



Comisiynydd
Cenedlaethau'r
Dyfodol
Cymru

Future
Generations
Commissioner
for Wales



Synnwyr
Bwyd Cymru
Food Sense
Wales

Food for Our Future

How Local Authorities Can Shape Better Food Systems in Wales



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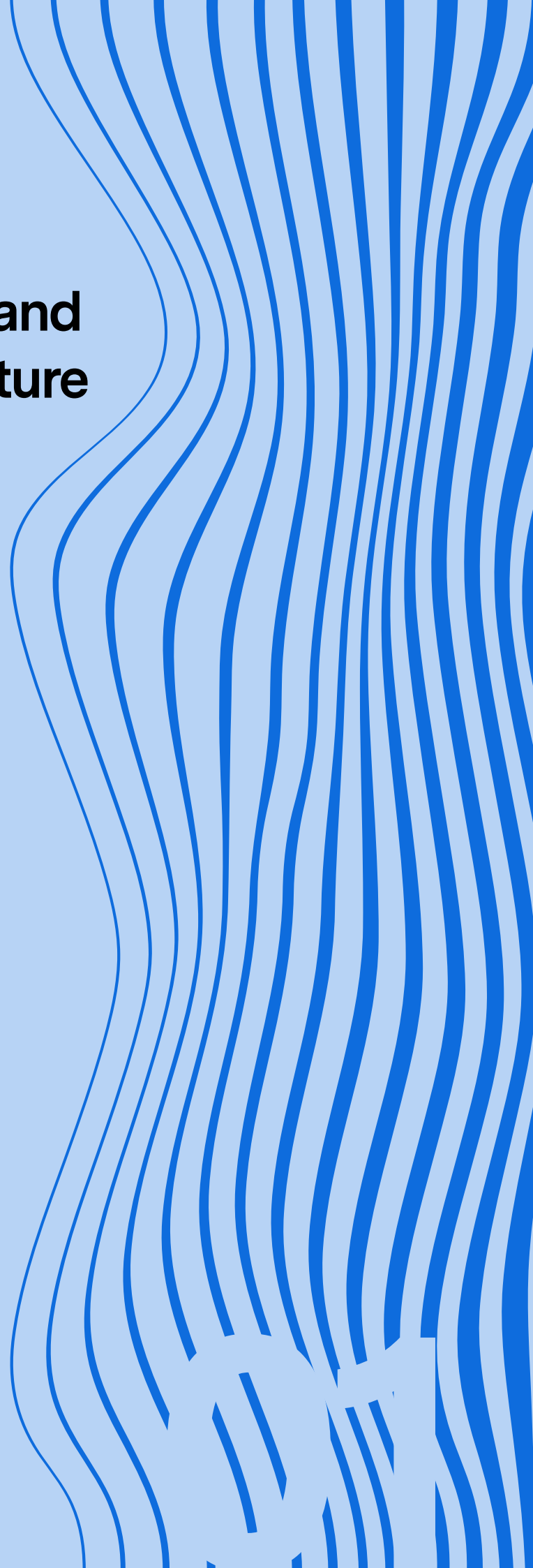
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SECTION 01

Local food systems and the Well-being of Future Generations Act



SECTION 01

1.1

FOREWORD



Foreword from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and Food Sense Wales

The food system in Wales is not one we would want future generations to inherit.

Diet related ill health remains a significant challenge in Wales. It highlights the urgent need for dietary changes, healthier food choices to improve public health, and to reduce the burden on the Welsh NHS. Wales also faces unprecedented levels of food insecurity as a result of the cost of living and an increasingly volatile global food supply chain, affected by global conflict, trade disputes and climate change.

Fixing the food system requires action by all public sector organisations in partnership with our communities, and requires action from businesses. Local authorities have a particularly important role to play and this guidance focuses on what more they can do.

In the last two years, Welsh Government has launched its Community Food Strategy, local authorities have delivered universal free school meals for primary schools and thirteen local authorities have signed up to the [Welsh Veg in Schools](#) programme. Each local authority area in Wales now has a [Local Food Partnership](#) - a network of changemakers working together to improve their local food system.

From farmers to public bodies and through Local Food Partnerships there is a growing movement of people building a fairer and more resilient food system in Wales. These actions and partnerships are improving the health of our nation whilst also building resilient local food supply chains that benefit our communities, our economy, our environment and our farmers.

This momentum exemplifies the 'can do', Cymru Can, spirit which we reflect in this guidance which aims to stimulate more action in more places and responds to increasing requests for advice on food from local authorities.

We have involved local authorities in developing this guidance and have taken on board the views of Welsh citizens expressed during the Food, Farming & Countryside Commission's [Food Conversation](#). We have benefited from the expertise of Public Health Wales, Public Services Boards, Local Food Partnerships and the Welsh Local Government Association. We have also taken inspiration from food guidance produced by [Sustain](#) and [Sustainable Food Places](#), as well as [Ambition North Wales'](#) Food Systems Report.

We would like to thank the Welsh Government's Food Division for providing support to research local authority practice across the UK. Our guidance complements Welsh Government's Community Food Strategy, Child Poverty Strategy, Healthy Weight Healthy Wales strategy and supports delivery of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

This guidance is not an exhaustive list of the policies, partnerships and innovations which local authorities are implementing across Wales. Our intention is that this will become a living document that expands and is refined as progress is made.

We hope this guidance will be a useful contribution towards collective efforts to create a food system in Wales that enables our current and future generations to thrive.

Derek Walker,
Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

Katie Palmer,
Head of Food Sense Wales

SECTION 01 1.2

Executive summary

The food problems facing Wales and our local authorities are stark and complex:

- One in three children in Wales start school above a healthy weight and 62% of adults are overweight or obese, with higher rates in the most disadvantaged communities.
- 30% of Welsh households experienced food insecurity over the last [year](#). Food bank use in Wales is at an all time high. Many disabled people in Wales [report](#) they are unable to meet their daily food needs.
- Wales' food security is dependent on a volatile global food supply chain at risk from climate change and global conflict. In 2023 only 6% of the vegetables used in Welsh primary schools came from Wales.
- Wales will not be able to achieve its well-being goals and improve its food security without improving access to local, healthy and sustainable food.

[Welsh citizens](#) want stronger action on the food system across the public sector, 73% support banning Ultra Processed Foods in schools, 64% back restrictions on food advertising to improve public health, and 77% believe children should leave school with a strong understanding of the food system, including skills to grow and cook healthy food.

Addressing these problems must become a national mission. Our food system in Wales is made up of many local food systems, where local authorities in collaboration with partners can make an impact. In this guidance you will find:

- A summary of how food is rising up the political agenda across the UK. A growing number of local authorities are establishing local food strategies
- A summary of the food policy levers which local authorities in Wales control - where action can progress the Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Defining local, healthy and sustainable food and food resilience
- An introduction to Local Food Partnerships
- Guidance around food policy levers which local authorities control, the rationale for using these levers, case studies, steps to take, impact measures - and a summary of how policy levers align to Wales' well-being goals, Healthy Weight Healthy Wales, the Community Food Strategy and Child Poverty strategy
- Next steps for the guidance and continued support for local authorities



Photo credit: Welsh Government

SECTION 01 1.3

Food policy in the UK and Wales

Food is rising up the political agenda across the UK and Wales. At all levels of government, strategies aim to shape local and national food systems to deliver better outcomes for the economy, environment, health and to improve food resilience.

The [UK Government's Food Strategy](#) (2025) envisions a UK food sector that feeds a healthier and more productive population, with reduced diet related ill-health, better environmental outcomes, vibrant food cultures and improved resilience of the food supply chain. It emphasises the importance of place, recognising that the UK food system is made up of smaller food systems at regional, community and household level: "One size does not fit all. We need to unlock expertise, energy and experience at a local level to deliver improved outcomes where they are most needed."

The [Scottish Government's Good Food Act](#) (2022) requires local authorities to develop good food plans related to child poverty, the economy, environment and health. Plans must be assessed every two years with scrutiny provided by the Scottish Food Commission.

Wales: A Community Food Strategy and the Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Well-being of Future Generations Act places a duty on public bodies to set well-being objectives to work towards achieving seven national well-being goals. The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales prioritises food in the Cymru Can strategy and has found that food and diets are largely absent from local authority well-being objectives.

The [Future Generations Report](#) 2025 has found that Wales cannot achieve its well-being goals without urgent action to improve access to local, healthy and sustainable diets - and that Wales must improve its food resilience. The report recommends Welsh Government develops a national food plan and that local authorities should establish local food resilience strategies. The report recommends that public bodies deploy 'Marmot Principles' to address health inequalities - by improving the economic, cultural, environmental and social determinants of health. In 2025, Welsh Government announced a commitment to developing a Marmot Cymru approach and the Gwent Public Service Board Well-being Plan (2022-2027) aims to establish a Marmot Region.

The Welsh Government's [Food Matters](#) summarises food related policies. The [Community Food Strategy](#) 2025 aligns to the Well-being of Future Generations Act and aims to promote and strengthen the local food system in Wales; increase the availability and consumption of locally sourced, healthier and sustainable food; and improve community well-being. The strategy aligns to Welsh Government's [Sustainable Farming Scheme](#), [Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales](#) and [Child Poverty Strategy](#).

This guidance seeks to build on, and complement, these Welsh Government strategies - outlining the actions local authorities can take to maximise contribution to these national policy frameworks.

Local authority food strategies across the UK

Sustainable Food Places supports a growing number of Local Food Partnerships, which are contributing to an increase in local authority food strategies. Sustain developed [self assessment tools](#) for local authorities on food related policies and developed [scorecards](#) in England to assess local authority actions on food.



SECTION 01 1.4

Local authority food policy levers and the Well-being of Future Generations Act

This table outlines a suite of policy levers that local authorities can deploy to improve their local food system while maximising progress against all seven of Wales' well-being goals. Presenting where there is strongest alignment to individual goals, this table can be used by local authorities to integrate food when setting (and meeting) well-being objectives and steps.

A number of policy levers are featured in this guidance - and it will not be possible for a local authority to focus on all the levers at the same time. This guidance recommends that local authorities should start with developing a local authority led food resilience strategy. A first step towards a strategy is local authority involvement in the Local Food Partnership. Through engagement with the Local Food Partnership first and then the development of a local authority led food resilience strategy a local authority can identify which policy levers to focus on.

Policies levers which local authorities control which can shape the local food system	How local authority policy levers relate to Wales' Well-being Goals
Governance Involve the local authority in the Local Food Partnership Integrate local food system actions into well-being objectives Design and implement a local authority food resilience strategy, framed by the Well-being of Future Generations Act - involve Local Food Partnerships, business, citizens, farmers and Public Services Boards If a local authority strategy is in place - work towards establishing a Public Services Board food resilience strategy Use the strategy to set out a vision for the local food system and integrate food across local authority services and policies	All seven Well-being goals
Planning Use the local planning system to promote local, healthy and sustainable food production Collaborate with health boards to review how to restrict hot food take aways around schools Support county farms and county farmland to produce local, healthy and sustainable food for local authority supply chains	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A Healthier Wales A More Equal Wales
Procurement Buy more local, healthy and sustainable produce for food provided by local authorities - aligned to the duties of the Social Partnership & Public Procurement Act	A Prosperous Wales A Globally responsible Wales A Healthier Wales A Resilient Wales A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language A More Equal Wales
Increase access to food Ensure those in need can access food through cash first approaches, supporting community food programmes and promoting uptake of food-related benefits such as the Healthy Start Scheme Ensure children from households with No Recourse to Public Funds receive free school meals Become a Real Living Wage accredited employer	A Prosperous Wales A More Equal Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Healthier Wales
Promote healthy diets Restrict the promotion of food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar through advertising controls Improve local, healthy and sustainable food options in public spaces, including leisure centres and food festivals Support local food businesses	A Prosperous Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
Food waste Eliminate preventable waste from the food served by local authorities and promote food waste awareness	A Resilient Wales A Globally responsible Wales

SECTION 01 1.5

Defining local, healthy, sustainable food and food resilience

These terms are understood in different ways, with a range of definitions that often involve tensions and trade-offs. Our aim here is to offer local authorities a clear and practical direction of travel, while recognising that ongoing debate and nuance are both necessary and valuable.

Local and regional food systems are collaborative networks that integrate food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management in **sustainable** ways that provide social and health benefits, contribute to thriving local economies, enhance biodiversity, protect natural resources such as water and soil, and help address the climate and nature emergency. Such a system is **resilient** when it has a capacity to absorb shocks, adapt to change and withstand future disruptions.

Local food is produced, processed, sold and eaten within the same region (or local administrative area) through Small and Medium Enterprise-focused supply chains. Sometimes this can mean a local authority, sometimes Wales, and in border local authorities this can materialise as rural-urban or rural collaboration with neighbouring English administrations.

A diet that supports **health** is high in fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains and low foods high in fat, salt and sugar (**HFSS**). The Eatwell **Guide** sets out what proportions of different food groups should be eaten to meet dietary recommendations. The **UK Nutrient Profiling Model** is a points-based system that can help local authorities to identify less healthy foods and restrict their promotion and provision.

Sustainable and resilient local food systems are built through, and promote, **food literacy**. Food literacy has several dimensions, covering knowledge (including nutrition and horticulture), skills (food preparation), and the ability and wider circumstances (economic and physical access) to put these into practice. It also fosters wider **knowledge** about food systems and citizen involvement and activism.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are key to building fair and sustainable food systems. Equity means making sure everyone - farmers, workers, and consumers - has a fair chance to take part and benefit. Diversity brings in different cultures, food traditions, and crops, which makes the system more resilient. Inclusion means giving a voice to people who are often left out, so decisions and opportunities reflect many perspectives.



SECTION 01

1.6

Local Food Partnerships in Wales

Local Food Partnerships bring together partners from a range of different sectors to address social, economic and environmental issues, working together to ensure good food for all. They work across sectors and bring people together to develop a vision for a more sustainable food future, tailored to the local area and responding to local needs.

Food Partnerships were pioneered in the UK by [Sustainable Food Places](#), a UK-wide network that makes healthy and sustainable food a defining characteristic of where people live. Food Sense Wales supports and nurtures the Local Food Partnerships in Wales; bringing them together, providing leadership and opportunities for collaboration.

Local Food Partnerships include public bodies such as health boards and local authorities as well as citizens, voluntary organisations, charities, food businesses, retailers, wholesalers, growers and farmers. Local Food Partnerships in Wales are led by a coordinator and are resourced through a mix of funding including from Welsh Government.

In Wales, there are [22 Local Food Partnerships](#), one in each local authority area, promoting innovation and best practice in healthy and sustainable food systems. Many are hosted within Local Authorities, with others hosted in health boards, housing associations or third sector organisations. These Local Food Partnerships are central to supporting local authorities with delivery on the proposed actions outlined in this guidance.



SECTION 01 1.6

Local Food Partnerships at a Glance



MEMBER



BRONZE



SILVER



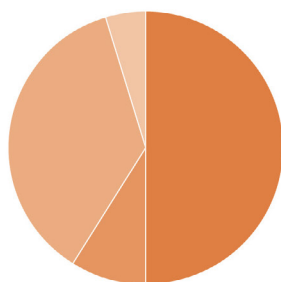
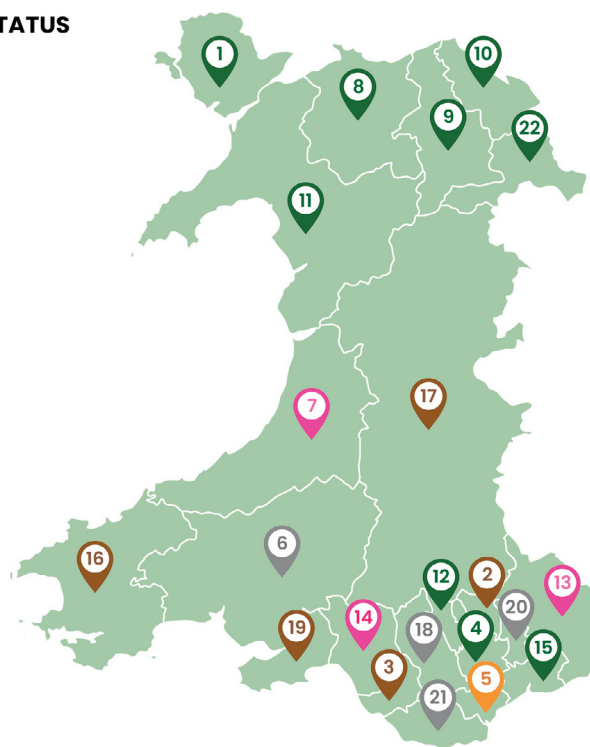
GOLD



NEITHER

AREA / MEMBERSHIP STATUS

1. Anglesey
2. Blaenau Gwent
3. Bridgend
4. Caerphilly
5. Cardiff
6. Carmarthenshire
7. Ceredigion
8. Conwy
9. Denbighshire
10. Flintshire
11. Gwynedd
12. Merthyr Tydfil
13. Monmouthshire
14. Neath Port Talbot
15. Newport
16. Pembrokeshire
17. Powys
18. RCT
19. Swansea
20. Torfaen
21. Vale of Glamorgan
22. Wrexham



HOST ORGANISATION TYPE

- 11 Public Sector, Council
- 2 Public Sector, Health
- 8 3rd Sector/Social Enterprise
- 1 Housing Association

SECTION 02

Local Authority Food Policy Levers in Wales



SECTION 02 2.1

Establish a local authority food resilience strategy

Good Practice

A local authority led food resilience strategy can use five ways of working to:

- **Involve** Local Food Partnerships, food growers, farmers, businesses and citizens in its design and implementation - and emphasises diversity, equality and inclusion.
- Identify the future trends impacting local food systems and food resilience and set a **long-term** vision for a resilient local food system which supports equal access to local, healthy and sustainable food. Hwb Dyfodol is a free resource public bodies can join to get training on how to apply futures approaches and long-term thinking.
- **Integrate** the strategy across local authority services and its well-being objectives to pull policy levers in the same direction.
- **Collaborate** with members of Public Services Boards and Local Food Partnerships.
- Address the root challenges of the local food system to **prevent** problems in public health, poverty and the climate and nature emergencies.
- Set metrics to monitor and evaluate progress aligned to **Wales' seven national well-being goals**.

Rationale

A food resilience strategy can set a vision and a direction of travel for the local authority in shaping the local food system. Through involving citizens, businesses, farmers and growers - the strategy can identify local food challenges and opportunities. Strategies can define priorities or goals and establish targets for action. This can bring consistency and coordination to the food policy levers local authorities control.

Involving Local Food Partnerships, Health Board Whole Systems Leads from health and Public Services Boards provides local authorities with the partnerships needed to deliver the strategy, its actions and targets.

Local authorities can integrate the local food system into their well-being objectives. Outlining a vision for food through a strategy and integrating food into well-being objectives provides direction to procurement and planning officers and other policy teams to ensure their policies work together towards the local authority's food priorities.

Public Services Boards

If a local authority food strategy is in place, local authorities can use their membership of Public Services Boards (PSBs) to advocate for a PSB food resilience strategy. Carmarthenshire council and Bwyd Sir Gar are developing Carmarthenshire PSB's food strategy, the first PSB food strategy in Wales. Health Board Whole Systems Leads are currently supporting a joint approach by Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea PSBs to develop a strategic approach to food.

Case Studies: Local authorities

Cardiff Council was the first local authority in Wales to establish a [food strategy](#), and will be designing its next iteration, it established a Food Strategy Steering Group with representatives from key council departments. [Food Cardiff](#) has achieved Gold status through Sustainable Food Places - which recognises the council's strategy, its support for food festivals, increasing local and organic vegetables for primary schools and piloting the Cardiff Planet Card - a fruit and vegetable voucher scheme to support low income households to access healthy food.

Monmouthshire Council has integrated food across its well-being objectives and in 2024 established a [food strategy](#) with a vision of 'a fairer, greener, healthier food system and farming in a flourishing economy that benefits all our residents'. It emphasises involvement of farmers and growers in three core priorities: improving local and ethical supply chains, developing food as an economic sector and community food: access, education, participation. It has designed a [global deforestation free school menu](#) with Size of Wales.

Across the UK, both rural and urban local authorities have established local food strategies, including [Northumberland](#), [South Lanarkshire](#) and [Bristol](#). [Leeds Council's](#) food strategy exemplifies the common approach in establishing food strategy priorities: improve public health, reduce food insecurity and increase local, sustainable food production to reduce carbon emissions and boost the local economy.

Case Studies: Local Food Partnerships

Local Food Partnerships are creating a vision, strategy and action plan within each local authority area. The [Blaenau Gwent Community Food Strategy](#), outlines what the partnership can do as a collective for a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable local food system. A local authority can incorporate the energy and activities of these plans to support the design and delivery of its own food strategy.

SECTION 02 2.1

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Food Partnership approved their [food strategy](#) (2025-2030) this year with support from all PSB partners including the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The strategy has three 'Good Food Goals': fair and healthy, circular food economy and community resilience. Each of its 30 actions are mapped to Wales' well-being goals and outlines actions for the local authority.

Steps towards good practice

- Take an active role in the Local Food Partnership
- Integrate food into local authority well-being objectives - an overview of how local authorities in Wales are doing this can be found [here](#)
- Pass a motion outlining the local authorities commitment to a strategic approach to improve the local food system, such as Cardiff Council's recent [motion](#)
- Establish a food champion in cabinet, examples include Cardiff Council and Monmouthshire Council. Leeds Council appointed a councillor as its food champion
- Designate a council official to coordinate food policies, as Cardiff Council has done
- Utilise existing local authority engagement mechanisms, such as surveys or citizen panels to involve residents in strategy development
- Develop a food forum for officials from multiple departments to coordinate and align food policies - which Cardiff Council and Welsh Government have established

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

Local authority strategies should set targets across its priorities and suggestions for impact metrics are highlighted in each of the sections below for each of the policy levers described. Local authority strategies should be reviewed each year, involving Local Food Partnerships. Where possible the 50 national well-being [indicators](#) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act can be used to support the development of impact measures. An illustrative set of food system related national well-being indicators are listed here for consideration:

- Percentage of adults with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours
- Percentage of children with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours
- Percentage of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- Concentration of carbon and organic matter in soil
- The global footprint of Wales
- Amount of waste generated that is not recycled, per person
- Areas of healthy ecosystems in Wales

How this policy lever relates to Welsh Government strategies

Well-being of Future Generations Act	✓	Prosperous Wales
	✓	Resilient Wales
	✓	Healthier Wales
	✓	More Equal Wales
	✓	Cohesive Communities
	✓	Culture & Welsh language
	✓	Globally Responsible

Healthy Weight Healthy Wales	✓	Whole System Approach
	✓	Families & Lifelong Health
	✓	Schools & Settings for Good Health
	✓	Healthier Food Environments
	✓	Active Lives
		Treatment Pathways

Community Food Strategy Objectives	✓	Joined up Strategy & Leadership
	✓	Local Food Coordination & Action
	✓	Community Food Resilience
	✓	Cohesive Food Communities
	✓	Stronger, Diverse Local Supply
	✓	Community Growing & Horticulture

Child Poverty Strategy Objectives	✓	Reduce Costs & Maximise Incomes
	✓	Pathways out of Poverty
	✓	Child & Family Wellbeing
	✓	Challenge Stigma and ensure Dignity & Respect
	✓	National, Regional & Local Collaboration

SECTION 02 2.2

Planning

Good Practice

Develop social value-based planning policy and guidance to increase land and assets used for community-led and commercial sustainable food production - and promote healthier food environments around schools.

Rationale

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has recommended a Community Right to Buy [Bill](#) for Wales. Welsh communities are the least empowered in the UK with respect to ownership of land and other community value assets; 68% of the Welsh public would [support](#) legislation to give communities a right of first refusal to buy community assets such as land, village halls and pubs. Despite the lack of any explicit Community Right to Buy, it is still possible for communities to take over land or buildings via a [Community Asset Transfer](#).

Access to public land and assets can support local, healthy and sustainable food systems by:

- Promoting food production that can reduce carbon and improve biodiversity and soil health
- Supporting local economies by offering land to small-scale farmers and food enterprises, creating jobs and boosting rural livelihoods and resilience
- Supporting county farms and county farmland to produce more fruit and vegetables and integrate their produce into local authority food supply chains
- Addressing health and social inequalities by encouraging physical activity, healthy eating and social interaction

In Wales there is growing interest in the restriction of hot food takeaways around schools. These restrictions are being implemented by some local authorities in England - and having an impact in reducing child obesity. Local authorities in Wales could consider the use of supplementary planning guidance to address this issue. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board is assisting local authorities in North Wales around restricting opening hours of hot food take-aways. However, local authorities and health boards have reported to the Future Generations Commissioner that a technical advice note from Planning Policy Wales would assist local authorities in being able to distinguish between food outlets to enable effective restrictions. The Future Generations Commissioner will seek responses around this policy area to guide further advocacy around it, working closely with Healthy Weight Healthy Wales stakeholders.

Case Studies

Brighton and Hove Council has published food growing and development [guidance for developers](#), mapped its [public land for growing](#) and analysed social, economic and environmental [value of allotments](#).

[Blaenau Gwent Council](#) and [Rhondda Cynon Taff Council](#) have used Community Asset Transfers to use more public land for food growing and related activities. Blaenau Gwent's Community Asset Transfer includes the establishment of Terence Gardens in Brynmawr which is being used as a growing space and also to support mental well-being.

[Powys' Rural enterprise planning policy](#) supports small-scale horticulture businesses by providing planning guidance for rural enterprise dwellings. Powys Council has been working with [Bywd Powys Food](#), [Our Food](#) and other partners to provide 38 acres of public land for three new commercial ventures.

[Gateshead Council](#) used supplementary planning guidance to implement restrictions on take away outlets near locations with high levels of obesity and over proliferation and clustering near secondary schools, youth clubs, parks and leisure centres. In the most deprived areas, child obesity has reduced by 5%.

The Food Environment Assessment [Tool](#) can be used by local authorities, including planning teams, to map and monitor access to food outlets - this can assist with developing local strategies to address obesity and compare access to food outlets between neighbourhoods.



SECTION 02 2.2

Steps towards good practice

- Map available land for food growing and community-led food
- Increase access to land and assets for community-led food production, such as Community Asset Transfers, and support pathways into farming and growers' access to new markets
- Integrate community-led food into social value-based planning guidance and into new housing developments
- Ensure more county farms and county farmland is used for community-led or commercial food production
- Simplify planning policies and permissions for small horticultural businesses and on-farm diversification to add value to agricultural products, including processing infrastructure and accommodation
- Bring planners together with farmers, growers, public health and other stakeholders to share knowledge and build relationships
- Engage Health Board Whole Systems Leads and Public Services Board members to consider how to improve the food environment around schools

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

- Increase in publicly owned land and infrastructure dedicated to private allotments, community growing sites and orchards or commercial food growing - market gardens, community supported agriculture.
- Increase in a number of people engaged in community growing, improvements in their physical and mental well-being and community cohesion, skills
- Growth in availability and diversity of locally sourced horticultural produce (Community Food Strategy target)
- Increase in the concentration of carbon and organic matter in soil (National Well-being Indicator)

How this policy lever relates to Welsh Government strategies

Well-being of Future Generations Act	✓	Prosperous Wales
	✓	Resilient Wales
	✓	Healthier Wales
	✓	More Equal Wales
	✓	Cohesive Communities
	✓	Culture & Welsh language
	✓	Globally Responsible

Healthy Weight Healthy Wales	✓	Whole System Approach
	✓	Families & Lifelong Health
		Schools & Settings for Good Health
	✓	Healthier Food Environments
	✓	Active Lives
		Treatment Pathways

Community Food Strategy Objectives		Joined up Strategy & Leadership
	✓	Local Food Coordination & Action
	✓	Community Food Resilience
	✓	Cohesive Food Communities
	✓	Stronger, Diverse Local Supply
	✓	Community Growing & Horticulture

Child Poverty Strategy Objectives		Reduce Costs & Maximise Incomes
		Pathways out of Poverty
	✓	Child & Family Wellbeing
	✓	Challenge Stigma and ensure Dignity & Respect
		National, Regional & Local Collaboration

SECTION 02 2.3

Procurement

Good Practice

Local authorities can procure more local, healthy and sustainable food for the meals they provide to schools, care homes and other meal services - while boosting the local economy and horticulture production. Local authorities can:

- Divide large contracts into smaller manageable lots for local small and medium enterprises to compete effectively.
- Stipulate in contracts that fresh produce suppliers should work with local growers and develop relationships with them to increase the volume of local produce - including committing to buy local vegetables for the following year, thus encouraging fresh produce supplier contract holders to crop plan with local growers.
- Celebrate your area's food traditions and support the richness of its distinctive food culture by championing local produce as well as the farmers, producers and makers.

Rationale

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act (Wales) 2023 requires local authorities to consider socially responsible public procurement when carrying out procurement, to set objectives in relation to well-being goals, and to publish a procurement strategy. This is an opportunity for local authorities to consider how local, healthy and sustainable food procurement can maximise well-being outcomes by improving public health, boost the local economy and reduce carbon emissions.

58% of the annual Welsh public sector [spend](#) on food is with Welsh firms, though this does not always equate with food being of Welsh origin, which is estimated at 23%. Investing in local, healthy and sustainable food procurement, as exemplified by Carmarthenshire's Future Generations school meal menu, or local authority collaboration with Larder Cymru and Welsh Veg in Schools, can boost local economies while addressing the climate and nature emergencies.

Local authorities can collaborate with wholesalers to source more Welsh food from local growers and leverage bulk buying to increase Welsh produce for the meals it provides. Welsh Government guidance on sustainable and local food procurement for public bodies in Wales is outlined in [Harnessing the Power of the Public Plate: Buying Food Fit for the Future](#). Public Protection Services support food procurement compliance with food hygiene and safety standards.

Case Studies

[Welsh Veg in Schools](#): In 2023, 94% of vegetables served in Welsh schools were imported and none were organic. This initiative is changing that by increasing the supply of locally produced organic vegetables in school meals. In 2025 the project is working with thirteen local authorities, fifteen growers, four wholesalers, Farming Connect Horticulture and Local Food Partnerships. By buying organic local vegetables for primary school meals, local economy and horticultural production are boosted while providing healthy food for school children with a provenance story that encourages uptake. Producing sustainably contributes to biodiversity gain and carbon reduction.

[Larder Cymru](#) collaborates with local authorities to review school menus to integrate more local produce. [Gwynedd](#) Council's approach to procurement of school meals has delivered £1.18 of social value for every £1 spent on North Wales produce.

Carmarthenshire Council's Future Generations School Meal menu [aims](#) to reduce the carbon footprint of its school meals by 80% largely due to replacing imported foods with locally sourced alternatives and reducing meat content by 30%. Using a sustainability framework, the menus are designed to align with Welsh seasonality and local farm production. Monmouthshire Council have collaborated with Size of Wales to produce [global deforestation free school menus](#), designed with schoolchildren.

[East Ayrshire Council](#) segmented large procurement contracts into smaller lots, enabling local SMEs to participate effectively. This approach resulted in an estimated annual CO₂ saving of 37.7 tonnes for primary-school meal distribution and generated approximately £6 returned to the local economy for every £1 spent. This practice significantly increased local supplier engagement and improved environmental outcomes. A similar approach has been undertaken by Caerphilly Council for the Welsh Public Sector Collaborative Food Group (WPSCFG) Food Framework.

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

Please note further guidance and wellbeing impact metrics are expected around the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act. Local authorities may wish to consider

- Percentage of food contract value with Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
- Percentage of food contract value with Welsh or local suppliers
- Number of schools in each local authority area involved in Welsh Veg in Schools

SECTION 02 2.3

How this policy lever relates to Welsh Government strategies

Well-being of Future Generations Act	✓	Prosperous Wales
	✓	Resilient Wales
	✓	Healthier Wales
	✓	More Equal Wales
		Cohesive Communities
	✓	Culture & Welsh language
	✓	Globally Responsible

Healthy Weight Healthy Wales	✓	Whole System Approach
		Families & Lifelong Health
	✓	Schools & Settings for Good Health
	✓	Healthier Food Environments
		Active Lives
		Treatment Pathways

Community Food Strategy Objectives	✓	Joined up Strategy & Leadership
	✓	Local Food Coordination & Action
	✓	Community Food Resilience
	✓	Cohesive Food Communities
	✓	Stronger, Diverse Local Supply
		Community Growing & Horticulture

Child Poverty Strategy Objectives	✓	Reduce Costs & Maximise Incomes
	✓	Pathways out of Poverty
		Child & Family Wellbeing
	✓	Challenge Stigma and ensure Dignity & Respect
	✓	National, Regional & Local Collaboration



SECTION 02 2.4

Increase access to food

Good Practice

Embed access to affordable, nutritious, and sustainable food within wider poverty strategies, rather than treating it as a stand-alone issue.

Local authorities should:

- Become an accredited real living wage employer.
- Set out statutory entitlements clearly, ensuring residents know what they are entitled to and how to access it, and communicate support effectively.
- Prioritise “cash-first” approaches and income-focused interventions, alongside advice and support to maximise income and build financial resilience. A “cash first” approach is a strategy for tackling poverty and food insecurity that prioritizes giving people direct cash payments, rather than in-kind support like food parcels.
- Promote uptake of public food provision such as free school meals or Healthy Start Scheme and support community food initiatives nurturing food literacy. Ensure children from households with No Recourse to Public Funds can access free school meals.
- Ensure that marginalised groups, such as asylum seekers and refugees, have equal access to food, for example by factoring in needs such as culturally appropriate food, physical access to venues, utilising non-digital communication channels.
- Harness the Welsh Curriculum to encourage learning about and through food and improve food literacy across all ages.
- Embed [Marmot principles](#) in approaches to improving public health through diets - recognising poverty and inequality as a core driver of ill health.

Rationale

Poverty remains a key driver of poor health, and people on low incomes are much more likely to suffer from preventable ill health resulting from unhealthy diet. Despite growing initiatives such as community food projects, or Universal Primary School Free School meals, significant inequities in access persist. Local authority-enabled food provision has a significant role in reducing health inequalities and household food insecurity. Significant [inequalities](#) exist in household food security, for example disabled people, households with more than 2 children and people from non-white ethnic groups are at higher risk of food insecurity.

Case Studies

Cardiff, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Monmouthshire and Vale of Glamorgan local authorities are accredited Real Living Wage employers.

[Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Blaenau Gwent and Rhondda Cynon Taf](#)

councils have produced cash-first leaflets with the Independent Food Aid Network.

Salford integrated food into their [Tackling Poverty](#) strategy, including measures on increasing uptake of Healthy Start Scheme, free school meals, and strengthening their provision of financial advice and support for community food projects.

In January 2022, the Healthy Start Scheme uptake in Hounslow was 49% of all eligible participants. After [awareness and educational interventions](#), it rose to 57% in January 2023. With further targeted promotion, uptake reached 71% in 2024.

[Shropshire Council](#) is taking a long-term, preventative approach to food insecurity through reframing food insecurity to reduce stigma, integrating it into organisational plans, delivering training to frontline staff and promoting a “cash-first” approach for emergency support.

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership have aligned their [Community Food Strategy](#) to Marmot principles, seeking to use food systems change to address health inequality - e.g. using the UN Model of food security to determine their approaches such as cross sector collaboration and cash first approaches to reduce emergency food use.

Many Local Food Partnerships are using the [Food Ladders toolkit](#) which provides a framework to address food poverty whilst taking a longer-term approach to community food resilience.

Conwy County Borough Council and the Conwy Local Food Partnership ran cooking sessions for adults with learning disabilities, resulting in better independence and more confidence in accessing and preparing healthy food.

Food Sense Wales ran Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for Local Food Partnerships and published a [reflection and resource pack](#).

SECTION 02 2.4

Steps towards good practice

- Strengthen and embed cash-first approaches to reducing poverty and ensure people are accessing the benefits and financial help they are eligible for, including providing crisis support via cash payments and increasing income maximisation via advice services.
- Become an accredited Real Living Wage (and Hours) Employer and reduce reliance on zero-hour contracts as an employer and in your food procurement supply chains. [Cynnal Cymru](#) is the Living Wage Foundation accreditation partner in Wales - get in touch with them for support to become an accredited real living wage employer.
- Increase of Healthy Start Scheme uptake, for example through provision of training for health professionals or improving their promotion.
- Encourage schools to take up the Food and Fun programme, and increase uptake of free school meals in primary and secondary schools.
- [Cardiff Food Hour](#), [Cegin y Bobl](#), [Eco-schools](#), [Healthy Schools Scheme](#) or [Nutrition Skills for Life](#) are some of the programmes that support schools to provide healthy, sustainable meals and improve food culture (staff training, involving parents and children in menu design etc).

- Widen the eligibility for public food provision, for example to include residents with no recourse to public funds such as asylum seekers and refugees. Provide specific support to community food organisations that cater to these groups.
- Use emergency food aid grants or equivalents to support projects which go beyond emergency food provision into nurturing food literacy, food skills, enjoyment and community cohesion. For example, develop a fruit and veg voucher scheme that supports local economies, such as [Cardiff Planet Card](#).

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

- Number of outlets actively promoting Healthy Start Scheme, number of publicly managed advertising spaces used for promoting foods high in fat, salt or sugar
- Proportion of schools running Food and Fun and their uptake
- Percentage of contract value with suppliers that are accredited Real Living Wage organisations
- Percentage of contract value with suppliers which either do not have employees on zero hour contracts, or which review the appropriateness of these arrangements with individuals/and or trade unions on a regular (at least quarterly) basis
- Proportion of households reporting being food insecure - for example, [Ask Cardiff](#) survey is collecting this information
- Proportion of children and adults eating vegetables or fruit every day (National Well-being Indicator)

How this policy lever relates to Welsh Government strategies

Well-being of Future Generations Act	✓	Prosperous Wales
		Resilient Wales
	✓	Healthier Wales
	✓	More Equal Wales
	✓	Cohesive Communities
	✓	Culture & Welsh language
		Globally Responsible

Healthy Weight Healthy Wales	✓	Whole System Approach
	✓	Families & Lifelong Health
	✓	Schools & Settings for Good Health
	✓	Healthier Food Environments
		Active Lives
		Treatment Pathways

Community Food Strategy Objectives	✓	Joined up Strategy & Leadership
		Local Food Coordination & Action
	✓	Community Food Resilience
	✓	Cohesive Food Communities
		Stronger, Diverse Local Supply
		Community Growing & Horticulture

Child Poverty Strategy Objectives	✓	Reduce Costs & Maximise Incomes
	✓	Pathways out of Poverty
	✓	Child & Family Wellbeing
	✓	Challenge Stigma and ensure Dignity & Respect
		National, Regional & Local Collaboration

SECTION 02 2.5

Promoting healthy diets

Good Practice

By supporting healthier retail and catering, local councils and partnerships can give smaller, community-led enterprises the conditions to succeed. Targeted support, such as access to land or premises, market stalls, tailored advice, or tax incentives, helps these businesses to start, grow, provide fair working conditions and other local benefits. Local authorities can also work with food venues to promote healthier out-of-home food environments. Local authorities can restrict the advertising of foods high in fat, salt or sugar from all outdoor advertising sites it manages.

Rationale

In 2023, there were over 28 000 food and drink businesses, with the whole supply chain employing almost 1 in 5 people in Wales¹. Local food systems boost regional economies by creating fair jobs, supporting local producers and creating more community wealth and skills. But it can do much more than that. Wales has rich connections with its landscape and food culture, Welsh language and preparing and eating food is an important social and cultural experience.

The Future Generations Report 2025 recommends that all Public Bodies in Wales restrict the promotion and provision of food and drinks high in fat, salt or sugar.

Advertising influences what we buy and what we eat. Outdoor advertising is often dominated by images of foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt or sugar. For children in particular this can lead to strong brand awareness and influences their food choices. Across the UK, [25 local authorities](#) are implementing advertising controls around food, with a further 150 reviewing options with Sustain. Health Boards in Wales are assisting local authorities in this policy area.

Case Studies

London has its [Healthy Catering Commitment](#), while Bristol's [Eating Better Award](#) has been evaluated. [Buckinghamshire](#) has its own Good Food Retail scheme in which the local authority supported 10 stores to provide a free trial of healthier products, advice and engagement to help retailers overcome barriers to providing healthier food.

[In 2025, Torfaen County Borough](#) provided grants to food businesses that bring innovation, sustainability and added value to local food systems.

[Leeds city council owned leisure centres](#) changed their vending machines offerings to at least 50% healthier options. This resulted in

a reduction in fat, salt and sugar content but no reduction in sales, which is often the reason for a reluctance to implement such policies.

Both the [Vale of Glamorgan Council](#) and [Cardiff Council](#) have restricted the promotion of foods high in fat, salt or sugar (HFSS) from all outdoor advertising spaces that they manage, which will come into full force once all current contracts end. This outcome was achieved due to their collaboration with the Whole Systems Lead team at Cardiff & Vale University Health Board and as a part of ongoing collaboration across Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan PSBs around good food movement. The work was supported by a local study undertaken by the [Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team \(PHIRST\)](#) which aimed to evaluate public perceptions of HFSS advertising and of the planned policy changes. The UK Government's [Nutrient Profiling Model](#) was used to support the health board and local authorities to identify the food and drinks to restrict.

Transport for London developed a [healthier food advertising policy](#) and restricted advertising of unhealthy foods. Modelling shows that this led to a 20% decrease in sugary product purchases with households buying 1000 fewer calories (6.7% less than would have happened without the policy) per week from high fat, salt and/or sugar foods and drinks. This is equivalent to one big bar of chocolate less each week per household. Researchers also [modeled](#) the impact suggesting a 4.8% decrease in obesity, 2,857 fewer cases of diabetes, and 1,915 fewer cases of cardiovascular disease.

Case Studies: Food, Culture and the Welsh language

[Amgueddfa Cymru Food Festival](#) and [Abergavenny Food Festival](#) are two Welsh festivals that have sustainable policies and collaborate with their Local Food Partnership.

[Ceredigion Local Nature Partnership](#) utilised community gardens to support local culture and sessions on learning Welsh through gardening.

[Stori Bwyd Sir Gar](#) is a food culture project involving schools and community groups and Bremenda Isaf, a council farm growing vegetables for the public plate. Participants learn more about the farm's history and use and collaborate with local artists to create a piece of art - be it a poem, a story, photography or song. These sessions collect the food memories and stories and deepen people's connection to the food traditions of the area and the Welsh language. Carmarthenshire Council is integrating local county farm produce into its [future generations meals](#) for primary schools.

¹ Welsh Government, Welsh Food and Drink Economic Appraisal - 2023. [Welsh Food and Drink Economic Appraisal - 2020](#)

SECTION 02 2.5

Steps towards good practice

- Support local food SMEs by maintaining or increasing markets, business rate relief and affordable rents, grants, as well as by accessing available funding, knowledge transfer and training opportunities, such as Cywain, Project Helix/Food Innovation Wales or Food and Drink Skills Wales, for example through signposting, collaborating with others or having a designated officer.
- Facilitate preferential access to street markets, empty retail premises and street food trading and reduce or remove rental costs or business rates to help facilitate more healthy food retail outlets.
- Work with vending machine providers, catering venues and convenience stores to improve their offer of healthy food, including their participation in Healthy Start Scheme.
- Promote healthy catering schemes such as [Healthy Eating Awards](#) and work with food venues to promote healthier out-of-home food environments.
- Adopt a sustainable food policy for festivals, community, cultural and sporting events held on public land and on public premises. This includes sourcing Welsh and local producers, limiting waste and encouraging healthier, climate-friendly options, whilst considering inclusivity with low-cost options.
- Celebrate local food heritage and deepen people's connection with the food they eat and its connection to culture and language through food festivals and food culture projects with Local Food Partnerships.
- Review [Sustain](#) policy toolkit for local authorities on restricting food advertising and review current advertising contracts, policies and upcoming procurement dates.

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

- Number of Micro or Small and Medium Enterprise jobs providing fair work, created or maintained, in the local food economy
- Proportion of local, healthy, climate-friendly food served at cultural and sporting events and festivals (by volume or spend)

How this policy lever relates to Welsh Government strategies

Well-being of Future Generations Act	✓	Prosperous Wales
		Resilient Wales
	✓	Healthier Wales
		More Equal Wales
	✓	Cohesive Communities
	✓	Culture & Welsh language
	✓	Globally Responsible

Healthy Weight Healthy Wales	✓	Whole System Approach
		Families & Lifelong Health
		Schools & Settings for Good Health
	✓	Healthier Food Environments
	✓	Active Lives
		Treatment Pathways

Community Food Strategy Objectives		Joined up Strategy & Leadership
		Local Food Coordination & Action
	✓	Community Food Resilience
	✓	Cohesive Food Communities
	✓	Stronger, Diverse Local Supply
		Community Growing & Horticulture

Child Poverty Strategy Objectives		Reduce Costs & Maximise Incomes
	✓	Pathways out of Poverty
	✓	Child & Family Wellbeing
		Challenge Stigma and ensure Dignity & Respect
		National, Regional & Local Collaboration

SECTION 02 2.6

Food waste

What does good practice look like

Managing food waste is important for creating sustainable food systems, reducing environmental impacts, and addressing food insecurity. There are three levers that Local Authorities can use:

- Re-distribution of food waste for composting
- Reduce waste through procurement & production monitoring tools
- Behaviour change campaigns

Rationale for using the lever

Although all local authorities in Wales collect food waste at a kerbside for anaerobic digestion, [WRAP](#) statistics show that in 2021/2022, over 300 000 tonnes of household food waste (edible and inedible part) was generated in Wales. That's 100kg and £250 per person annually, and 75% of that was classified as edible (food intended for human consumption).

Case Studies

- [Newham](#), [Gloucester](#) or [Hastings](#) are some of the English local authorities that support community composting.
- [Swansea Bay University Health Board](#) trialled a new patient food ordering app to support in reducing food waste and also give an improved patient experience and expanded choices. By facilitating timely and accurate meal ordering, over a 10-month period, approximately 6,000 fewer meals were wasted compared to the previous year.
- As part of their Future Generations Menu, [Carmarthenshire Council](#) is piloting food waste monitoring system for both plate waste and kitchen waste. Food waste monitoring is also included in their [PSB food strategy](#).
- Cardiff and Monmouthshire councils collaborated with Fair Share Cymru on the Redistribution Wales Kitchen Wales [Project](#) where surplus food is being made into nutritionally balanced affordable meals and distributed to local community groups. Guidance is provided by the [Food Standards Agency](#) on food safety and hygiene food banks and charities.
- During Food Waste Action Week (March 17-23, 2025), [Rhondda Cynon Taff Council](#) encouraged residents to "Be Mighty, Recycle!" and "Buy Loose. Waste Less" as part of their behaviour campaign. This campaign and assets are produced by WRAP and is [available](#) for all local authorities.

Steps towards good practice

- Support community composting sites in parks, allotments, and housing estates, offering small grants, equipment, and training to residents or community groups.
- Develop food-waste audits and dashboards for council-run catering services to track and review waste generation and incorporate food-waste reduction goals into procurement policies.
- Run annual food-waste awareness campaigns timed to national initiatives such as Food Waste Action Week or Love Food Hate Waste. Find out more about WRAP Cymru [Be mighty, recycle](#) campaign and their other resources.

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

- Reduction in household, commercial and public (procurement) food waste.

How this policy lever relates to Welsh Government strategies

Well-being of Future Generations Act	✓	Prosperous Wales
		Resilient Wales
	✓	Healthier Wales
		More Equal Wales
		Cohesive Communities
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Child Poverty Strategy Objectives		Reduce Costs & Maximise Incomes
	✓	Pathways out of Poverty
	✓	Child & Family Wellbeing
		Challenge Stigma and ensure Dignity & Respect
		National, Regional & Local Collaboration

SECTION 02 2.7

Next steps

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and Food Sense Wales would like to invite local authorities to get in touch with us to discuss this guidance and identify where we can assist you to take further actions on food. Please contact: Jonathan Tench, Well-being Economy Director and Jenny McConnel, Sustainable Development Adviser at the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales -

Jonathan.Tench@futuregenerations.wales;
Jenny.McConnel@futuregenerations.wales

Pearl Costello, Sustainable Food Places Manager, at Food Sense Wales can help connect you with Local Food Partnerships:

foodsensewales@wales.nhs.uk

Throughout this guidance we have referenced the importance of Whole Systems Leads, based in each health board in Wales, these leads can support collaboration across many of the policies we have outlined and can be contacted via your local health board.

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales will convene an annual forum for local authorities on the food system. Public Service Boards are developing their well-being assessments and in 2026 will develop their well-being objectives. This guidance will inform the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' advice in this process.

In all our involvement with local authorities we are learning of key challenges and opportunities to unlock their ability to take further action on food. This will inform our ongoing engagement across the Welsh Government strategies referred to in this guidance. This includes: advocacy for the development of a cross-departmental Welsh Government national food plan, integrating local, healthy and sustainable food into Planning Policy Wales and into town or high street regeneration programmes, further embedding food literacy in the national curriculum, further national investment in building horticultural local supply chains.

Acknowledgements

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and Food Sense Wales would like to thank the Welsh Government's Food Division for providing support to develop this guidance, BIC Innovation and Barbora Adlerova for researching local authority practice, Liz Lambert, Sustainable Development Group Leader in Cardiff Council and the many local authorities, health boards and Local Food Partnerships that were involved.

In developing this guidance we have reviewed policy recommendations developed by Ambition North Wales, Sustain and Sustainable Food Places and the findings of the Food, Farming & Countryside Commission's food conversations with Welsh citizens.

In addition, we would like to thank Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority, Castell Howell Food Ltd, Food Policy Alliance Cymru, Food Standards Agency, Professor Kevin Morgan, Natural Resources Wales, Nesta, Public Health Wales and Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government for reviewing this guidance.





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