

# BARNET FOOD PLAN

## 2022-2027

Caring for people, our places and the planet

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# Foreword

We are delighted to launch the Barnet Food Plan that acknowledges the food challenges and opportunities for those who live, work and study in Barnet.

Now, more than ever, as we face a cost-of-living crisis and a climate crisis, it is important that we acknowledge the significant role that food plays in our lives. From its nutritional and cultural value, to bringing us together at the table, and as part of our local economy, the food system is an integral part of our daily lives.

This Plan has been developed by listening to local communities, using evidence of what works elsewhere and with a great involvement of our community and voluntary sector and various internal and external stakeholders.

A big thank you goes to all those who contributed to and co-ordinated the production of this report. We want to ensure that the Plan is delivered, and its aims achieved - therefore implementation of the Plan will be monitored via Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Board.



**Councillor Alison Moore**  
Chair, Barnet Health  
and Wellbeing Board



**Dr Tamara Djuretic**  
Director of Public Health  
and Prevention



# Introduction

Food impacts every aspect of our lives:

- It can provide important connections to our family, culture and nation.
- It is exchanged and shared with others; sitting down to eat with loved ones is important for social wellbeing.
- Agriculture and food production have an enormous impact on soil health, biodiversity, and carbon emissions
- The local food economy provides jobs and help make our town centres vibrant places to live and work
- Good food is important to our physical and mental health and wellbeing throughout our lives

However, insufficient food is a cause of stress and poor health. This Food Plan recognises that with the current cost-of-living pressures, there are more people in Barnet who struggle to provide good food for themselves and their families. This plan also recognises how a healthy food environment and vibrant food economy can enhance our health and wellbeing and neighbourhoods and town centres.

Finally, we know that food is also one of the most significant contributors to UK greenhouse gas emissions. Local councils play an important role in reducing emissions linked to local food systems. This Food Plan recognises Barnet's Net Zero by 2030 target with specific actions around food waste and procurement, in line with recommendations from the National Food Strategy (2021). This Food Plan has also been developed in line with guidance from the National Food Strategy which recommends that local authorities should put in place a food strategy in partnership with the communities they serve.



# Our Vision

Our vision is for everyone who lives, works and studies in Barnet to have access to affordable, healthy food.

We want Barnet to be a healthy place, where the high street and food environment promote health and wellbeing and residents have access to food growing opportunities.

We will continue to strengthen partnership and coordination between all actors in the food system, and leverage opportunities to decrease our carbon footprint linked to food waste and food production and consumption.



# Building on the Barnet Food Security Action Plan

The Barnet Food Plan 2022-2027 builds on the Barnet Food Secure: Action Plan 2019-2021. It expands on the previous action plan to include the wider food system in Barnet as well as issues around sustainability and climate.

The Food Security Action Plan was the council's first plan for tackling food insecurity, and it focused primarily on increasing our understanding of what is delivered through the voluntary and community sector organisations, as well as raising awareness of the challenges presented by food poverty across the council.

An overview of the achievements of the Food Security Action Plan is below. However, the scope of actions already undertaken across Barnet extends beyond these aims and objectives and beyond the council's reach.

There is incredible work going on across Barnet in local communities including allotments projects and school initiatives on food growing. To celebrate the contributions made by our communities, we have highlighted just a few of the amazing projects being delivered.



# Reviewing the Food Security Action Plan 2019-2021

Since the publication of the Food Security Action Plan (2019), much passion, hard work, resilience and determination has gone into delivering the plan.

Our Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) continues to deliver programmes that are essential to achieving a food secure Barnet. Their response to the COVID-19 pandemic provides an excellent example of what can be achieved when we share knowledge, work together with local communities and join-up our resources.

The Barnet Food Steering Group has also provided a forum for bringing food actors from across the council together, helping to keep good food on the agenda and ensuring a joined-up approach is taken at policy level.

On the next page is a brief summary of progress made against actions outlined in our Food Secure Barnet Action Plan (2019).



# Our Achievements to Date

Our 2019 Action Plan Commitment:	Progress Made:
<p>Get a commitment from different stakeholders about integrating food security into service areas when policies/strategies are up for renewal.</p>	<p>Food security is an identified priority in the Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2023 and the Barnet Plan 2021-2025.</p>
<p>Investigate new policies that the council can adopt which will help prevent food insecurity.</p>	<p>Partners continue to work together to look at how food policy can be integrated into financial vulnerability policies, migrant health and workstreams to tackle inequalities.  <b>Healthier High Streets</b> was launched in March 2022 to support our high streets to promote health and wellbeing via business behaviour change of which good and healthy food is one aspect.</p>
<p>Improve access to food education and utility budgeting skills for residents</p>	<p><b>Community Innovation Fund (CIF)</b> has supported a number of food growing, food security and healthy eating programmes run by the VCS. One of these programmes was <b>GROW</b> at Totteridge Academy who delivered a 'Grow-Cook-Share' project between Apr-Sept 2022. It supported 10 families who experience poverty, personal, or social barriers to learning, healthy living, and access to green spaces. These families were able to use dedicated growing space at Totteridge Academy. Each family received 12 food growing sessions, one nutrition session and one cooking session, a celebration event and an intro and exit consultation. CIF has also supported <b>Give. Help. Share.</b>, an organisation set up in January 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They supply food bags with recipes to families and children, as well as providing food education workshops for primary-aged pupils across Barnet.</p>
<p>Investigate new policies that the council can adopt which will help prevent food insecurity.</p>	<p>BOOST also delivered a series of <b>budget cooking webinars</b> with Bread n Butter throughout 2021/22 which worked in tandem with the online videos and recipes Bread n Butter created for our resource hub. Colindale Community Trust also ran a series of workshops on cooking and healthier eating.</p>
<p>Improve links between food aid services and primary care mental health support; Embed food security within social prescribing</p>	<p>Barnet launched its <b>Making Every Contact Count (MECC)</b> service. MECC factsheets on a range of topics are available on the Barnet website. MECC interactive eLearning training is now freely available for all council staff, healthcare professionals and volunteers to access. The factsheets and how to access the training is available at <a href="https://www.barnet.gov.uk/MECC">https://www.barnet.gov.uk/MECC</a></p>

<p><b>Support at-risk children to access food 365 days of the year</b></p>	<p><b>Barnet Active Creative Engaging (BACE) Holidays</b> is Barnet’s programme that provides healthy food and enriching activities to children and young people who are in receipt of benefit-related Free School Meals (FSM) during the Holidays. In 2021, 6,093 children attended BACE holiday programmes, 20,000+ hot meals were provided to vulnerable children, 15000+ nutritional snack bags were given out and 2000 activity packs were provided to support online delivery.</p>
<p><b>Actively encourage uptake of Free School Meals in low uptake areas.</b></p>	<p>Due to the pandemic, this workstream has not been actively encouraged. Instead, Free School meal uptake has been routinely monitored and reported on via the Barnet Food Security dashboard.</p>
<p><b>Increase uptake of Healthy Start.</b></p>	<p>Healthy Start data is now published on the Council’s website as part of the wider food security dashboard. Nationally, the decision to move the vouchers to digital has led to new challenges, however in long term this is likely to have a positive impact on uptake and it will also make it easier for more people to use the Healthy Start card (improving availability).</p>
<p><b>Identify opportunities to work with food aid organisations.</b></p>	<p>The <b>Essential Supplies Hub</b> was set up at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, to respond to the urgent need for food distribution in Barnet. It was supported by more than 600 volunteers, supplying more than £140,000 worth of resident support packages. Barnet Together took over the running of the <b>Food Hub</b> at the end of 2020. It continues to support 16 food banks in the borough. In 2021, they provided more than 100,000 food parcels to residents in need. The strategic responsibilities of the Food Hub have continued to grow. They play an important role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting as a central point of contact for statutory and community partners regarding food support</li> <li>• Running foodbank network meetings and a platform to engage directly with front line services</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide resources to assist voluntary organisations with referral processes.</b></p>	<p><b>SPACE Food Bank Manager App</b> was funded via the Greater London Authority Challenge Incubation Grant. It allows foodbanks to easily track the amount of food given out, raise alerts for specific items needed most and make it easier to share data around foodbank use with the council. We will also be able to track how many foodbank users have been referred/where they are referred into council support services. Additionally, Barnet’s MECC service has factsheets and training that Voluntary Community Sector organisations can use to make referrals to other services.</p>
<p><b>Run public campaigns to increase awareness of food security/insecurity.</b></p>	<p>Barnet Together support campaigns and donations directly to our food banks. Barnet Public Health also ran a campaign on budget healthy eating using a series of videos and recipe cards produced by Bread n Butter.</p>
<p><b>Enhance ability to monitor food insecurity rates within the borough and whether needs have changed.</b></p>	<p><b>Barnet Food Security Resource Hub</b> provides an overview of food bank information, budget cooking and healthy eating resources, free school meals, Healthy Start and support for older adults. Monthly food bank use data is published for the 16 food banks registered with the Barnet Food Aid network and free school meal uptake and Healthy Start uptake is also monitored.</p>

# Existing Initiatives to Build On

## Incredible Edible Barnet

Incredible Edible Barnet was set up in 2016 with the aim of increasing the amount of food grown in public places for the community to see and share. A small group of volunteers grow fruit, vegetables and edible flowers outside a church in New Barnet (with a previous plot in a pub car park in East Barnet), some for passers-by to pick and some for the local food bank.

The garden is managed organically with nature and the planet in mind so they can also support local wildlife. One of their goals is to show people what growing food organically in the UK looks like, helping to raise awareness of the environmental, nutritional and health benefits of home growing. Volunteers include experienced gardeners and first-time growers wanting to learn how to grow some of their own food.

They grow many plants that people can easily try at home. Incredible Edible also share tips about food growing via email or on social media to encourage more people to give it a go. The group is happy to help others wanting to start their own community food growing space in the borough and encourage people to get in touch with any queries.

They are also inviting anyone interested to join one of their community events – further information can be found on their website:

**<https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk/find-a-group/incredible-edible-barnet/>**



## School Gardens

An increasing number of schools across Barnet have planted school gardens which provide important benefits for both students, their families, and the wider community. For pupils, school gardens provide opportunities to grow vegetables and understand more about food production and diets; improve concentration; promote responsible behaviour; and provide skills. Tudor Primary School and Frith Manor Primary School were recently awarded School Garden Grants from School Food Matters.

For Tudor Primary School, this grant has enabled the creation of a new multi-purpose school garden-with plans to host activities for the local community, including garden tastings; cooking events; marketplaces-food stalls; gardening workshops; with targeted sessions for special schools and care homes.

The grant awarded for Frith Manor Primary School is being used to extend the existing school garden to increase variety and yield of crops, providing further opportunities for all students to get involved. There are also plans to introduce cooking classes. The school garden has been integrated into the school curriculum to ensure children actively learn about food growing and healthy eating.

## The Impact Store, Finchley

The Impact Store is a zero-waste shop based in Finchley, selling bulk food without plastic packaging and offering a container refill service to customers.

Their mission is to help people build a more sustainable, low waste life. They are also committed to improving the food supply chain, working with their supplier to minimise single-use plastics.

Find out more about the Impact Store by visiting their website:

**<https://impactstore.co.uk>**



# Development of the Barnet Food Plan 2022-2027

The development of this Food Plan started in 2021, with a comprehensive needs assessment undertaken by Public Health. At the same time Public Health commissioned the Bartlett School of Planning at University College London (UCL) to conduct research into food security and civil society in Barnet.

The report outlines the priorities, activities, and aspirations of local civil society organisations working on food security in the borough. Both the needs assessment and UCL report helped shape the evidence base, key themes, and actions for this Food Plan.

Following the development of the Draft Barnet Food Plan, Public Health undertook a series of engagement and consultation activities outlined below between June 2022 and October 2022 to seek feedback on the overall Food Plan, its guiding principles, key themes, and actions.

The consultation recommendations have been integrated into the final version of the Food Plan. A full consultation report is available and describes all findings from this consultation period.

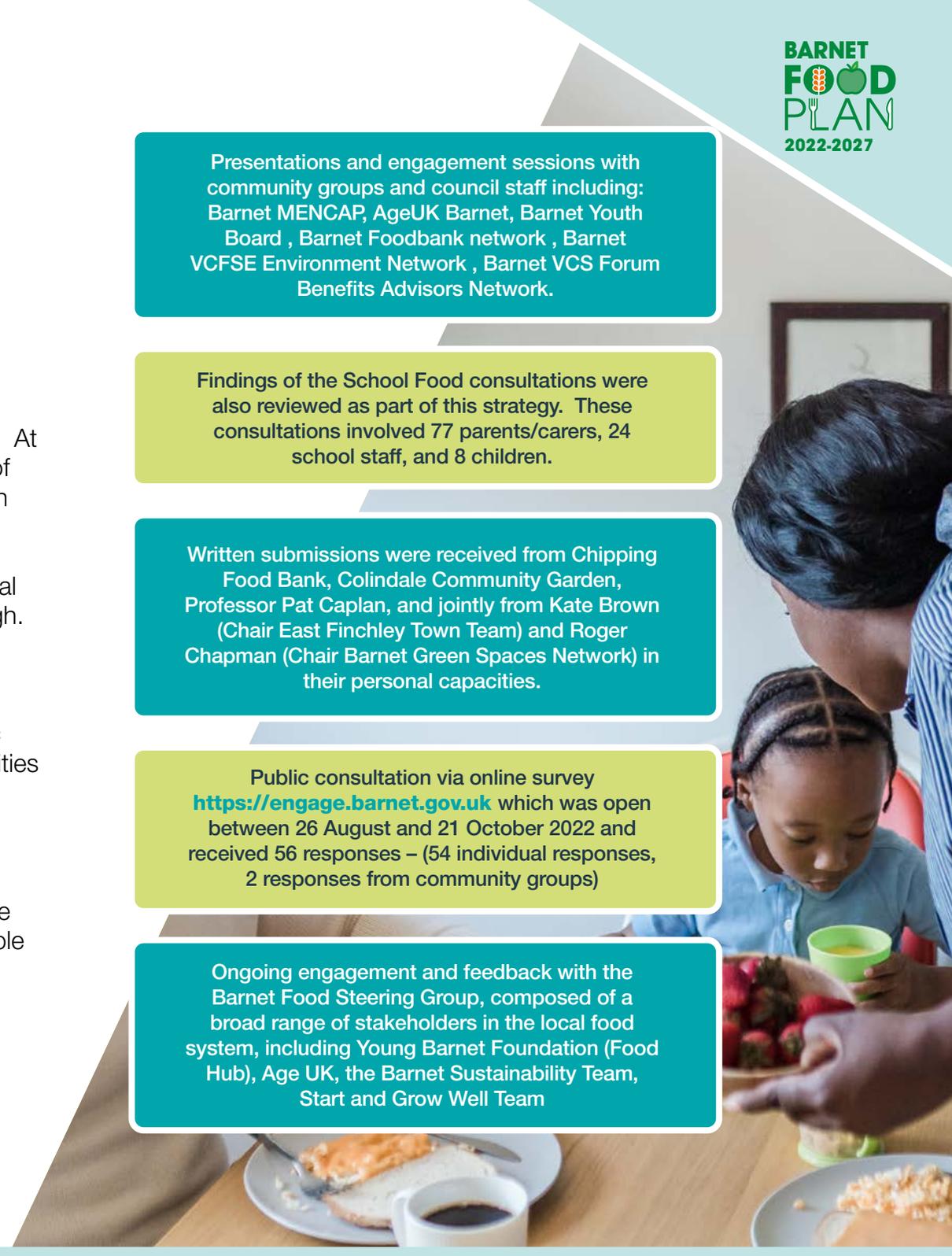
Presentations and engagement sessions with community groups and council staff including: Barnet MENCAP, AgeUK Barnet, Barnet Youth Board, Barnet Foodbank network, Barnet VCFSE Environment Network, Barnet VCS Forum Benefits Advisors Network.

Findings of the School Food consultations were also reviewed as part of this strategy. These consultations involved 77 parents/carers, 24 school staff, and 8 children.

Written submissions were received from Chipping Food Bank, Colindale Community Garden, Professor Pat Caplan, and jointly from Kate Brown (Chair East Finchley Town Team) and Roger Chapman (Chair Barnet Green Spaces Network) in their personal capacities.

Public consultation via online survey <https://engage.barnet.gov.uk> which was open between 26 August and 21 October 2022 and received 56 responses – (54 individual responses, 2 responses from community groups)

Ongoing engagement and feedback with the Barnet Food Steering Group, composed of a broad range of stakeholders in the local food system, including Young Barnet Foundation (Food Hub), Age UK, the Barnet Sustainability Team, Start and Grow Well Team



# Links to other council strategies and plans

## **Barnet Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – 2021-2025**

This strategy sets out the commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of those who live, work and study in Barnet.

## **The Barnet Plan – 2021-2025**

The Barnet Plan sets out the four priorities for the borough, including the 'Healthy' priority, dedicated to enabling residents to live happy and healthy lives.

## **BarNET ZERO**

The council's sustainability campaign communicating our journey, working together to achieve net zero by 2030 as a council and as a borough by no later than 2042.

## **Children and Young People's Plan – 2019-2023**

This sets out the plan for ensuring that the borough is an excellent place to live for children and their families.

## **Barnet Life Chances Strategy 2020-2024**

This strategy sets out the approach to improving life chances in Barnet. It outlines how we will work to improve young lives and increase their opportunities to succeed.

## **Fit and Active Barnet Framework 2022-2026**

The framework sets out Barnet's ambition to create a more active and healthy borough and how we plan to achieve this by working across a varied partner network.

## **Barnet Growth Strategy 2020-2030**

The Growth Strategy sets out our approach to growth and development in the borough and delivering opportunities for residents to live happy, healthy and independent lives.

## **Barnet Social Value Policy 2021-2025**

This policy includes Barnet's approach to delivering social value and how the services it commissions creates positive outcomes for people and places in Barnet.

# Guiding Principles

The following set of guiding principles will ensure continuity between each action across all three themes, building on the strengths of other workstreams and ensuring our key priorities remain the focus of every strand.



**Data led decision making:** We will build a robust evaluation framework into everything we do. Making sure we are receiving information on what works/doesn't work. Data will be delivered in the form of feedback from residents as well as quantitative data.



**Tackle inequalities:** We will ensure our actions support those at greatest risk of poor health outcomes. Activities will take an equitable approach, targeting populations, localities and ages where there is the greatest need.



**Asset-based approach:** We will use our strengths to maximise opportunities, building on the skills, knowledge and assets of communities and pooling our resources effectively.



**Food that is good for health:** We will ensure the food choices we are promoting provide residents with the nutrients they need to live a healthy and active life across the life stages.



**Recognise the cultural and social role of food:** Food contributes to our social and cultural experiences, often playing a significant role on our emotional wellbeing and social capital. When supporting healthy and sustainable food, our actions will ensure culturally relevant and socially acceptable food is available to all.



**Sustainable approach to food:** Food that is locally sourced and supports our climate and sustainability ambitions will be promoted across all actions in the plan.



**Support partnerships:** We will enhance our community support network and inbuilt council steering group for work around food. This will bring together partners delivering on health, sustainability, food economies and poverty reduction to achieve common aims.

# Evidence Review

The Barnet Food Security Needs Assessment and University College London (UCL) Report on Food Security and Civil Society in Barnet were both undertaken from December 2021-March 2022.

The purpose of our food security needs analysis was to understand the wider challenges currently facing our food system and the purpose of the UCL review was to understand the impact of these challenges at a local level, particularly for residents living with food insecurity. The findings from our needs analysis can be grouped into three main challenges facing our food system: health of the population, health of the planet and food insecurity. Our needs analysis also explored the drivers of our eating habits.



## Health of the Population

A well-balanced diet provides us with the energy we need to stay strong and healthy, helping to prevent diet-related illness, and providing us with the nutrients we need for growth and replenishment. In addition to satisfying physical needs, food can be used to satisfy social and emotional needs, contributing to psychosocial wellbeing. It plays an important role in supporting mental wellbeing, educational attainment, and resilience. Overall, improving what we eat and how we eat presents a major opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of the population.

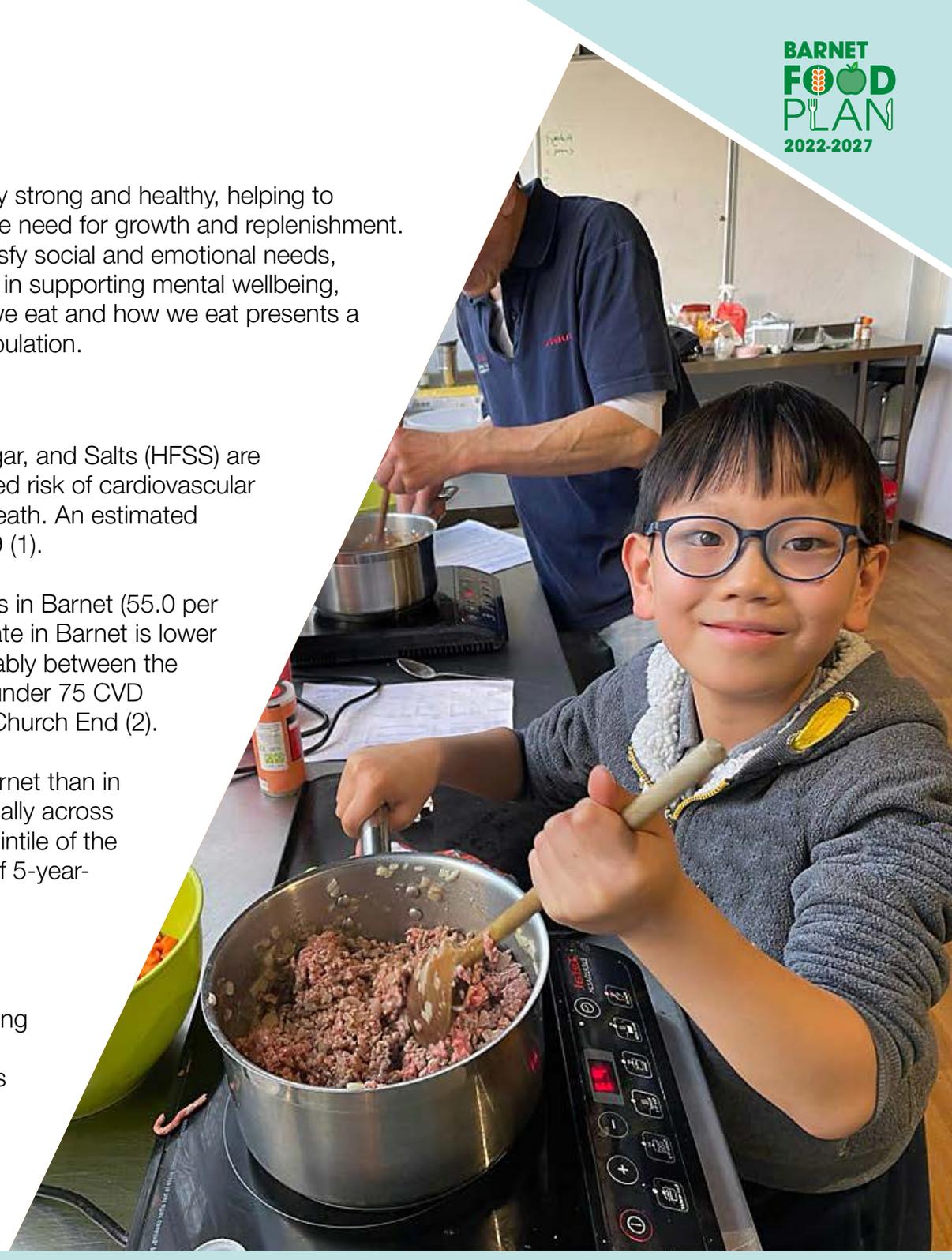
### What is the challenge?

Diets that are low in nutritious whole foods and High in Fats, Sugar, and Salts (HFSS) are associated with a range of health impacts. This includes increased risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), some cancers, poor oral health and premature death. An estimated 60,000 deaths in England were attributable to poor diets in 2019 (1).

In Barnet, CVD is one of the major causes of deaths in under 75s in Barnet (55.0 per 100,000 population) (2). Although the under 75 CVD mortality rate in Barnet is lower than in London (69.1 per 100,000 population), it varies considerably between the borough's wards, with clear links to deprivation (2). The rate of under 75 CVD mortality in the Cricklewood, is more than triple that of Finchley Church End (2).

Similarly, though levels of poor oral health are slightly lower in Barnet than in London, the data shows that dental decay is experienced unequally across the borough: almost 35% of 5-year-olds in the most deprived quintile of the borough have experience of dental decay compared with 10% of 5-year-olds in the least deprived quintile (3).

In Barnet, as in England, rates of child obesity spiked during the pandemic, but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. In 2018/2019, prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) among Year 6 children in Barnet was 19.3% (4). In 2019/2020 this rate rose to 20.6%, and the most recent data from 2021/2022 shows a slight decrease to 19.9% (4).



# Health of the Planet

Supporting sustainable food systems provides significant opportunity to help reduce the contribution of food to climate change and restore nature. Sustainable food growing and nature-friendly commercial farming will contribute to nature recovery and biodiversity net-gain, particularly in urban areas.

A sustainable food system is also a more localised food system, providing local job opportunities and contributing to the character and heritage of a local area, as well increasing our local biodiversity. Reducing food waste will lessen the environmental impacts of growing, transportation and treatment/disposal of food. Reducing food waste will also reduce economic pressures on consumers.

Diets that are planet-friendly are the best for our health and wellbeing, demonstrating the interconnectedness between health and sustainability. For example, the Lancet's Planetary Health Diet takes a plant-forward approach: heavy on plants, nuts, grains and legumes with smaller amounts of meat and dairy. Overall, what we eat and where it comes from presents a major opportunity to improve the health of the planet.

## What is the challenge?

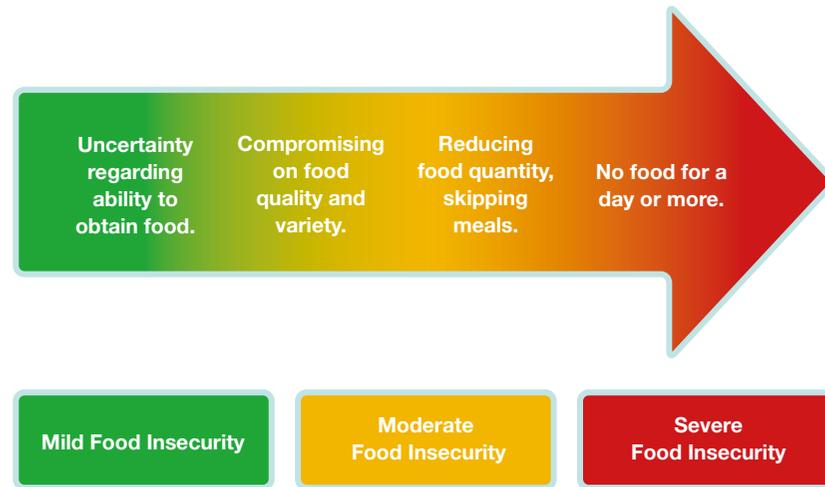
In the UK, emissions from the residential and agricultural sectors are the fourth and fifth biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions (5). Research from Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) from 2018 reported that 6.6 million tonnes of household food waste is thrown away each year in the UK (6). Of the 6.6 million tonnes that is thrown away, 70% of this is food that could have been eaten (4.5 million tonnes) (6).

Not only does our food system have a significant impact on our climate, but climate variability also places a significant strain on food costs and availability. Yield reduction in parts of the world due to climate change is likely to drive up the cost of food in supermarkets, with currently half of the food consumed in the UK being imported from other countries (7). These rising costs will have the greatest impact on lower income households whose budgets are already stretched, increasing the likelihood of food insecurity.



# Food Insecurity

The World Health Organisation defines food security as circumstances where a person has physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The figure below can be used to demonstrate the scale of food insecurity.



## What is the challenge?

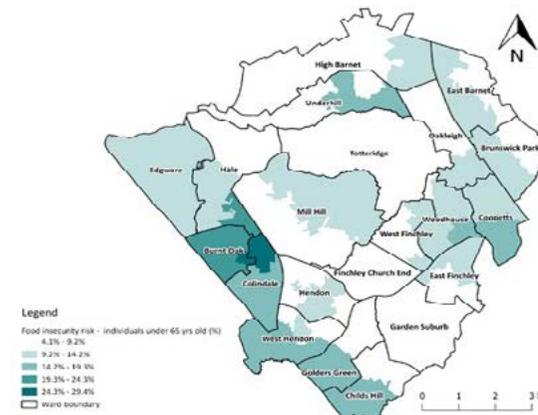
Evidence from the UK shows that an increasing number of those on very low incomes do not have sufficient financial access to a stable and healthy diet (8). Compared to those with higher socio-economic status, individuals with lower socio-economic status tend to obtain a greater proportion of energy from less healthy foods and beverages (9) as well as foods which are less environmentally sustainable.

As a result, children living in food insecure households are significantly more likely to have poor health compared to food secure children and have elevated risk of anaemia, tooth decay and asthma. Food insecurity is also associated with maternal and child mental illness (10).

At present, the drivers of food insecurity in the UK include the increasing cost-of-living especially food, fuel and energy prices, as well as welfare reforms, stagnant or low wages, all of which have all been identified as contributing to a ‘nutrition recession’ in the UK (9). In Barnet, food banks report that many people who visit food banks are in employment, indicating that the cost-of-living crisis is affecting groups who may previously have been food secure.

Data from the 2021 Census indicates that the total rate of households in Barnet having at least one dimension of deprivation fell by 6.4% in 2021 Census compared to the 2011 Census (11). Although the general trend with levels of deprivation in Barnet is downward, it is still important to note in the 2021 Census there were 25,960 households (13% of households) with 2 or more dimensions of deprivation (11).

There are pockets of Barnet with high levels of deprivation: in Burnt Oak and Watling Park 66% of households experience at least one dimension of deprivation (unemployment, long-term illness, disability, household overcrowding or lack of education) (11). Grahame Park and Brent Cross and Staples Corner also have similar levels of deprivation: 62% and 64% of households with one dimension of deprivation respectively (11).



**Figure 1:** Food Insecurity Risk in Barnet individuals under 65yrs, December 2020

## Preventative Approach to Food Insecurity

There are multiple points where we can intervene to support those at risk of food insecurity and those already experiencing severe food insecurity. The prevention model below is a useful way of orienting some potential key policies and programmes. This model has been used to identify key actions for our Barnet Food Action Plan.



## What Influences our Eating Habits?

To tackle our other major food challenges, our needs analysis also needed to include a review of how best to influence change and support prevention across the system, ultimately influencing food behaviours. The drivers of food consumption come from both external and internal influences. External influences are those factors that are outside the control of consumers. Even though we have no control over these influences, they have a significant impact on our food decisions.

This includes everything from access to cooking facilities to product placement within shops. A recent review commissioned by Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) found that the drivers of food consumption in the UK include: cost, affordability and perceived value for money, convenience and availability, marketing, and the built and micro-food environments (our neighbourhoods and our homes) (9). Intrinsic motivators of food consumption are often what we think of when we make food 'choices'.

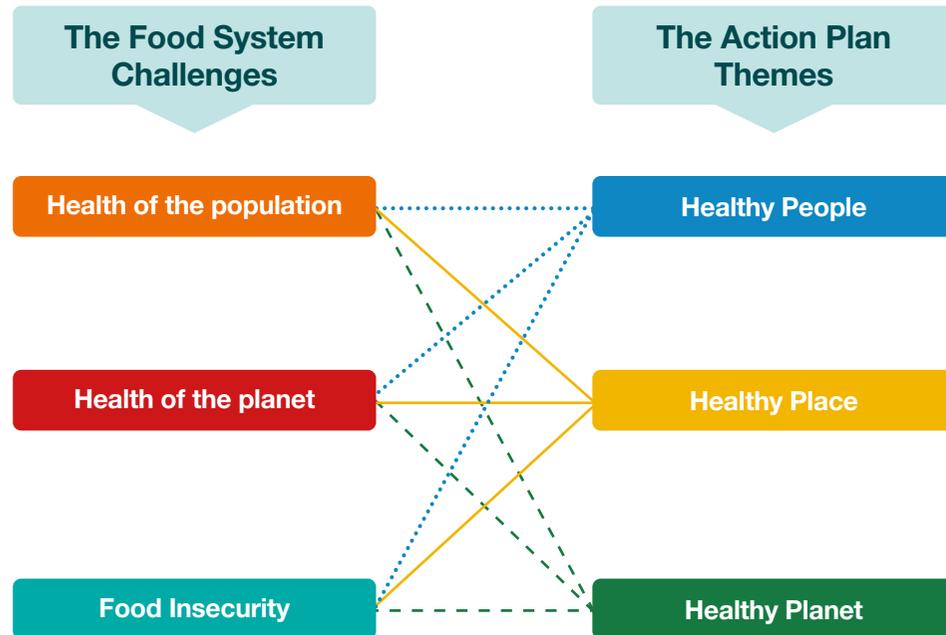
Our food choices are influenced by an unconscious response to personal and social experiences; as well as factors such as cooking skills, habits, cultural experiences, and stress (9). Further information on both the external and internal drivers of food consumption can be found in our full needs analysis report.



# Our Approach

To drive forward the positive change needed to address the three major food challenges identified within our needs analysis, action must be taken at an individual, community and environmental level to tackle both the external and internal drivers of food behaviours.

Therefore, we propose structuring the action plan around three themes, each targeting one of these areas. The figure below illustrates the relationship between the main food challenges and our action plan themes, demonstrating the cross-cutting nature of our Food Plan.



# The Three Pillars of our Approach and Action Plan

## HEALTHY PEOPLE

What we eat is central to our health and wellbeing. Our vision is for everyone in Barnet to have access to healthy, affordable and planet-friendly food that meets their dietary needs and cultural preferences.

- We will deliver programmes such as the Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Prevention Programme and Action Plan, Healthy Schools, and Sugar Smart to promote healthy eating knowledge and behaviours across the life course with targeted support for those with excess weight or chronic conditions.
- We will support individuals to access services and support such as the Holiday Activity Fund, and Healthy Start and cost-of-living support.
- We will implement programmes which address financial vulnerability such as the Tackling the Gaps Action Plan and the Financial Vulnerability Action plan.

### Success Measures:

- Increase in the number of residents registered with Healthy Star, cost-of-living support mechanisms, and continued delivery of the Holiday Activity Fund.

## HEALTHY PLACE

We want Barnet to be a healthy place, where the high street and food environment promote health and wellbeing. We will deliver programmes to make our high streets healthier and create more opportunities for community gardening and food growing.

- We will work with food retailers on the Healthier Catering Commitment, and a Good Food Retail Plan and other initiatives such as Refill London, Breastfeeding Friendly spaces.
- We will finalise and implement the Barnet Advertising and Sponsorship Policy which includes a ban on the promotion of foods high in fat, sugar and salt.
- We will increase opportunities for community food growing.
- Barnet will continue to strengthen partnership and coordination between all actors in the food system, including establishing a Barnet Food Partnership, and supporting the Barnet Food Hub.
- Support Barnet's diverse communities to have equitable access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food.

### Success Measures:

- Establishment of the Barnet Food Partnership and development of a local food system map
- Increase in the number of businesses signed up to the Healthier High Streets programme.
- Increase in the number of food growing spaces.

## HEALTHY PLANET

Producing, transporting and disposing of food has a significant impact on biodiversity and climate change. Our vision is for Barnet to leverage opportunities to decrease our carbon footprint linked to food waste and food production and consumption. As purchasers and providers of food and catering services, we can put health and sustainability at the heart of our work; and demonstrate good practice.

- As part of this work, we will review and map our existing procurement contracts for food across the borough and work with suppliers to promote sustainable diets, sourcing and food waste reduction in relation to food that is bought and consumed across council service.
- Barnet will explore opportunities to re-start food waste collection, in line with the forthcoming guidance from the Environment Act and subject to feasibility.

### Success Measures:

- Procurement contracts related to food are identified and targets are set in relation to sustainable diets, sourcing and food waste.

# Appendix I - Action Plan

The following tables summarise the actions that the Barnet Food Steering Group proposes to implement over the lifetime of this strategy. We recognise that the Food Plan will need to be dynamic, allowing for flexibility as new priorities emerge. Specific actions and milestones will be developed with local communities.

HEALTHY PEOPLE	
AIM	ACTIVITIES
<b>Maximising Incomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement actions identified in the Financial Vulnerability Action Plan</li> <li>• Send out leaflets on the cost-of-living support available for residents</li> <li>• Promote information on the cost-of-living support available for residents: via internet, newsletters, Barnet First magazine and flyers</li> </ul>
<b>Encourage uptake of Healthy Start</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications campaign to encourage women who have young children or who are pregnant and receiving benefits to claim Healthy Start.</li> <li>• Promote Healthy Start with retailers and maintain the map of eligible retailers on our webpage</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Individuals using Council Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Tackling the Gaps Action Plan</li> <li>• Promote Make Every Contact Count training and factsheets with frontline services</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Treatment of Excess Weight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications campaign to promote healthy eating in adults</li> <li>• Implement Barnet’s Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Programme</li> <li>• Provide targeted weight management services to at-risk individuals.</li> <li>• Implement the Children and Young People (CYP) Healthy Weight Action Plan and Adolescent Weight Management Services</li> </ul>
<b>Barnet Holiday Activity Fund (HAF)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support families whose children access free school meals and families on reduced incomes during school holiday periods with food packages, holiday camps for children including hot meals and fruit and food education</li> </ul>
<b>Embed a whole systems approach to food for Vulnerable Adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver services or promote existing services which provide healthier eating and cooking training for vulnerable adults</li> <li>• Explore barriers to healthier eating amongst older adults and identify key actions</li> <li>• Support local voluntary community sector and faith-based organisations to make sustainable and healthier changes to their food offer</li> </ul>
<b>Embed Whole Systems Approach in Children and Young People Settings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote Healthy Schools London awards, Sugar Smart Barnet and other similar programmes</li> <li>• Track Free School Meal uptake</li> <li>• Implement the School Food Plan which aims to ensure school food standards are met across all Barnet schools</li> </ul>

## HEALTHY PLACE

AIM	ACTIVITIES
<b>Form the Barnet Food Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply to become a member of Sustainable Food Places as a formal Food Partnership</li> <li>• Develop formal governance structures and wider group Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Encourage membership to Barnet Food Partnership for those applying for grant funding so we are better able to track activities and outcomes</li> <li>• Consider the expansion and longer-term funding of the Barnet Food Hub, proactively seeking funding opportunities</li> <li>• Hire a dedicated Food Officer to support coordination of food partnership and coordination across the borough</li> </ul>
<b>Engaging Residents with Lived Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite residents with lived experience of food poverty to join the Food Partnership.</li> <li>• Consider the unique experiences of migrants and include a representative from New Citizens Gateway to sit on the Barnet Food Steering Group</li> <li>• liaise with the new Refugee Health outreach officer to ensure aspects of food, health and wellbeing are incorporated into needs assessment or research work</li> </ul>
<b>Support Black, Asian and other marginalised ethnic groups to have equitable access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an accessible map of food aid organisations and food shops which cater to specific ethnic needs.</li> <li>• Provide small grants to organisations supporting food access and nutrition education for Black, Asian, and marginalised ethnic groups</li> </ul>
<b>Lead by Example: Improve Food &amp; Drink Offer in Parks, Leisure Centres, Libraries and Council Premises</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of food offer against best practice guidance for public institutions</li> <li>• Map and identify all council-run premises where food and drink are serviced</li> <li>• Identify which venues can become Refill London sites, Breastfeeding Welcome sites</li> <li>• Identify where the Healthier Catering Commitment is currently being implemented and opportunities to increase the number of venues which seek to meet the criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure Council Architecture is Optimised to Support Food Aid Organisations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run Make Every Contract Count (MECC) training for food aid organisations</li> <li>• Expand MECC factsheets</li> <li>• Create a single email address where food aid organisations can get in touch with Barnet Food Partnership</li> <li>• Support implementation of the SPAZE project and provide wider support to food aid organisations to adopt a ‘food bank plus’ model-including social, financial and wellbeing support for residents in need</li> <li>• Map the different types of support available to residents. Share this with organisations which have contact with those at-risk of food insecurity. Print this in the main languages spoken in Barnet.</li> </ul>
<b>Use Existing Local Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Barnet Borough Partnership to promote healthy, inclusive and sustainable food within our Anchor Institutions</li> <li>• Work with students from universities and post-secondary institutions to implement and evaluate small pilot programmes</li> <li>• Identify and showcase businesses which are addressing health, food insecurity or environmental issues</li> </ul>

## HEALTHY PLACE

AIM	ACTIVITIES
<b>Support Community Food Growing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signpost residents to local food growing initiatives including allotment sites</li> <li>• Develop and share a clear process for residents to request use of land for community food growing on publicly owned land, including housing estates</li> <li>• Explore ways of promoting food growing</li> <li>• Map and track existing allotments and community gardening programmes as part of work on the Sustainable Food Partnership,</li> </ul>
<b>Support Sustainable Food Enterprises and market infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support sustainable food start-ups/provide <a href="#">food business training</a></li> <li>• Encourage council procurement from sustainable food Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by creating a list of relevant local businesses</li> </ul>
<b>Create a Good Food Retail Plan for Barnet</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission research to explore food retail in Barnet and views on local food offer</li> <li>• Develop a Good Food Retail Plan for Barnet supporting retailers provide healthier options linked to the Healthier High Streets programme.</li> <li>• Implement new Local Plan policies around hot food takeaways and health impact assessments</li> </ul>
<b>Improve food environment through Healthier High Streets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the Healthy High Street programme to businesses and public to increase awareness.</li> <li>• Encourage businesses across the borough to sign up to HHS schemes via the Public Health Business Engagement Officer</li> </ul>
<b>Implement the Barnet Advertising and Sponsorship Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise and implement the Barnet Advertising and Sponsorship Policy which includes a ban on the promotion of foods high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS)</li> </ul>
<b>Embed Food Policy into Wider Council Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence Against Women and Girls strategy link with Domestic Violence and controlling food.</li> <li>• Migrant Health Needs Assessment</li> <li>• Fit and Active Barnet Framework</li> <li>• Life Chances Strategy</li> <li>• Sustainability Strategy</li> </ul>

<b>HEALTHY PLANET</b>	
<b>MECHANISM OF CHANGE</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>
<b>Procurement as a lever for Change and Embedding Social Value</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map existing food procurement contracts held by Barnet. Assess current contracts for commitment to buying locally and/or shortening their supply chain, to providing healthy food, and openness to providing more plant-based options.</li> <li>• Work with the Procurement team to develop time-bound and measurable targets for healthier and sustainable food for future contracts, and to work with current suppliers to increase nutritional value and sustainability of food provided by the council</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting household food sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barnet's pathfinder project, the Citizen's Assembly, will consider the theme of sustainable consumption and produce recommendations</li> <li>• The council will support and share food waste reduction messaging from partners such as the North London Waste Authority and ReLondon</li> <li>• Street Scene will work with the North London Waste Authority on a behaviour change project on waste reduction with businesses and residents</li> <li>• The council will explore opportunities to re-start food waste collection, in line with the forthcoming guidance from the Environment Act and subject to feasibility</li> </ul>
<b>Take a strategic approach to food sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore steps to fulfil and sign the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration</li> <li>• Promote opportunities to reduce waste amongst residents and businesses.</li> <li>• Hire a biodiversity officer</li> <li>• Develop a biodiversity net gain action plan</li> </ul>
<b>Improve Use of Geographic data and Intelligence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capture geographic datasets relating to food to support decision-making and evidence base.</li> <li>• Work with local partners to promote use of data and collecting data</li> <li>• Promote and further develop the food security dashboard</li> <li>• Link data collection with existing strategies</li> </ul>

# Monitoring our progress

Progress on the performance of this plan will be presented and discussed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and will be reported to full council as part of the Barnet Plan, Healthy Workstream. These progress updates will include a review of our key performance indicators in the form of quantitative data and feedback from our local communities.

**The full evaluation framework is an internal, live, working document and includes:**

- a detailed action plan
- designated staff or team responsible for each action
- time frame
- key performance indicators

The Barnet Food Steering Group will continue to meet monthly to maintain a multi-agency, joined up approach to strategic implementation. In addition, a new Barnet Food Partnership will be established.

Local Food Partnerships are cross-sector bodies that own and drive forward agendas on their local food system. In the UK, Local Food Partnerships come together as members of Sustainable Food Places (SFP). Food partnership work has been taking place in Barnet for a number of years, however, we plan to formalise this work by becoming members of SFP, thereby demonstrating the seriousness of our strategic and holistic commitment to taking action on food.

Membership in the Barnet Food Partnership will be available to any organisation who is passionate about delivering a better food future for the borough. The Partnership will support operational delivery of the actions outlined within the Barnet Food Plan.



# Get Involved

Barnet's food action plan will thrive off the passion and drive of people from all backgrounds and sectors. Everyone can get involved in making sustainable, healthy and affordable food available locally. We encourage those who would like to champion better food for Barnet to do so. Below are just some of the ways you can get involved.

## Voluntary, Community and Faith Organisations

- Sign up to Make Every Contact Count Training so that you know how to refer residents to a wide range of advice and support
- Express interest in joining the Barnet Food Partnership by emailing **food@barnet.gov.uk**
- If you have an idea about a project that could help with the aims of this plan, you can make a suggestion through our food partnership. Once the group has been established, we will share further information on our website.

## Residents

- Volunteer or make a donation to support organisations involved in the Barnet Food Partnership.
- If you have a lived experience of food insecurity that you would like to share, please contact [food@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:food@barnet.gov.uk)
- Small changes make a big difference! Use the resources available on the Council webpage to make dietary changes that are positive for both people and the planet
- Shop Local. Supporting businesses that have signed up to our healthier high streets scheme and making use of local markets are just some of the ways you can show your support for involved businesses.

## Businesses

### If you are a food retailer in Barnet you can:

- Take part in Healthy Start so that families are welcomed to use their Healthy Start Card to buy healthy food items
- Participate in Barnet's Healthier High Streets Programme
- Partner with a surplus-food organisation to ensure surplus food is diverted to people in need
- Reduce food mileage by supporting local suppliers
- Become a London Living Wage Employer
- Contact **food@barnet.gov.uk** if you would like your business included on our list of local sustainable food providers

## Public Sector Organisations

### Be aware of how your work affects food security:

- Undertake Make Every Contact Count Training so that frontline staff know where to refer
- Know the signs and symptoms that someone might be experiencing food insecurity
- Sign up to take part in Sugar Smart Barnet
- When running events and commissioning services, support sustainable food SMEs, serve food in line with NHS guidelines, Healthier Catering guidance and promote drinking water.
- Become a London Living Wage employer

# Related Strategies and Reports

## *National and regional strategies*

### **The London Food Strategy – December 2018**

The Mayor of London's Strategy to ensure Londoners can access healthy, affordable, and sustainable food.

### **The London Food Strategy: Implementation Plan – 2018-2023**

The actions the Mayor of London will take and support between 2018 and 2023 to achieve the objectives in the London Food Strategy.

### **National Food Strategy for England – July 2021**

An independent review of the food system in England, including recommendations for Government.

### **United Kingdom Food Security Report – December 2021**

An analysis of statistical data relating to food security.

### **The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World – July 2021**

The World Health Organisation's assessment of food insecurity and malnutrition for 2020.

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