopt nature-friendly practices.
- [Our Cow Molly](#) produce and process milk at their farm on the western edge of Sheffield, meaning low-carbon milk is available in supermarkets, veg box schemes, cafes and other outlets across the city. Prior to switching to Our Cow Molly milk, the University of Sheffield's milk had a 330-mile round trip, emphasising the value of local procurement by anchor institutions.

- The ShefFood Charter states that everyone in Sheffield should have, **by default**, access to healthy, sustainable and affordable food. [Food Works](#) are leading the way on making low-carbon food available to everyone regardless of income by providing meals cooked with local produce from the Food Works Farm and other local sites on a pay-as-you-feel basis in their social eating cafes and Just Meals offer.
- Many other climate-focused organisations in the city include food as part of their remit and are members of the ShefFood partnership, such as [Schools Climate Education South Yorkshire](#), and the [South Yorkshire Climate Alliance](#).
- Climate was one of 3 strands at the [2023 Festival of Debate](#) with many food-related talks and events with speakers from several ShefFood partner organisations.
- Sheffield is home to world-leading research clusters and programmes relating to sustainable food, such as the [Institute for Sustainable Food](#), the [H3](#) consortia, the [National Centre for Excellence in Food Engineering \(NCEFE\)](#), the [South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre](#) and the [Health Innovation Campus](#). All of these groups take seriously their civic duties, playing an important role in influencing food systems change not only in Sheffield and the South Yorkshire region, but nationally and globally too, via their research and strategic networking.
- In 2023, the [South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre](#) was launched with a key strand of work on ‘agri-food decarbonisation and environmental restoration’, which involves projects to decarbonise food through local, values-based primary production, and sequestration of CO2 using the food system. [Regather Cooperative](#) are a lead partner in this work and have been driving the development of local food infrastructure in the city for many years, with their work recently being recognised at a national level through shortlisting for BBC Food and Farming ‘Farming for the Future Award’.
- Various anchor organisations have sustainability and climate strategies containing explicit commitments around food. For example the [University of Sheffield’s strategy](#) commits to reducing the sale of high impact foods, investigating local and on-campus food growing, and reducing single use packaging and waste, while [Sheffield Hallam’s Climate Action Strategy](#) launched in May 2023 commits to creating a more sustainable catering offer.

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

- Publish a council-wide food use strategy to minimise food waste according to the food waste hierarchy.

- Establish a food waste collection scheme for homes and businesses that redirects food and food-related waste for composting, energy recovery (AD) or animal feed (where permitted).
- Promote community composting through the provision of resources and sites for communities to use.
- Provide a network of publicly accessible drinking fountains.
- Ensure the effective collection of consumable surplus food from all stages in the supply chain, from farms to retail, and redistribute it to organisations providing good quality food support for people in need.

A city-wide food use strategy

Sheffield City Council's [South Yorkshire Municipal Waste Strategy \(2017-2021\)](#) embeds the waste hierarchy, and contains a commitment to also support partners in the private and third sectors to process waste according to waste hierarchy principles.

In line with the Environment Act 2021, [Sheffield City Council has committed to implementing a permanent, citywide, weekly food waste recycling service by 2024/5](#). As a precursor to this, Sheffield City Council conducted a food waste recycling trial with the evaluation findings currently being analysed to shape the final implementation of the scheme. ShefFood and partners are currently liaising with Sheffield City Council in order to ensure that the final implementation delivers community and environmental benefit, for example by ultimately producing a nature-friendly growing medium available to growers in the city.

Maximising surplus food in the city

There is a strong and coordinated effort in the city to redirect surplus food for example through [Food Works](#) who collect, share and upcycle surplus food in their market and social eating spaces. Food is also used to cook frozen ready meals which are distributed to dozens of community organisations across the city. Any food unsuitable for human consumption is redirected to animal feed or compost for community growing activities. Similarly [FareShare Yorkshire](#) redistribute surplus food to over 400 community groups in Yorkshire including in Sheffield, and are engaged with the ShefFood partnership.

Composting in Sheffield

There are numerous small-scale community composting schemes in Sheffield at local community gardens and allotments such as [Firth Park Community Allotments](#), [Gleadless Valley Methodist Church Community Garden](#) (where people living on the estate nearby are encouraged to bring their food waste, fostering connection with the community growing project), and [Heeley and District Community Allotments](#).

As a first step towards developing larger scale schemes in Sheffield, in November 2022, members of the ShefFood Working Group visited a Liverpool composting social enterprise to see an example of a successful community composting scheme in action. The second step in this research was a review conducted by the University of Sheffield in partnership with Regather, on [Municipal Waste Management Policy and Strategy](#). ShefFood and partners are currently liaising with Sheffield City Council to ensure that this research is integrated into their municipal waste strategy. A recent report by John le Corney (Composting in the Community Network Chair and active member of the Growing and Composting Working Group) recommended conducting a community composting feasibility study, which ShefFood will explore going forwards.

Sheffield Action on Plastic

Single-use plastic campaign organisation, [Sheffield Action on Plastic](#), signed the ShefFood Charter in June 2023. The organisation operates a reusable cup hire scheme, plastic-free markets, and are working to support businesses with the transition to comply with incoming legislation banning single-use plastics.

Anchor institutions in the city are also working hard to improve packaging (as discussed in *section 5a*).

There are [over 200 locations in Sheffield where people can fill up their water bottles for free](#). These include both Universities (The University of Sheffield SU have prohibited the sale of bottled water), and many independent cafes and restaurants.

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

FOR PANEL USE ONLY

Comments from the panel on your application:

Outcome of application:

Recommendations for onward progress:

