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The Sustainable Food Cities Award

Criteria and application process

The Sustainable Food Cities Award is designed to recognise and celebrate the success of those places taking a joined up, holistic approach to food and that are achieving significant positive change on a range of key food health and sustainability issues.

The Award is open to any place - be it a city, town, borough, county or district - which:

* Has an established cross-sector food partnership in place
* Is a member of the Sustainable Food Cities Network
* Is implementing an action plan on healthy and sustainable food.

There are three tiers to the award - bronze, silver and gold - each requiring an increasing level of achievement in terms of action and outcomes. Details on how to apply for the bronze and silver awards are presented below. The gold award will be launched in 2017. Applications will be reviewed on an annual basis by a national panel of experts. Places achieving an award will be able to use an award badge in their communications and marketing materials.

  

For each level of the award, a place must meet a number of **minimum requirements** relating to their: **1) food partnership**, **2) action plan** and 3) the extent to which healthy and sustainable food is embedded in **local policy**.

As well as meeting these minimum requirements, applicants will have to provide evidence of action and outcomes **across six key food issues**:

1. Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public
2. Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food
3. Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects
4. Promoting a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy
5. Transforming catering and food procurement
6. Reducing waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.

**BRONZE AWARD - for bronze you must meet the relevant minimum requirements and achieve three points for action/outcomes under each of the six key food issues.**

**SILVER AWARD - for silver you must meet the relevant minimum requirements and achieve six points for action/outcomes under each of the six key food issues.**

The awards aim to recognise both the totality of food-related activity and continuous improvement year on year. So while a bronze award may be given based entirely on evidence of food related activity and achievements to date, silver and gold awards will only be given where there is clear evidence that such activity and achievements are building year on year.

We recognise that circumstances, challenges and opportunities differ between places and want to celebrate innovation, so **under each of the six issues you can score one of your three bronze points or two or your six silver points for actions that are not listed in the tables but that you believe are contributing to tackling that issue.**

To score a point, your action must be deemed ‘significant’ by the selection panel. So, for example, if you want to score a point for ‘The public have a wide range of free opportunities to see, taste and learn about healthy and sustainable food - e.g. through demonstration, sharing and celebration events such as food festivals and town meals’, you will need to show that you are doing a number of these things, not just one or two. There may also be a number of actions which contribute to tackling more than one issue. Where this is the case, you will only be able to cite this action under more than one issue if you can show that it is being done to a sufficiently significant degree to warrant the additional points.

To help places navigate the award process and to provide guidance on the relative significance of various actions, applications will be facilitated by a member of the Sustainable Food Cities Team. This will involve an initial discussion, reviewing a draft application, providing feedback on areas of weakness, attending a meeting of the local food partnership (at silver) and, should a final application go to the expert panel, acting as the advocate for that application. The selection panel’s decision is final, but feedback will be given on both successful and failed applications.

You do not have to achieve the bronze award before applying for the silver.

To make the process as transparent as possible, one condition of receiving the award is that all successful applicants agree to make their application accessible to other members of the Sustainable Food Cities Network through the Sustainable Food Cities web site. We will also expect applicants to provide short case studies on selected areas of their work. We will help you to identify the most suitable case studies during the application process, based on particularly innovative and inspiring initiatives that other members of the Sustainable Food Cities Network can learn from.

Each award is given for a three year period. If the award holder has not made an application for a higher award by the end of that period, they will be expected to stop using the award and to stop referring to themselves as awards winners in all communications and promotional activity or to reapply for their existing level award.

**If you would like further information on the award or to discuss a prospective application, please contact Tom Andrews: email** [**tandrews@soilassociation.org**](mailto:tandrews@soilassociation.org) **or call 07717 802 188.**

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO FOOD PARTNERSHIP, ACTION PLAN AND POLICY:**

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|  | **BRONZE** | **Achieved?** |
| **Partnership** | **Terms of reference for partnership in place with list of member names and organisations.**  **Cross-sector (public sector, business, NGO, community group) membership of partnership.**  **Partnership has met at least 4 times spanning the last 12 months and evidence that meetings are leading to implementation.** | Yes/No  Yes/No  Yes/No |
| **Plan** | **Action plan outlining key objectives for at least one year ahead. It does not matter if the action plan is in draft form, but it should be available for interested parties to read and reflect the six key issues listed previously.** | Yes/No |
| **Policy** | **Evidence that healthy and sustainable food is ‘recognised/referred to’ in city policies and strategies.** | Yes/No |

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|  | **SILVER** | **Achieved?** |
| **Partnership** | **Evidence the partnership links effectively with other agencies and networks in the city.**  **Evidence of formal recognition of the role of the partnership by Local Authority and other bodies.**  **Partnership has met at least 8 times spanning the last 24 months and evidence that meetings are leading to implementation.** | Yes/No  Yes/No  Yes/No |
| **Plan** | **Formally published, publicly accessible, minimum three year action plan outlining key objectives.**  **Summary report on progress against action plan targets for current and previous year(s).**  **Evidence that the action plan is formally reviewed at least every two years.** | Yes/No  Yes/No  Yes/No |
| **Policy** | **Evidence that healthy and sustainable food is being ‘actively promoted’ through city policies and strategies.** | Yes/No |

**THE TABLES BELOW LIST THE SORTS OF ACTIONS/OUTCOMES WE WOULD EXPECT TO SEE UNDER EACH OF THE SIX KEY ISSUES:**

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| **KEY ISSUE 1: PROMOTING HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD TO THE PUBLIC** | | |
| **1** | **Healthy eating campaigns - such as breastfeeding, healthy weight, 5-a-day, Eatwell, cook from scratch, and sugar, salt and fat reduction - that aim to change public behaviour, particularly among hard to reach audiences, are being delivered.** | ***1 point*** |
| 1a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **2** | **Campaigns to promote more public consumption of sustainable food - including fresh, seasonal, local, organic, sustainably sourced fish, high animal welfare, meat free and/or Fairtrade - are being delivered.** | ***1 point*** |
| 2a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **3** | **A food charter or equivalent that encapsulates the food ambitions/vision for your city/place has been developed and a range of organisations have pledged/committed to taking specific practical actions to help achieve those ambitions.** | ***1 point*** |
| 3a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **4** | **An identity (brand/logo/strapline) for your city-wide initiative has been developed and is being promoted to the public as an umbrella for all the great work on healthy and sustainable food in your city.** | ***1 point*** |
| 4a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **5** | **Public understanding of food, health and sustainability issues is being raised through a variety of communication tools including web sites, social media, magazines, film shows, radio and press pieces, talks and conferences.** | ***1 point*** |
| 5a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **6** | **The public have a wide range of free opportunities to see, taste and learn about healthy and sustainable food - e.g. through demonstration, sharing and celebration events such as food festivals and ‘town meals’.** | ***1 point*** |
| 6a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **7** | **Community food initiatives and engagement opportunities have been mapped and are being promoted to the public through print, broadcast and on-line media and/or via open days, food trails and volunteer recruitment and support programmes.** | ***1 point*** |
| 7a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **8** | **People have new opportunities to buy affordable healthy and sustainable food - particularly in areas with little or no existing provision - through markets and mobile/pop-up shops and restaurants.** | ***1 point*** |
| 8a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **9** | **Any other ‘significant’ action/outcome that promotes healthy and sustainable food to the public.** | ***1 point*** |
| 9a | Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze): | Yes/No |
| 9b | Summary of additional alternative action/outcome (for silver): | Yes/No |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS AWARDED** |  |

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| **KEY ISSUE 2: TACKLING FOOD POVERTY, DIET-RELATED ILL HEALTH AND ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTHY FOOD** | | |
| **1** | **A multi-agency partnership - involving key public and voluntary organisations - has been established to assess and tackle the full range of issues that contribute to food poverty in a joined-up strategic way.** | ***1 point*** |
| 1a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **2** | **The living wage is being promoted through Local Authority policy commitments and/or via campaigns to raise employer awareness of the impacts of paying low wages and the benefits of raising them.** | ***1 point*** |
| 2a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **3** | **For those in urgent need - and particularly benefit recipients facing delay or suspension in payments - relevant agencies are providing rapid referral to hardship funds and emergency food aid.** | ***1 point*** |
| 3a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **4** | **Health professionals, welfare advisers and/or housing/voluntary organisations are trained in food poverty issues and are able to advise clients on accessing affordable healthy food and skills training such as menu planning, food buying and cooking.** | ***1 point*** |
| 4a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **5** | **A range of healthy weight services and initiatives are being provided, from dieting and nutrition advice and support to exercise programmes and facilities.** | ***1 point*** |
| 5a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **6** | **Efforts are being made to maximise the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, free school meals and social food provision - such as lunch clubs and meals on wheels - for vulnerable people who might otherwise go hungry or suffer malnutrition.** | ***1 point*** |
| 6a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **7** | **More healthy options are being made available in supermarkets, convenience stores, takeaways, vending machines and/or catering settings such as nurseries, schools, hospitals, care homes and workplaces.** | ***1 point*** |
| 7a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **8** | **The council/city is working to prevent the development of food deserts (where people cannot access affordable healthy food within 500 metres of where they live) and food swamps (where the high street is dominated by fast food outlets).** | ***1 point*** |
| 8a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **9** | **Any other ‘significant’ action/outcome that tackles food poverty and increases access to affordable healthy food.** | ***1 point*** |
| 9a | Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze): | Yes/No |
| 9b | Summary of additional alternative action/outcome (for silver): | Yes/No |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS AWARDED** |  |

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| **KEY ISSUE 3: BUILDING COMMUNITY FOOD KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, RESOURCES AND PROJECTS** | | |
| **1** | **A network for community food activists that enables them to share information and resources and that helps direct them to advice, training, grants and/or tools has been established.** | ***1 point*** |
| 1a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **2** | **Green and brownfield sites and/or redundant retail and other buildings that could be used for community food projects or allotments have been mapped and/or are being made available to local communities.** | ***1 point*** |
| 2a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **3** | **Developers are incorporating food growing into existing and new developments through the creation of roof gardens and/or growing spaces in residential housing and commercial developments.** | ***1 point*** |
| 3a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **4** | **Community food growing is increasing through increased allotment provision and/or the development of edible landscapes in parks, borders and verges and through city-wide food growing initiatives such as *The Big Dig* and *Incredible Edible***. | ***1 point*** |
| 4a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **5** | **Primary and secondary schools are adopting holistic school food education and engagement programmes - such the *Soil Association Food for Life* - including growing, cooking, farm visits and improvements to meals and dining culture.** | ***1 point*** |
| 5a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **6** | **Tailored training opportunities on food buying, cooking, nutrition and hygiene skills and/or access to community kitchens are being provided for a variety of audiences including young adults, families and the vulnerable elderly.** | ***1 point*** |
| 6a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **7** | **Local authorities are changing policy and practice to enable individuals and communities to get better access to resources that could be used for food enterprises or projects, for example through the introduction of meanwhile leases.** | ***1 point*** |
| 7a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **8** | **Communities are protecting, taking control of and managing community assets for growing and other food related initiatives, for example by using mechanisms such as the Sustainable Communities Act.** | ***1 point*** |
| 8a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **9** | **Any other ‘significant’ action/outcome that contributes to building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects.** | ***1 point*** |
| 9a | Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze): | Yes/No |
| 9b | Summary of additional alternative action/outcome (for silver): | Yes/No |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS AWARDED** |  |

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| **KEY ISSUE 4: PROMOTING A VIBRANT AND DIVERSE SUSTAINABLE FOOD ECONOMY** | | |
| **1** | **Retail, tourism, planning and economic development strategies, policies and services actively promote and support the development and long term success of healthy and sustainable food businesses.** | ***1 point*** |
| 1a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **2** | **Vocational training and business planning, finance, development advice, support and/or grants are being provided to new sustainable food entrepreneurs, including producers, processors, retailers and caterers.** | ***1 point*** |
| 2a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **3** | **Shops, restaurants and markets selling healthy and sustainable food are being promoted to the public using a range of communication tools, such as marketing and branding initiatives, directories, ‘restaurants weeks’ and food awards.** | ***1 point*** |
| 3a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **4** | **Efforts are being made to increase consumer spending in independent local food businesses through the introduction of local currency and loyalty schemes.** | ***1 point*** |
| 4a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **5** | **The council/city is supporting new independent healthy and sustainable food start-up businesses, for example by offering special loan and lease options or through business rates reductions and holidays.** | ***1 point*** |
| 5a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **6** | **The council/city is working to protect and/or re-establish vital sustainable food infrastructure, such as Grade 1 and 2 land, local processing and wholesale businesses, food hubs and/or distribution networks.** | ***1 point*** |
| 6a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **7** | **Local producers can connect direct with consumers and/or better access wholesale and retail markets through events, on-line tools and cooperative marketing and retailing initiatives.** | ***1 point*** |
| 7a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **8** | **Restaurants and other food businesses are working to improve sustainability across all aspects of their business through peer learning networks and/or through support from national organisations such as the *Sustainable Restaurants Association*.** | ***1 point*** |
| 8a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **9** | **Any other ‘significant’ action/outcome that promotes a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy.** | ***1 point*** |
| 9a | Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze): | Yes/No |
| 9b | Summary of additional alternative action/outcome (for silver): | Yes/No |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS AWARDED** |  |

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| **KEY ISSUE 5: TRANSFORMING CATERING AND FOOD PROCUREMENT** | | |
| **1** | **A cross-sector sustainable food procurement working group, network or equivalent forum has been established to bring together procurement officers, caterers, suppliers and other decision-makers.** | ***1 point*** |
| 1a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **2** | **The Council has developed and formally adopted a city-wide Sustainable Food Procurement strategy and/or policy, incorporating specific commitments on a range of health and sustainability issues (see 3 below for examples).** | ***1 point*** |
| 2a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **3** | **Individual public sector bodies have adopted healthy and sustainable food policies e.g. nutrition standards, healthy options in catering and vending, ‘tap water only’ policies and/or ethical standards such as cage-free eggs, sustainable fish and *Fairtrade*.** | ***1 point*** |
| 3a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **4** | **Public sector organisations and large private caterers have achieved quality, healthy, sustainable and/or ethical food accreditation, such as the *Food for Life Served Here*, *Sustainable Fish*, *Good Egg* and other awards.** | ***1 point*** |
| 4a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **5** | **The uptake of healthy and sustainable catering accreditation is being tracked and actively communicated to promote further uptake across all key settings, including nurseries, schools, colleges, hospitals, care homes and workplace canteens.** | ***1 point*** |
| 5a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **6** | **Procurement officers and catering businesses are able to source more of their ingredients from local and sustainable producers and processors, for example via local supplier directories and through meet the supplier events.** | ***1 point*** |
| 6a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **7** | **Small scale local producers and other sustainable food businesses are better able to access large scale procurement markets via cooperative marketing and supply initiatives and via on-line tendering databases.** | ***1 point*** |
| 7a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **8** | **Restaurants and other small scale catering businesses are sourcing more healthy, sustainable, ethical and locally produced ingredients.** | ***1 point*** |
| 8a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **9** | **Any other ‘significant’ action/outcome that contributes to transforming catering and food procurement.** | ***1 point*** |
| 9a | Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze): | Yes/No |
| 9b | Summary of additional alternative action/outcome (for silver): | Yes/No |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS AWARDED** |  |

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| **KEY ISSUE 6: REDUCING WASTE AND THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM** | | |
| **1** | **City-wide campaigns to raise public awareness of food waste and how to reduce it are being delivered - such as *Love Food Hate Waste*, *Feeding the 5000*, *The Pig Idea* and *Disco Soup*.** | ***1 point*** |
| 1a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **2** | **Farmers, growers and land managers are being provided with training, advice and support on how to adopt low ecological impact production and management techniques such as organic, permaculture and pesticide free.** | ***1 point*** |
| 2a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **3** | **The Food Waste Hierarchy is being incorporated into relevant policies, strategies and services in order to reduce food waste and ensure surplus food and food waste are diverted to the most appropriate purposes.** | ***1 point*** |
| 3a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **4** | **A food waste collection scheme for homes and/or for restaurants and other catering, retail and manufacturing businesses has been established and is redirecting this waste for composting, energy recovery (AD) or animal feed (where permitted).** | ***1 point*** |
| 4a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **5** | **Producers, processors, retailers, caterers and the wider business community are better able to access training on how to reduce food packaging and waste and how to improve energy, water and other resource efficiency.** | ***1 point*** |
| 5a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **6** | **Home and community food composting is being promoted through awareness and education campaigns and through the provision of composting tools, demonstrations, materials and sites for communities to use.** | ***1 point*** |
| 6a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **7** | **A crop-gleaning/abundance volunteer scheme to collect harvest surplus from local farms and food growing sites and help local producers harvest and distribute food unwanted by retailers has been established.** | ***1 point*** |
| 7a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **8** | **Local charities and social enterprises are collecting consumable surplus food and redistributing it to organisations feeding people in need, while working to raise the nutritional standards of the food aid being offered.** | ***1 point*** |
| 8a | Summary of action/outcome: There is strict maximum limit of 500 words for each answer. Please do not exceed this. | Yes/No |
| **9** | **Any other ‘significant’ action/outcome that reduces waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.** | ***1 point*** |
| 9a | Summary of one alternative action/outcome (for bronze): | Yes/No |
| 9b | Summary of additional alternative action/outcome (for silver): | Yes/No |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS AWARDED** |  |