

Aim

Develop a sustainable and healthy food culture at the University that excels at sourcing, environmental and society initiatives, and acts as a benchmark and example for great practice not only in the city but nationally.

Society

Support the Community

We already partner with:

- Sheffood, a cross-sector partnership committed to creating a more sustainable food system. (see <https://www.sheffood.org.uk>)

We offer or aim to:

- Support vulnerable people with skill sharing workshops
- Support local business through networking and sharing best practice, joining forces for a positive change
- We offer cookery classes to students and staff colleagues, teaching others how to cook healthy meals on a budget, how to source sustainably and how to reduce wastage and maximize yield from ingredients.

Treat staff fairly

We already:

- Provide training, clear policies and inductions, staff handbooks
- Pay the living wage and offer overtime incentives
- Offer staff opportunities to engage with suppliers and enjoy away days

We are aiming to:

- Complete a skills audit by September 2026, and a full team development plan with 100% engagement in mandatory training by January 2027

Feed people well

We already:

- Offer an exclusive vegetarian offer, every day.
- We display the nutritional information for our salads and sandwiches

Healthy and Sustainable Food Policy

- We display eat well guides in our food and drink establishments, to enable students to eat more healthy options.

We are aiming to:

- Display the sugar, salt and fat ratios for all street food boxes by January 2027.
- Increase our homemade range to ensure freshness and remove salt, sugar and fat by 20% by January 2027

Environment

Value natural resources

We already:

- Monitor water usage and have clear reduction targets
- Have grey water systems in use within our buildings
- Our new buildings source energy is from green tariffs
- Replaced display fridges with energy efficient models with doors that save 50% energy

Waste no food

We already:

- Separate out food waste and process it through our onsite digester
- Ensure zero waste goes to landfill, instead it is separated and managed as energy recovery
- Offer smaller portions and doggy bags to reduce plate waste, e.g. food left over at conferences can be taken away and consumed later
- Discount food close to sell by day to reduce wastage and support students with cost of living
- Donate surplus food to the Students Union to provide support for those who need it most

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- Use plastic free packaging for all our homemade products
- We ensure all packaging is compostable or can be easily recycled
- Offer a considerable reusable cup discount to encourage the use of bring your own cup thereby reducing packaging
- We are piloting a bring your own plate scheme to reduce packaging.

We are aiming to:

- Set reduction targets for food waste by 10% year on year
- Create a coffee grounds recycling scheme

Healthy and Sustainable Food Policy

- Offer a discounted reusable container scheme for all loosely sold foods by 2026
- Establish a green champion staff member in all student facing cafes

Sourcing

Support global farmers

We already:

- Link with Sheffield organic growers, providing a location for organic food bag collections
- Use LEAF accredited vegetables
- All our tea, coffee and sugar are sustainability accredited
- Ensure we operate a no air freight policy

We are aiming to:

- Procure single origin coffee beans, supporting a local network of growers within 2026
- Include our activity in staff inductions in Sep 2026

Source fish responsibly

We already:

- source all our fish as either MSC accredited or on the 'fish to eat' list
- all our farmed fish is MSC accredited

Serve more veg and better meat

We already:

- All our meat (except charcuterie) is at least Red tractor accredited
- All our eggs and egg products are free range

Celebrate Local and seasonal

We already:

- Change our menus weekly to exploit seasonal produce availability
- Provide locally made produce in our cafes for sale
- Consolidate supplies to reduce food miles
- Clearly label and market local ingredients and produce
- Last year, 2025-2026, we purchased 43% of our ingredients from local suppliers and distributors

We are aiming to:

- Increase our expenditure within the region to 50% per year.

Reviewed by: Michael Arthur (Head of Catering Operations) July 2026