

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

6th November 2023

MEETING OF CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following item(s) will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 5.15 pm on Thursday, 9th November, 2023.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN WALSH

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

3. **Update - Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership (Presentation- Beth Bell, Co-Chair of the Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership/ Mura Quigley- Adaptation and Resilience Advisor (Pages 1 - 26)**

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Update on the Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership
Date:	9 November 2023
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officers:	Debbie Caldwell, Climate Commissioner Mura Quigley, Adaptation and Resilience Advisor

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of the Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the report documenting the progress of the Sustainable Food Ambition as part of the Belfast Resilience Strategy; and II. Agree to allocate £30,000 of existing City and Organisational Strategy budget to develop a 3 year Sustainable Food Strategy for Belfast.
3.0	Main report

3.1	<p>Background</p> <p>This report gives Members an update on work that has been taking place on the development of a Sustainable Food Partnership for the city and seeks members support for the development of a city-wide food strategy for Belfast.</p> <p>In 2020, the Belfast Resilience Strategy identified Sustainable Food as an ambition for the city, stating that there is a need to examine the climate impacts and opportunities for an ongoing and city-wide programme of healthy and sustainable food, which will be critical to Belfast’s resilience as a city.</p>
3.2	<p>In 2021 Belfast signed up to the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration which is a commitment by local and regional governments to tackle the climate emergency through integrated food policies and a call on national governments to act. There is a recognition of the need to integrate climate issues and join up sustainable food working across the city in order to address some of the issues faced by Belfast and the region in terms of access to fresh, nutritious food, reversing biodiversity loss and reaching carbon net zero.</p>
3.3	<p>Belfast City Council’s Climate Team appointed a consultant team in 2022 to undertake engagement and research to review the existing Sustainable Food Places Bronze accreditation and propose a framework that would allow for the renewal of the Bronze Award and potential progression to Silver and Gold. The Council was also successful in June 2022 in securing funding from SFP for a 1.5 day per week Food Coordinator role to support this work for 2 years. The findings of the research conducted by Social Farms and Gardens, Dr Sinead Furey, Ulster University and Beth Bell, Food Ethics Council have been developed into a series of recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a need to join up food work across through the establishment of a Sustainable Food Partnership for Belfast which should be supported by the Climate and Inclusive Growth Teams in Belfast City Council. The proposed governance structure for this is shown in Appendix 1. 2. The new Sustainable Food Partnership should report into the Resilience and Sustainability Board, and be advised by the Living Here Board, to strategically align its work across the city with the priorities of the Belfast Agenda and build greater sustainability around the network. 3. A priority for SFP is the need to address the cost-of-living crisis and food poverty in the city by taking a holistic approach to building more sustainable, affordable and healthy food system for Belfast. It is recommended that work on food security should therefore sit within the SFP structures to ensure an integrated and sustainable approach to addressing these issues.
3.4	<p>Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership and progressing from Bronze to Silver status</p> <p>The Sustainable Food Partnership was re-established in August 2023 and is made up of a range of multi-sectoral partners, with secretariat support provided by the BCC Sustainable Food Coordinator. Further coordination internally across BCC is currently being considered, with an officer workshop planned in November to map sustainable food work in the Council and identify where value can be best created by coordinating across Council workstreams.</p>

In September 2023, an application was made for the city to renew its Sustainable Food Places Bronze Award. In order to progress to Silver, the Sustainable Food Partnership will need to develop a Sustainable Food Strategy for the City which should be co-designed by the partners and develop workstreams across six key areas of the food system:

1. Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action;
2. Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement;
3. Tackling food poverty and diet related ill-health and increasing access to affordable healthy food;
4. Creating a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy;
5. Transforming catering and procurement and revitalizing local and sustainable food supply chains;
6. Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food & farming and an end to food waste.

A sustainable food strategy for Belfast would allow the Partnership to map the current baseline of sustainable food activity in the city, align current workstreams that are underway, create a shared vision for sustainable food and what it looks like for the city, and develop a series of strategic themes that will catalyse collaboration and action in these areas for added value and to the benefit of residents, businesses and government.

A Sustainable Food Strategy for Belfast would also support the achievement of the city's climate and resilience goals which include reducing carbon emissions, reducing waste going to landfill, promoting positive behaviour change, helping grow the community and urban growing sector to produce and supply more fresh, local healthy produce in areas of need, and improve biodiversity through promotion of more sustainable food production methods.

3.5 Next steps

There is a substantial body of evidence and engagement which now needs to be collated and synthesised, along with wider public engagement and collaboration to develop a 3-year Sustainable Food Strategy for the city. This will include relevant impact screenings and assessments where identified.

It is estimated that the development of a 3 year Sustainable Food Strategy for Belfast will cost £30,000. This covers the cost of a suitably qualified consultant to carry out desktop research, engagement, develop a vision and strategic themes for the city, as well as identify a costed action plan for taking forward and securing investment and funding. It also covers the development of a Communications Strategy, and participation at key events taking place across the city such as the Imagine Festival to raise awareness, interest, and engage people on a sustainable food vision for the city

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

Approval is sought to allocate £30,000 of existing City and Organisational Strategy budget for the development of a City Wide Strategy for Sustainable Food in Belfast in this financial year.

3.7	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications</u> Any good relations or equality implications will be identified as part of the Council's screening process.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Governance Structure of the Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership



Belfast Climate Commission



Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership



Belfast Sustainable Food Network

(staff team led by senior council or other statutory official responsible to Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership, plus a range of other CVSE, Industry and Statutory representatives, including grassroots representation and people with lived experience of food issues.)



Initially setup as a Task and Finish Group to establish the SFP Partnership. Membership reviewed in 6 months.

This forum brings together a wide range of statutory, voluntary sector, business and academic stakeholders to advise on strategic direction and objectives for delivery.



Task and Finish/Working Groups established comprising a number of statutory bodies (often community planning partners), VCSE and business bodies. Each provides staff time directly or in the form of aligned work programmes, and financial resources in the form of aligned or pooled budgets. Reports on activity in each Key Theme area to the Partnership.

This page is intentionally left blank



Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership

Page 7

Beth Bell

Co-Chair of the Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership

Mura Quigley

Sustainable Food Coordinator for Belfast City Council

Why Sustainable Food?

Equivalent to

35%

of the UK's GHG emissions comes from our food and drink.*

*includes emissions overseas from imported food.

wrap.org.uk/GHGPathway

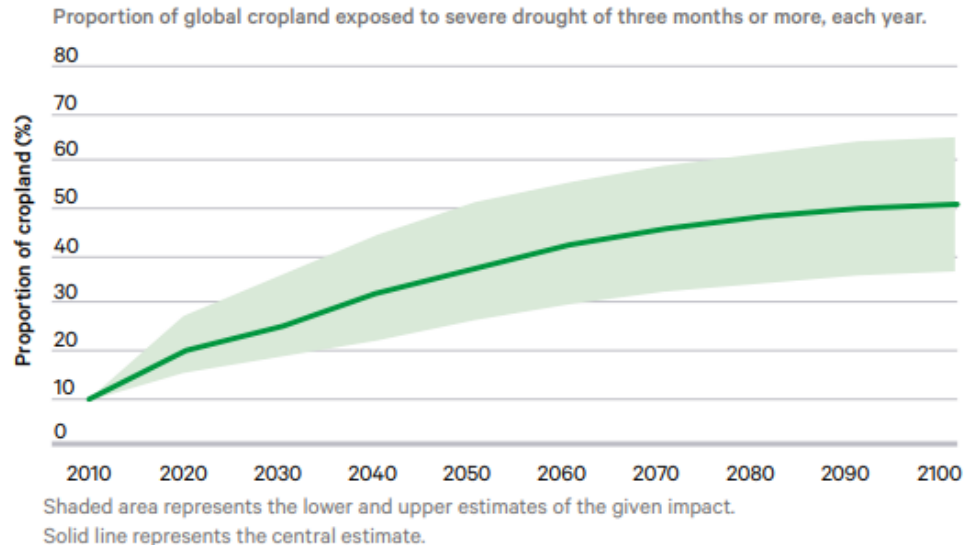


Why Sustainable Food?

50% more food needed

To meet global demand, agriculture will need to produce

almost 50 per cent more food by 2050. But yields could decline by 10 per cent in the absence of dramatic emission reductions.



Droughts 3 x worse by 2040

By 2040, the proportion of global cropland affected by severe drought – equivalent to that experienced in Central Europe in 2018 (50 per cent yield reductions) – will likely rise to 32 per cent each year, more than three times the historic average.

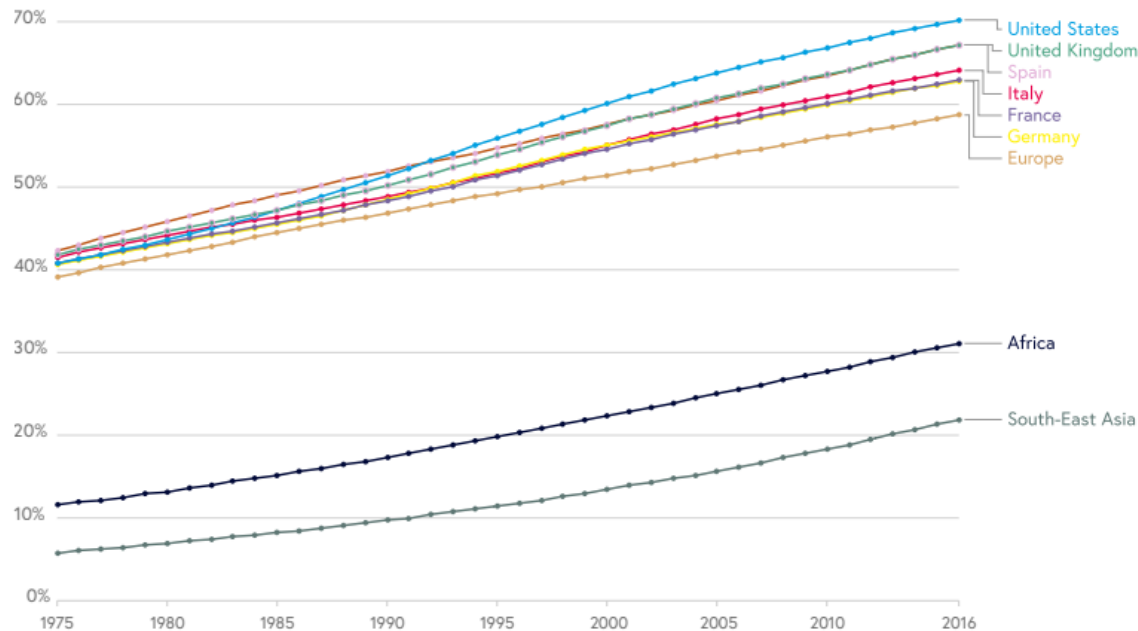
Why Sustainable Food?

WHY IT MATTERS

National
Food Strategy

The UK has one of the highest rates of obesity in Europe

SHARE OF ADULTS THAT ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE, 1975 TO 2016



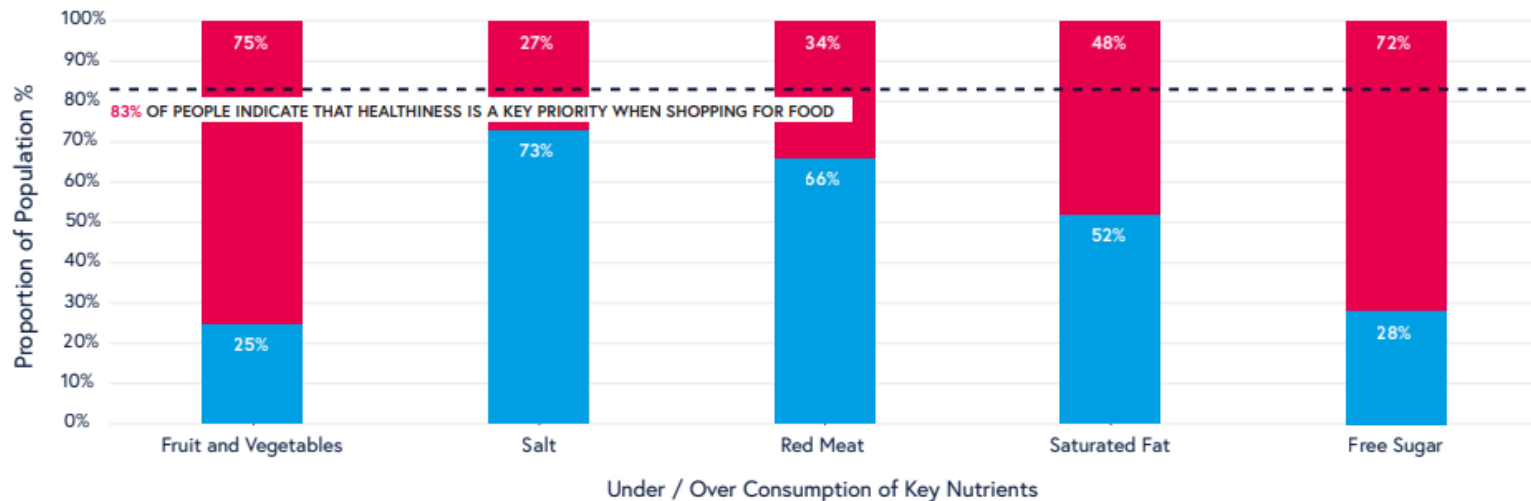
Being overweight is defined as having a body-mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 25. Obesity is defined by a BMI greater than or equal to 30. BMI is a person's weight in kilograms divided by his or her height in metres squared.

Why Sustainable Food?

IMPACT OF THE JUNK FOOD CYCLE ON OUR DIETS

National
Food Strategy

We mostly fail to meet dietary recommendations



We eat too little fruit and veg, fibre and oily fish.

We eat too much salt, saturated fat, sugar and red meat.

Less than 0.1% of the population meet all elements of the Eatwell Guide recommendations.

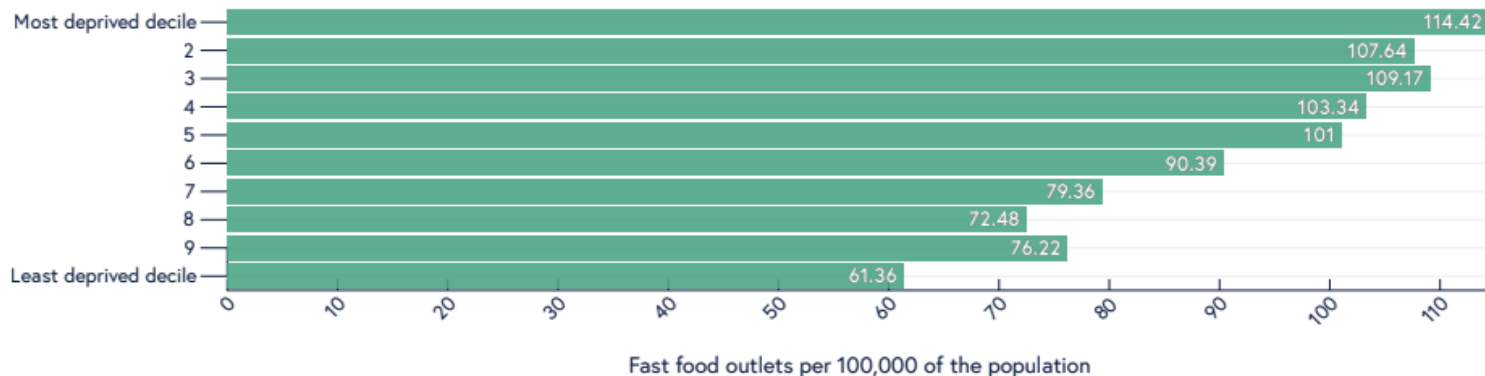
Why Sustainable Food?

IMPACT OF THE JUNK FOOD CYCLE ON OUR DIETS

National Food Strategy

Unhealthy food is easier to access: deprived areas have a higher density of fast-food outlets

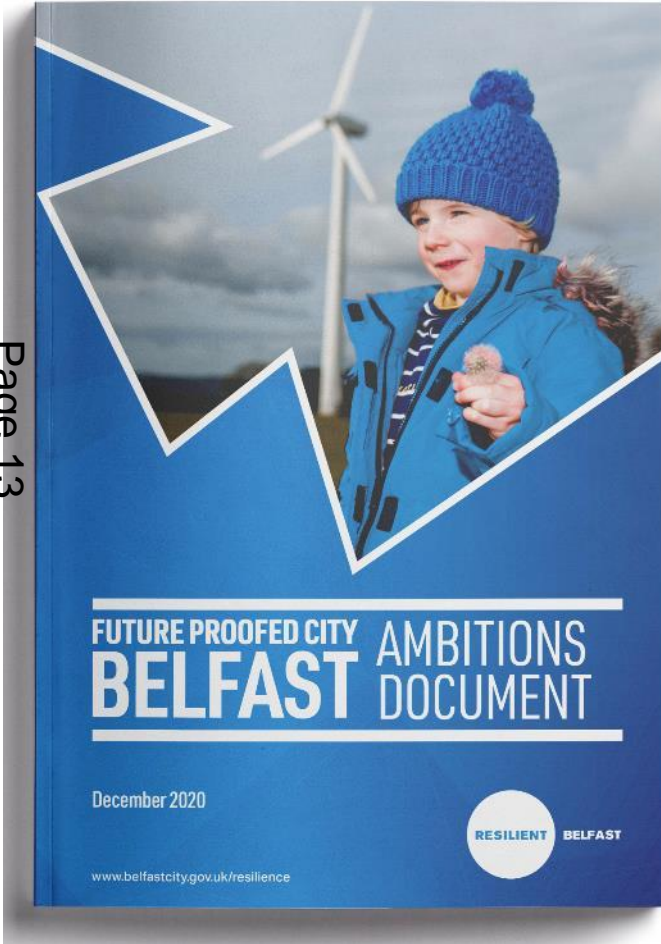
DENSITY OF FAST-FOOD OUTLETS PER 100,000 POPULATION, BY IMD DECILES, ENGLAND, 2014



The number of fast food shops also increased by eight per cent between 2014 and 2017.

What are we doing about it?

Page 13



11 Sustainability and Food

In developing this strategy, we have had insufficient time to look in detail at the city's food needs into the future, however this is a priority for strategy implementation. Working with partners across the city, a workstream examining the climate impacts and opportunities for an ongoing and city wide programme of healthy and sustainable food will be critical to Belfast's resilience.



- No poverty
- Zero hunger
- Good health and well-being
- Quality education

- Decent work and economic growth
- Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Reduced inequalities
- Responsible consumption and production

- Climate action
- Life below water
- Life on land
- Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Partnerships for the goals



GLASGOW FOOD AND CLIMATE DECLARATION

In 2021 Belfast signed up to the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration.

Page 14

A commitment by local and regional governments to tackle the climate emergency through integrated food policies and a call on national governments to act.

Run by IPES.

List of Signatories



Background in Belfast

Belfast Food Network was run through Northern Ireland Environment Link with support from Belfast City Council until recently.

Belfast achieved Bronze in 2016 recognising the coordination of efforts across the city.

BCC is being asked to lead on the setting up and coordination of a new Sustainable Food Partnership.

Opportunity for Climate Team & Inclusive Growth and Anti-poverty teams to co-lead.

Agreed and adopted by Community Planning Partners in March 2023.

Page 15



What is The Sustainable Food Partnership?

A cross sectoral partnership of organisations that work across the food system in Belfast.

Page 16

Driven by a passion to improve access to healthy, local, fresh food in Belfast, and build community wealth.

Doing it in a way that will help address the climate and nature emergency.



Strategic and collaborative approach



Active food citizenship & good food movement



Tackling food poverty and diet related ill health



Vibrant, prosperous and diverse food economy



Transforming catering, procurement & sustainable supply chains



Tackling climate, nature emergency and end to food waste



1. Food Governance & Strategy

Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action

DAERA Draft Food Strategy Framework Priorities

Page 17 Public sector food procurement (hospitals, prisons, schools, councils, universities etc.)

Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework

Vision

“A transformed food system that protects natural resources for future generations, is economically and environmentally sustainable and provides safe, nourishing, accessible food to people, who make informed healthy choices”.

Food at the Heart of our Society - A Prospectus for Change
Public Consultation Document
2021

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.



2. Good Food Movement

Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement

Promoting good food citizenship

Mapping what currently exists to identify gaps

Developing an urban growing/farming movement

Connecting people back to where their food comes from





3 Healthy Food for All

Tackling food poverty and diet related ill-health and increasing access to affordable healthy food

Need for better nutritional standards

Food Justice and ethics

Need to find an economic model that works around feeding people in food poverty. Transformation of system rather than increasing the number of food banks.

In NI, 94% children aged 11 to 18 not getting their 5 a day. 80% aged 65+ are not.

National diet and nutrition survey



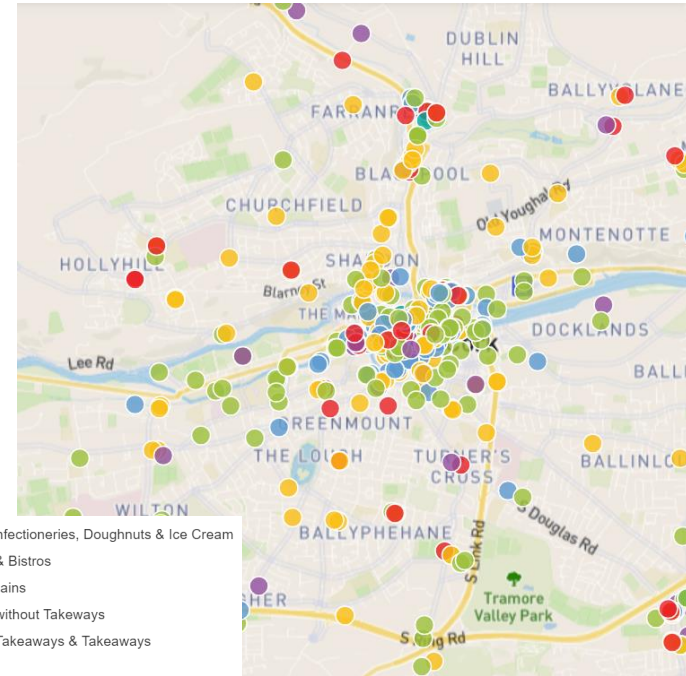
4 Sustainable Food Economy

Creating a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy

Increasing access to good food

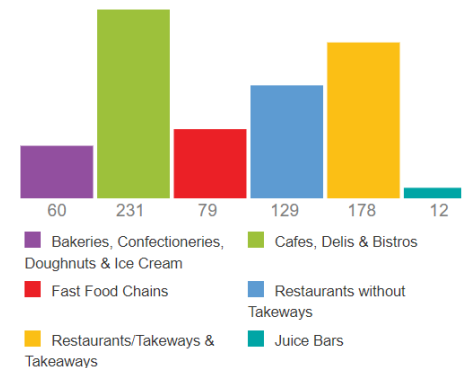
Page 20 Understanding the food economy of Belfast and where the gaps are (physically and what sectors need strengthened)

Bridging the Gap - partners hoping to pilot more effective models of working



Total Number of Outlets

Cork Healthy Cities
a healthier city together





5. Catering and Procurement

Transforming catering and procurement and revitalising local and sustainable food supply chains

Supporting, promoting businesses trying to source more sustainably

Page 21
Responding to greater plant-based diet choices by public

Key institutions and public expenditure in the city providing leadership on this

PLANTBASED TREATY



No meat please, we're British: now a third of us approve of vegan diet

A boom in plant-based diets means next year's Veganuary will attract more uptake than ever





6 Food for the Planet

Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food & farming and an end to food waste

Opportunities to reduce and recycle food waste better

Page 22 Sustainable Procurement Policy

Need to ensure a just transition so that no one gets left behind

Climate demonstrators underway in soils and biodiversity improvements as well as community growing,

Equivalent to
35%

of the UK's GHG emissions comes from our food and drink.*

*includes emissions overseas from imported food.

wrap.org.uk/GHGPathway





BELFAST CLIMATE COMMISSION

advises
→

The Belfast Agenda

continuing the conversation

Resilience and sustainability board

Living here board

Working and learning board

Growing the economy and city development board



establishes

Sustainable Food Partnership



BCC Internal Food Coordination Group

coordinates

Belfast Sustainable Food Network

organises and maps

Work Programmes and Task and Finish Groups setup to deliver key initiatives



Strategic and collaborative approach



Active food citizenship & good food movement



Tackling food poverty and diet related ill health



Vibrant, prosperous and diverse food economy



Transforming catering, procurement & sustainable supply chains



Tackling climate, nature emergency and end to food waste

What we have achieved so far...

1 public event in City Hall in June

2 partner workshops in 2022/2023

1 Partnership with 19 partners to date

An open Food Network for sharing ideas, learning, opportunities etc.

Application for City's Bronze Award from Sustainable Food Places

Supporting the development of a number of climate demonstrators



Thank You

A photograph of a person's hands holding a red apple in a green mesh shopping bag. The person is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. The background is a blurred market setting with warm lights.

Page 25

Beth Bell

Co-Chair of the Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership

Mura Quigley

Sustainable Food Coordinator for Belfast City Council

This page is intentionally left blank