

Doncaster Food Plan: 2025-2030

February 2025

*'For everyone in
Doncaster to be able to
access and use a range of
nutritious and
sustainable foods in ways
that enable people,
places, and the planet to
thrive.'*



Doncaster
Delivering Together



**City of
Doncaster
Council**

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Introduction

Food plays a key role in our health and wellbeing, but it is more than just a source of energy and nutrients for our bodies. Food can bring us joy and pleasure and help us to connect with one another. It is central to many celebrations, holidays, and social occasions, and reflects our diverse cultures.

Food is also an integral part of Doncaster's local economy. There are over 4000 food premises across the city (including caring establishments, schools, and colleges) and nearly 4% of residents in employment work in food and beverage service activities, with many others employed in the manufacture of food and beverage products, and crop or animal production (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2021).

A healthy and sustainable food system is essential for thriving people, place, and planet. However, our food system is currently facing several challenges. Action is needed to ensure that everyone living and working in Doncaster has reliable access to food that is good for our health, good for our city, and good for our planet.

What is a food system?

The food system is a network of all food-related activities. It includes how our food is produced, processed, transported, stored, and consumed. The system is shaped by, and in turn shapes, many factors, such as social and cultural norms, food availability, food policies, and school and workplace food environments. As such, every area of our society, including the environment, economy, and our health and wellbeing, are in some way connected to the food system.

Doncaster has a population of around 313,000 (ONS, 2021). The population is aging rapidly and it is projected that by 2026 there will be more people over the age of 65 years than there will be aged 18 years and under. However, Doncaster has some of the lowest healthy life expectancies, the number of years a person can expect to live in good health, in the country (ONS, 2022). Compared with England, males in Doncaster can expect 5.7 fewer years of good health overall, whilst women can expect 7.8 fewer years of good health. Coupled with an ageing population, low healthy life expectancy will likely increase the demand of our health services. There are also differences in overall life expectancy between areas in our city; males living in the most deprived areas of Doncaster have a 10-year lower life expectancy than those living in the least deprived areas, whilst there is an 8.2-year difference for females.

Access to a range of nutritious foods is essential for good health and wellbeing across the life course. Diets that do not contain the right amount of nutrients can contribute to the development of food-related health conditions. In Doncaster, high rates of many food-related health conditions are observed, including malnutrition, obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and tooth decay. We have also seen a rise in poor mental health and isolation which can be exacerbated by and contribute to poor dietary intake. Improving residents' access to nutritious food is key to improving the health and wellbeing of our population.

Doncaster's population comprises of a wide range of ethnic groups, with 13.4% of residents from an ethnic minority background (ONS, 2021). Doncaster is also home to many refugees and asylum seekers. Different population groups may have specific health and food-related considerations, including access needs. However, this also presents a great opportunity to learn about and share different foods cultures and traditions from around the world.

Whilst it is important that all residents have the skills and information to eat well, we also need to recognise that what we eat is not solely down to individual choice or food-related knowledge. There are many factors that influence what we eat, for example the cost of food, our access to adequate cooking and food storage facilities, the type and amount of food advertising that we are exposed to, and the types of food retailers that are accessible to us. We observe high levels of food insecurity in the city, with many residents finding it difficult to access affordable and nutritious food. On the other hand, large amounts of good food are thrown away every day. We are also facing a climate crisis and Doncaster has experienced firsthand some of the extreme weather events associated with this. The way in which our food is produced and the distance it travels before reaching our plates contributes to our city's carbon emissions and so this must also be addressed.

These challenges in our food system are both complex and interconnected and so a whole system approach must be taken when addressing these. The Doncaster Food Plan aims to do just that.

A whole systems approach

An integrated, whole systems approach to food involves bringing together stakeholders from across the food system, including residents, to work towards a shared vision. Rather than addressing food-related issues and different parts of the system in isolation, we must consider how these relate and the roles that different parts may play in both causing and resolving food-related challenges.

10 KEY FOOD STATISTICS IN DONCASTER

1

FOOD BANKS

There are more than 30 food banks in Doncaster and many are seeing a rising demand for food support from residents

6

MALNUTRITION

45 people admitted to hospital in 23/24 were found to have malnutrition

2

FOOD WASTE

2/3 of residents in Doncaster throw food away, wasting an average of 2.4kg per week

7

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Around 30% of children in Doncaster are eligible for free school meals, but not all eligible families take up this offer

3

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

40% of year 6 children are considered overweight (including obesity)

8

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

70% of primary (years 4 & 6) and 60% of secondary (years 8 & 10) school pupils eat fruits and vegetables most or every day

4

COMMUNITY GROWING

4% of residents reported that they participate in community food or growing projects in 2022

9

FOOD ACCESS

Money/cost of food was the top reason (33%) residents found it difficult to get the food they needed in their diet

5

CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH

1/3 of 5-year-olds in Doncaster are reported to have tooth decay

10

HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY

In Doncaster, females expect 7.8 fewer years of good health than in England. For males, 5.7 fewer years are expected



What is a Food Plan and why do we need it?

There is a lot to celebrate across Doncaster in terms of food-related projects, organisations, and businesses. However, local data and insight have highlighted several key areas where improvements are needed to create a food system in Doncaster that enables people, place, and planet to thrive.

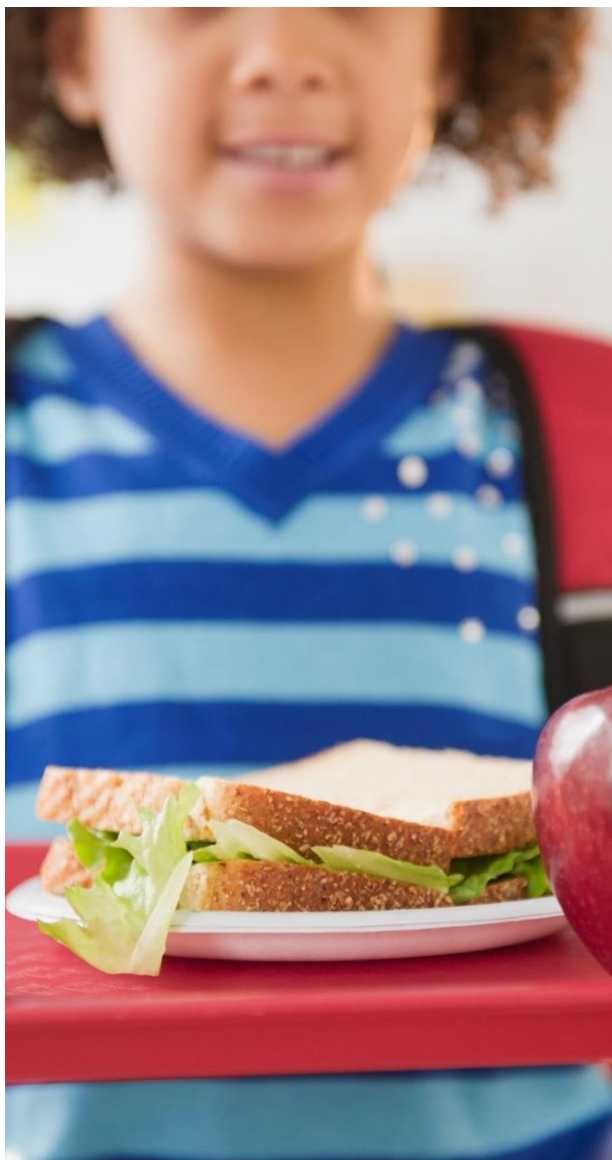


Image: A child carrying a sandwich and apple on a tray

Our vision

For everyone in Doncaster to be able to access and use a **range of nutritious and sustainable** foods in ways that enable **people, places, and the planet** to thrive.

The Doncaster Food Plan sets out a collective vision for food across the city, 5-year aims and objectives to work towards this, and a plan of action for how these aims and objectives will be achieved.

This plan encompasses multiple levels of the food system, including how we produce and distribute our food, our access and exposure to food, what and how we eat and drink, and how we dispose of our food.

The Food Plan has been co-produced with representatives from the council, third sector organisations, the public sector, and local businesses to create a collective and joined-up vision and action plan. Furthermore, Doncaster's Health and Wellbeing Board, comprising of political, clinical, professional and community leaders from across the care and health system, have agreed to support action to *'create a food environment that enables everyone in Doncaster to access and use diverse, nutritious, and sustainable foods through strengthened affordable food initiatives and by addressing the advertising and promotion of nutritionally poor foods, reduce food waste and increase local food production.'*

Resident consultation, involving around 1600 residents, was undertaken in May-August to help identify the priorities of the plan. Whilst this document has been authored by Public Health, City of Doncaster Council, we hope that it reflects the priorities of those who live and work across the city and that the delivery of this plan will be supported by stakeholders across the food system. **We all need to work together to be able to achieve the vision of the Doncaster Food Plan.**

The Doncaster Food Plan is supported by a 'live' action log; this working document breaks down the overarching actions specified in this Food Plan into smaller, more specific sub-actions, which are owned by stakeholders involved in delivering the Food Plan. This log will be updated as new partnerships are developed, actions are completed, and new actions are identified.



The Doncaster Food Network

The Doncaster Food Network was initially established in 2017 but became dormant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Following on from the stakeholder involvement in designing the Food Plan, the Doncaster Food Network will be relaunched. The Network will be used to help us deliver, monitor progress of, and evaluate the impact of the Food Plan. If you are a food-related organisation or business or deliver food-related activities and would be interested in joining the Doncaster Food Network or learning more, please contact Kirstie.Lamb@doncaster.gov.uk

How has the Food Plan been developed?

Around 1600 residents of Doncaster were consulted on the development of the Food Plan between May and August 2024. An online survey was distributed, face-to-face engagement 'pop-ups' were held at various community venues and events across Doncaster, and targeted workshops were run at a Doncaster primary school and community groups, including refugee support groups, an older person's social group, a young person's steering group, and support groups for residents with physical and mental health conditions. Residents were asked questions regarding their food-related priorities, barriers to eating well, and views on what an ideal food system in Doncaster would look like.

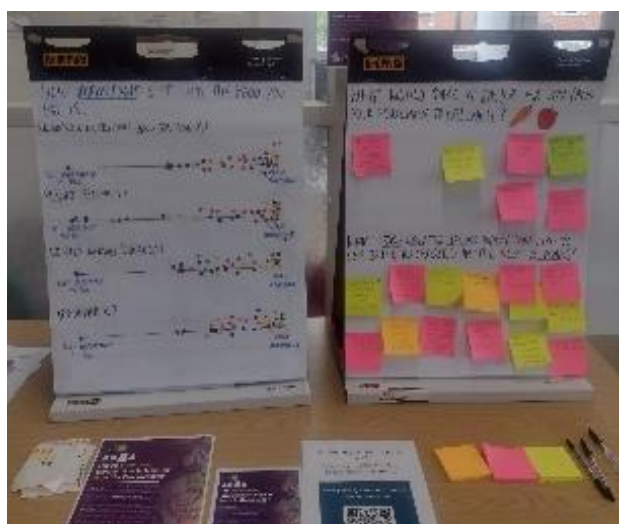


Image: Example of one of the 'pop-up' resident engagement events held at a community venue

Responses from residents were evaluated and themed alongside data gathered from the Doncaster Talks About Food survey (2022), identifying reoccurring topics and key priority areas for residents. These findings were presented to over 40 stakeholders from across the food system at two Food Plan design workshops (a list of contributing stakeholders can be found on page 7). At the first workshop held in October 2024, aims and objectives of the Food Plan were agreed by stakeholders. Key actions for each objective were identified at the second workshop held in November 2024. Additional stakeholders contributed actions to the action plan following the workshop.

May-August 2024: Resident engagement – Engagement with Doncaster residents to identify priority areas for the Food Plan

~1400 online survey responses
~200 face-to-face conversations

October 2024: Stakeholder design workshop 1 – Narrowing residents' priority areas down into key aims and objectives for the Plan

November 2024: Stakeholder design workshop 2 – Identifying actions for each objective

December 2024: Draft action plan distributed – Plan distributed to stakeholders for feedback and commitments to actions

Figure 1. Key steps in the development of the Food Plan



Image: Stakeholder design workshop 1 at Bentley Pavilion

Delivering the Doncaster Food Plan

Whilst written by CDC Public Health, the Doncaster Food Plan has been shaped by the voices of our residents and co-developed by the stakeholders listed on the following page. Stakeholders will work both independently and collaboratively, alongside residents, to deliver this over the next 5 years. Actions will be monitored regularly, with a review of our progress produced annually.

Stakeholder Involvement

The following stakeholders have contributed to the development of the Food Plan and/or will be involved in its delivery:

- Age UK Doncaster
- Bentley Urban Farm and A Commune in the North
- BME United
- City of Doncaster Council (CDC) representatives from the following teams:
 - Public Health
 - Well Doncaster/Be Well Doncaster
 - Health Determinants Research Collaboration
 - Sustainability Unit
 - Children, Young People, and Families
 - Communities Team – Wellbeing
 - Policy, Insight and Change
 - Early Intervention and Prevention
 - Heritage and Culture Services
 - Food Safety and Animal Health
 - Waste and Recycling
 - Strategic Procurement
 - Investment
 - Schools Catering
- City St George's, University of London
- Citizen's Advice Doncaster
- Community Pantry Van
- Cook Stars (Doncaster South)
- Danum Gallery, Library, and Museum (DGLAM)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- DN Colleges
- Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) NHS Trust
- Doncaster Foodbank - Trussell Trust
- Doncaster Mind
- Edlington Community Organisation (ECO)
- Ethnic Culture Fusion Network (ECFN)
- FareShare Yorkshire
- FoodCycle
- Great 8 Voluntary, Care, and Faith Sector (VCFS) representative for 'Tackling Climate Change'
- Holmescarr Food Train, Holmescarr Ark and Crafts
- Learn Live Love Food
- Manna Community CIC
- North Doncaster Development Trust (NDDT)
- Oral Health Improvement Group
- Rotherham, Doncaster, and South Humber (RDASH) Grounded Research
- ReFood
- SDA Food bank
- Social Isolation Alliance (SIA)
- Sodexo Health and Care
- St Leger Homes
- The Bare Project

A big thank you to all those who have contributed to the Food Plan so far. We welcome others to join us to help create a nutritious and sustainable food system for all in Doncaster.



Strategic Links

Doncaster's Food Plan has been written with consideration of existing food-related strategies and policies. This includes those produced specifically for Doncaster as well as broader national strategies.

Local Strategies

Doncaster Delivering Together 10-year Strategy (2020-2030)

Doncaster Delivering Together is a 10-year Borough Strategy about 'Thriving People, Places, and Planet'. Team Doncaster have agreed 'Great 8' priorities (**Figure 2**) that set out what residents, businesses, and public organisations will do to achieve 6 wellbeing goals, namely 'Greener and Cleaner', 'Skilled and Creative', 'Prosperous and Connected', 'Safe and Resilient', 'Healthy and Compassionate', and 'Fair and Inclusive'.

Doncaster Local Plan (2015-2035)

Doncaster Local plan sets out policies for housing, employment, and development in Doncaster. Two of its policies are of relevance to the Doncaster Food Plan:

- Policy 24: 'Proposals solely for a hot food takeaway, which are located within 400 meters of a school, sixth form, college, community centre, or playground will not be supported unless the opening hours are restricted until after 5pm during weekdays and there are no over the counter sales before that time.'
- Policy 50: 'Development to positively contribute to creating high quality places that support and promote healthy communities and lifestyles, such as maximising access by walking and cycling; developments designed to encourage and support healthy lifestyles; controlling the location of, and access to, Food and Drink Uses'

Oral Health Needs Assessment & Action Plan (2025)

This assessment makes recommendations for oral health to be included in the Doncaster Food Plan and promoted via whole school food and drink policies.

Doncaster Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy (2024-2030)

Doncaster Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy sets out priorities for improving health and wellbeing of residents. The strategy has an overall vision of 'adding years to life and life to years' and has three main areas of focus, namely 'improving the experience of ageing', 'close the women's and children's health and wellbeing gap', and 'creating healthy places to live, grow, and play'. The Doncaster Food Plan aligns with these aims.

Team Doncaster Environment and Sustainability Strategy (2020-2030)

The Environment and Sustainability Strategy follows the Council's climate emergency declaration in 2019. This strategy sets out actions that Team Doncaster aim to take to reduce Doncaster's emissions. Food plays a substantial role within the strategy. For example, it includes aims to 'increase the proportion of locally sourced food', 'reduce and remove avoidable food waste', and 'promote food security for the residents of Doncaster'. The strategy also proposed the aim to 'develop a clearly defined food strategy for Doncaster'.

Food Products for Doncaster Strategy

The Food Products for Doncaster Strategy outlines the long-term strategy for providing food products for Doncaster Council's catering services. It defines an aim of the council to 'ensure nutritious and healthy well-balanced meals and food types are provided to the customers to ensure excellent health and wellbeing in our communities'.

Doncaster Council Procurement Strategy (2022-2025)

This strategy sets out aims for the procurement of goods, services, and works in Doncaster, including actions to incorporate sustainability and environmental considerations into contracts and use local suppliers.

Barnsley, Doncaster, and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan 2012-2027

The Doncaster Food Plan also supports the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan 2012-2027 which aims to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste, which includes food waste, sent to landfill.



Figure 2. Doncaster Delivering Together 'Great 8' Priorities

National Strategies

The Independent National Food Strategy (July 2021)

The National Food Strategy advises that Local Authorities in England *"Develop food strategies, developed with reference to national targets and in partnership with the communities they serve"*.

Government Food Strategy (June 2022)

The Government Food Strategy, published in response to the National Food Strategy, includes policy initiatives and measures to boost health, sustainability, and accessibility of diets, and to secure food supply. The aims of this strategy have been acknowledged; however, it is important that aims and actions in the Doncaster Food Plan are tailored to Doncaster and are developed with and for the individuals that it will serve.

Sustainable Food Places

Doncaster was the 50th city to join the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) Network. The SFP model identifies six key areas that ensure a holistic approach to the food system is taken, namely Food Governance and Strategy, Good Food Movement, Healthy Food for All, Sustainable Food Economy, Catering and Procurement, and Food for the Planet (Figure 3). These six key areas have been considered when designing the Doncaster Food Plan.

Recipe for Health: A Plan to Fix Our Broken Food System (October 2024)

This strategy was published by the Food, Diet and Obesity Committee, appointed by the House of Lords, to set out a plan to improve our nation's current food

system. It aims to address the inequalities in food access and food-related ill health and calls on the government to adopt a new comprehensive food strategy to tackle food system failures. The report also emphasises the major role that the food industry has played, and continues to play, in the prevalence of food-related ill health and inequalities in food access.

United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

The Doncaster Food Plan also supports the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (Figure 4) outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including 'no poverty', 'zero hunger', 'good health and wellbeing', 'quality education', 'reduced inequalities', 'sustainable cities and communities', 'responsible consumption and production', and 'climate action'.



Figure 4. United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals

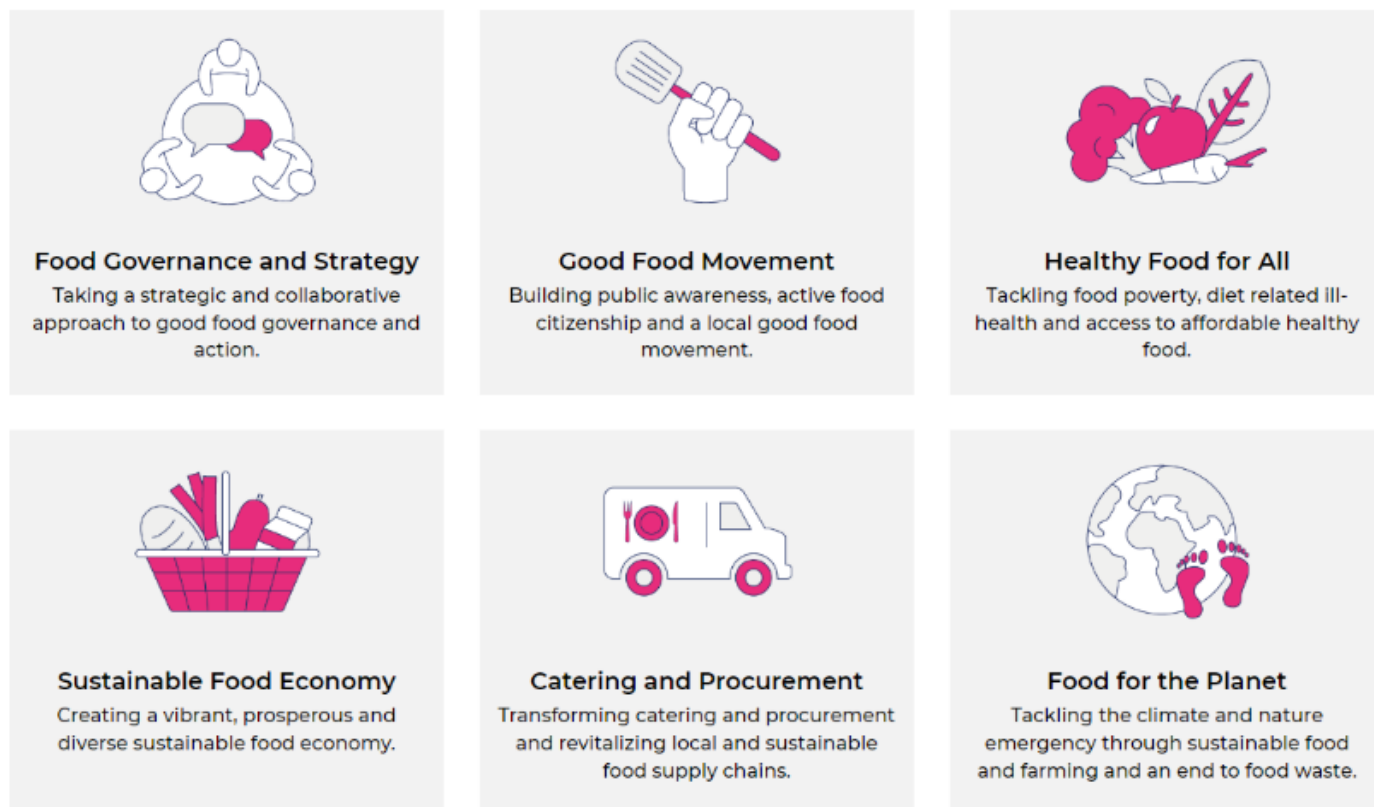


Figure 3. The Sustainable Food Places 6-key issues framework

Key Outcomes for 2030

We have identified 4 main outcomes that we hope to see as a result of delivering the Doncaster Food Plan.

1. Improvements in residents' food-related health and wellbeing

Access to a variety of nutritious food is important for good physical and mental health, at all stages of life. Behaviours adopted during childhood, such as food preferences and eating habits, can also influence health outcomes across the life course. Residents have told us that they are particularly concerned about childhood and adult obesity, mental health, and oral health. Residents also identified 'balanced and nutritious' as being an important characteristic of the food they eat. We hope to see improvements in food-related health and wellbeing as a result of the Food Plan's actions.

What could this look like?

- *Increasing healthy life expectancy across the city*
- *Improvements in diagnoses of mental health conditions, such as eating disorders*
- *Reductions in rates of malnutrition, obesity in adults and children, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, childhood tooth decay/tooth extractions, and other food-related ill-health*

2. A more food secure city – nutritious food is more accessible

It is important to recognise that food-related ill health is not simply a result of poor choices or a lack of willpower or knowledge. Many residents find it difficult to find and/or buy affordable nutritious food where they live and so we would like to see greater food security across Doncaster. Furthermore, to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents, nutritious food must be seen as the easiest, most attractive, and most accessible option.

What could this look like?

- *Reduction in the number of emergency food parcels requested/users of food banks in the city*
- *Increased number of affordable food provision options, such as food pantries and community shops*
- *Increased percentage of children eating fruit and vegetables most or every day*
- *Reduction in the percentage of residents living in areas of highest food insecurity*

3. A more sustainable, locally focused food system

Following CDC's declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency in 2019, it is essential to improve the environmental impact of Doncaster's food system and ensure that it is sustainable and resilient to future disruptions. We would like to see greater awareness and use of local food production and an increased interest and involvement in growing food across the city. We also hope that actions in the Food Plan will result in reductions in food waste and improved use of surplus food across the food system.

What could this look like?

- *An increase in the number of allotments and/or community food growing spaces across Doncaster*
- *Increased sourcing from local food growers/producers by key institutions*
- *Reduction in the amount of food ending up in landfill*
- *An increase in the number of composting sites*

4. Greater community cohesion and connection driven by food-related activities and events

Food has the capacity to bring people together and create community cohesion, whether that be through shared meals, community growing spaces, food festivals, or an increased understanding of different food customs and cultures. This can also lead to improvements in physical and mental health and wellbeing. Furthermore, building on the existing strengths of communities and allowing residents to shape where they live can increase a community's resilience and overall food security.

What could this look like?

- *An increase in the number of community-led food-related activities taking place across the city*
- *Reductions in reported social isolation and loneliness*
- *Increased reporting of community cohesion from community conversations*



Image: Punnets of fresh fruit at a market

Underlying Principles of the Food Plan

The Food Ladders Model structures our approach to building food security and resilience

A Food Ladders model (Dr Megan Blake, University of Sheffield) has been embedded into the Doncaster Food Plan to help us improve residents' access to affordable, nutritious food and tackle food insecurity. This multi-scaled approach addresses the wider effects that poverty has on health, wellbeing, and community cohesion by building local level resilience. Food ladders recognise that people need skills, resources, and independence to take part in food-related activities, with the overall goal being to help residents become more food secure and resilient. Food Ladders typically have 3 levels, or 'rungs', of intervention and all rungs are required for the ladder to work effectively:

1. **Catching (doing for/to residents):** this initial rung provides support for those in crisis, such as food banks and other emergency food provision. Food banks may also provide wrap-around support, such as advice on finances, helping residents move out of crisis.
2. **Capacity building (doing with residents):** the second rung supports residents who, whilst not currently in crisis, may be struggling to access nutritious food. These interventions, such as cooking classes and community pantries, promote the use of local assets whilst building residents' skills, knowledge, and resources.
3. **Self-organised community change (done by residents):** the third rung utilises local assets and community capacity. Residents are supported to contribute to food system change through self-organised projects. These interventions, for example cooperative food growing projects, help meet the community's self-identified needs and interests.

Residents are at the heart of the Food Plan's aims, objectives, and actions

Aligning with the Food Ladders Model, the Food Plan is, and will continue to be, community centred and asset based. As described on page 5, the plan has been designed around the priorities and desires of residents using local insight. We aim to work with residents to shape and deliver actions to ensure that these continue to reflect the priorities and meet needs of communities.

A compassionate approach to health and wellbeing is embedded in actions

CDC have adopted a compassionate approach to weight and health. This approach recognises that health is a complex issue and that there are many factors that affect it, not just our lifestyle choices. These include where we live, our income, genetics, and our culture. The Compassionate Approach vision is that:

- Everybody in Doncaster is fully able to pursue their own health goals and are fully supported to do so by society, without judgement or assumptions.
- Residents feel valued as an individual just the way they are.
- Compassion is at the heart of how we move together towards a healthier society for future generations.

This approach acknowledges that health and wellbeing can be promoted without focusing on being a certain body size. It focuses on building up residents' self-efficacy and self-worth. A compassionate approach to health, weight, food and nutrition will be embedded within its actions.

Collaborative working is encouraged and partnership is supported

A partnership approach has been used to design the Food Plan. Through the Doncaster Food Network, we will continue to take a collaborative and strategic approach to delivering and evaluating the actions of the Food Plan. We aim to build and utilise a strong whole-system partnership approach across different departments, sectors, components of the food system, and residents.

Activities are underpinned by evidence, research, and mapping

To make sure that the Food Plan's actions have the biggest positive impact possible, we will use data and research to support the design of activities and ensure that these are evidence-based. Where gaps in evidence are identified, new research will be conducted. Research and data will also be used to evaluate the impact of actions.



Image: Map identifying food-related activities in Doncaster

Aims and Objectives for 2025-2030

Five main aims have been identified for 2025-2030 following resident and stakeholder engagement, providing us with a framework for action. Each of these aims has been split into two objectives which will be our focus for the next 5 years.

However, it is important that a holistic whole-systems approach is taken, and it is acknowledged that these 5 aims are fundamentally linked and cross-cutting. Consequently, there will likely be crossover between objectives and many of our actions will contribute towards the achievement of more than one objective and/or aim. For example, increasing opportunities for cooking and nutrition education and skill-sharing will likely also contribute to increased food security.

1. Build residents' food-related knowledge and skills



Objective 1. Increase opportunities for cooking and nutrition education and skill-sharing for all age groups.

Objective 2. Develop accessible and realistic campaigns, communication, and resources that raise public awareness of nutritious and sustainable foods and the factors that influence eating behaviours.

2. Strengthen Food Ladders to address food insecurity



Objective 1. Identify and promote existing assets across Doncaster that support residents to access affordable, nutritious food.

Objective 2. Increase the offer of existing food support initiatives and develop new activities where gaps in provision have been highlighted.

3. Create a supportive food environment



Objective 1. Address the commercial determinants of health that influence food-related behaviours

Objective 2. Improve access to nutritious and sustainable food and drink where we live, work, and play.

4. Tackle food waste and surplus food



Objective 1. Reduce food waste where we live, work, and play, and support appropriate disposal initiatives where waste is unavoidable.

Objective 2. Improve the redistribution of surplus food, especially to those most in need.

5. Support and promote locally produced food



Objective 1. Build connections with and support local food producers and businesses.

Objective 2. Encourage and facilitate food growing where we live, work, and play.



Image: Menu board from FoodCycle's free weekly community meal at Doncaster Baptist Church

To help us achieve each objective over the next 5 years, several overarching actions have been identified and these are presented on the following pages. Organisations and CDC departments/teams supporting these actions have been listed. However, these lists are not exhaustive, as new partners may be identified following the publication of this Food Plan who are also able to contribute to actions. Similarly, whilst examples of what is already being done are provided, we know that there are many more actions already being completed across Doncaster that would contribute to our aims.

More specific sub-actions, which support the overarching actions, have been proposed by stakeholders involved in the delivery of the Food Plan. To allow us to update these sub-actions as they progress and add new sub-actions where new opportunities are identified, these have been collated in a separate 'live' action log, rather than in the Food Plan.



Aim 1: Build residents' food-related knowledge and skills

What residents told us...

Almost 90% of residents said that it was important or very important that the food they eat is nutritious and balanced (good for health).

Cooking skills (of children and adults) were mentioned as a potential barrier to eating well and was also identified as a priority issue that many residents would like to see being addressed in the next 5 years.

Many residents also wanted to see greater celebration of foods from different cultures.

Eating a variety of nutritious foods is important for good health and wellbeing. Diets that do not contain the appropriate amount of nutrients for our own needs can increase our risk of food-related ill health, for example:

- There were 45 cases of malnutrition identified in hospital admissions at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in 2023/2024 (NHS England, 2024).
- An increase in the percentage of underweight children at year 6 age has been observed over the past 6 years, whilst the percentage of adults (29.7%), reception-aged children (12.1%), and children in year 6 (24.6%) classified as obese are considerably higher in Doncaster than seen nationally (Office for Health Improvement and Disparities [OHID], 2024).
- A high number of residents have other food-related health conditions, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- Around 700 hospital tooth extractions were conducted on children and young people in Doncaster in 2022/2023 (OHID, 2024). Tooth decay and gum disease can in turn make it more difficult to eat.

Having the knowledge and skills to buy, store, and prepare nutritious food contributes to an individuals' ability to eat well. Residents of all ages should be provided with suitable opportunities to develop their understanding of food and nutrition and gain practical cooking and budgeting skills if required. Furthermore, it is important to build residents' digital and technology skills to make online resources more accessible.

Across Doncaster, there are many great examples of where knowledge and skill-building are already taking place, yet it has been identified that many residents are unaware of these activities and that existing provision is not always appropriate and/or accessible for some residents. This needs to be addressed.

We recognise that there are many factors that influence what we eat (see 'Compassionate Approach', page 10) and so activities and communication must also consider the environment in which residents are living, for example their household cooking and food storage facilities, and personal needs such as food intolerances and allergies. It is also important that residents are supported to understand the factors that can influence their eating behaviours.

We also know that many residents already have extensive food-related knowledge and skills. Opportunities for residents to share their experience with others in their community should be made more available, particularly where this facilitates intergenerational and intercultural learning.

There are more than 90 different ethnicities across the city and 13% of residents are from an ethnic minority background. We must therefore make sure that there are appropriate food-related information and activities available to support different cultures. An increase in activities that celebrate the diverse food cultures we have across Doncaster will also provide opportunities for intercultural learning and improved community cohesion.



Image: A parent and child enjoying cooking together

How will we achieve Aim 1?

Objective	Actions	Supported by
1. Increase opportunities for cooking and nutrition education and skill-sharing for all age groups	1) Undertake mapping work to identify existing provision for cooking and nutrition education, training, and skill-sharing across the life course in Doncaster	CDC Public Health [PH] (Children, Young People, and Families & Healthy Lives teams); North Doncaster Development Trust (NDDT); Voluntary, Community, and Faith Sector (VCFS) Great 8 representative 'Tackling Climate Change'; Social Isolation Alliance (SIA)
	2) Promote the current cooking and nutrition education, training, and skill-sharing offer to increase residents', organisations', and services' awareness of this	CDC PH (Children, Young People, and Families & Healthy Lives teams, Be Well); NDDT; Doncopolitan
	3) Evaluate existing provision, including its target audience, alignment with compassionate approach principles, and attendance barriers, to ensure that there are accessible and appropriate options for all residents	CDC Adults, Family, Community Learning (AFCL), PH (Healthy Lives team); NDDT
	4) Expand the current education, training, and skill-sharing offer where needed to build residents' cooking and nutrition confidence and competency	CDC PH (Children, Young People, and Families), AFCL/Remake Learning team; Bentley Urban Farm; Manna CIC; FareShare Yorkshire; NDDT; FoodCycle; Holmescarr Ark and Crafts; Edlington Community Organisation
	5) Facilitate food-related intercultural and intergenerational skill-sharing events and activities	CDC PH, Sustainability Unit (SU), AFCL/Remake Learning team, Schools Catering; NDDT; VCFS Great 8 representative 'Tackling Climate Change'; FoodCycle; Ethnic Culture Fusion Network; BME United
2. Develop accessible and realistic campaigns, communication, and resources that raise public awareness of nutritious and sustainable foods and the factors that influence eating behaviours	1) Develop and promote collaborative food and nutrition-related campaigns that align with compassionate approach principles, to ensure consistency in the information and messaging provided to residents	Doncaster Food Network; CDC PH (Children, Young People, and Families & Healthy Lives teams), SU, Schools Catering; Oral Health Improvement Group; Doncopolitan/Bentley Urban Farm; SIA
	2) Create accessible resources, aligning with and promoting a compassionate approach to food and nutrition, that make it easier for residents to identify and use nutritious and sustainable foods	CDC PH (Children, Young People, and Families & Healthy Lives teams, Be Well), SU, Schools Catering, AFCL/Remake Learning team; Doncaster Mind
	3) Facilitate initiatives to bridge the digital divide by providing access to technology and digital training for residents to access online food and nutrition resources	Citizens Advice
	4) Develop communication and resources that reflect and celebrate Doncaster's diverse food cultures	CDC AFCL/Remake Learning team, PH (Healthy Lives team)

What is already being done to achieve this aim?

- Cooking sessions are run across Doncaster by several Team Doncaster partners, for example CDC, several food banks, Cook Stars, and Learn Live Love Food.
- CDC Public Health developed a Compassionate New Year communications campaign which has run for 3 consecutive Januarys since 2023. This campaign promotes self-compassion when creating resolutions or goals for the New Year which can often involve dietary changes and weight loss targets.



Aim 2: Strengthen Food Ladders to address food insecurity

What residents told us...

Only 32% of residents said that it was easy or very easy to access affordable food and the cost of food was frequently reported as a barrier to eating well.

Access to affordable food options was identified as a priority issue that residents would like to see being addressed in the next 5 years.

Residents also requested more food-related opportunities to bring communities together.

Building food-related knowledge and skills is just one step to improving residents' diets. We must recognise that many are struggling to put nutritious foods on the table, even with the knowledge and skills to do so.

- Over 45% of households in Doncaster are experiencing, or are at high risk of, food insecurity, meaning that they do not have reliable access to affordable, nutritious, and safe food in socially acceptable ways (DWP, 2022).
- Additionally, almost 6% of adults in Doncaster reported that they had experienced hunger because they could not afford or get access to food and over 14% had struggled to access food (University of Sheffield, 2021).
- Food insecurity can negatively impact physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- The cost of food has also been reported as a common barrier to eating well, and fruit, vegetable, oily fish, and fibre intakes tend to be lower for those on lower incomes (National Diet and Nutrition Survey, 2020).

The use of emergency food aid providers, such as food banks, is more likely as a household becomes less food secure. An increasing number of residents are turning to these services, of which there are currently over 30 in Doncaster, for support. Whilst emergency food aid providers are an important resource for those in crisis, these are not the solution to food insecurity. The root causes of food insecurity must be tackled to build a healthy and resilient food system and affordable nutritious food options must be more accessible.

Recognising and building on local assets and increasing residents' access to resources and opportunities can help build local level resilience and food security, especially where residents are involved in the design and delivery of these. Activities that bring residents together also provide opportunities to address social isolation and poor mental health which can contribute

to lower diet quality if not addressed. The Food Ladders model supports this (see page 11 and Figure 5). The development of more rung 2 and 3 activities, such as food pantries and shared meals, and improved connection and coordination between activities, services, and residents is needed.

Insufficient income is a primary driver of food insecurity. Doncaster is the 48th most income-deprived Local Authority in England and around 40% of residents live in neighbourhoods that are among the 20% most income-deprived nationally (Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government, 2019). 'Low income' and 'cost of living' are the most common reasons residents require food bank support and so access to financial and employment support services are required alongside food provision.

Almost 30% of children in Doncaster are eligible for free school meals which support children's access to nutritious food. However, nearly 3000 eligible pupils did not take up this offer in 2023-2024 (Department for Education, 2024) whilst many children living in poverty are not currently eligible for free school meals. Healthy Start vouchers can also be used by eligible families to purchase healthy food, milk, and vitamins for pregnant women and children under 4. In January 2024, 1/5 of eligible families in Doncaster did not apply for these vouchers (NHSBSA, 2024). Barriers to these schemes must be addressed to ensure that as many children as possible are benefitting from these programmes.



Figure 5. The Food Ladders Model (Dr Megan Blake)

How will we achieve Aim 2?

Objective	Actions	Supported by
1. Identify and promote existing assets across Doncaster that support residents to access affordable, nutritious food	1) Undertake mapping of food ladder activities that support residents' access to affordable food	CDC Public Health [PH] (Healthy Lives Team, Well Doncaster); FareShare Yorkshire; Voluntary, Community, and Faith Sector (VCFS) Great 8 representative 'Tackling Climate Change'; St Leger Homes; North Doncaster Development Trust (NDDT); Social Isolation Alliance (SIA)
	2) Increase the promotion of existing food ladder activities to residents and partners	CDC PH (Healthy Lives Team, Well Doncaster); St Leger Homes; SIA; Edlington Community Organisation (ECO); Doncopolitan
	3) Improve coordination, connection, and information sharing between services at different rungs of the food ladder support system	FareShare Yorkshire; CDC PH (Well Doncaster); St Leger Homes; FoodCycle; 'Food, Advice and Guidance' subgroup (subgroup of Health, Housing and Poverty group)
2. Increase the offer of existing food support initiatives and develop new activities where gaps in provision have been highlighted	1) Support organisations delivering food support activities to expand their provision and/or connect with other services to provide wraparound support (such as financial and employment support) and skill development opportunities for residents	CDC PH (Well Doncaster); Doncaster Mind; St Leger Homes; FoodCycle; SIA; 'Food, Advice and Guidance' subgroup (subgroup of Health, Housing and Poverty group)
	2) Identify and address current barriers to uptake of Free School Meals and Healthy Start Vouchers in Doncaster to increase the reach and use of these programmes	CDC PH (Healthy Lives & Children, Young People and Families teams), Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC), Adults, Family, and Community Learning (AFCL), School Catering; FoodCycle; ECO
	3) Develop evidence-base to identify communities where new food support activities, such as food pantries, pantry vans, and shared meals, are needed most and explore opportunities to establish these activities	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team, Well Doncaster), SU, Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB); FareShare Yorkshire; FoodCycle
	4) Provide opportunities for food citizenship and community-led food initiatives	CDC Sustainability Unit (SU), PH (Well Doncaster, Healthy Lives), AFCL/Remake Learning team; St Leger Homes; Bentley Urban Farm; A Commune in the North; NDDT; ECO

What is already being done to achieve this aim?

- Edlington Community Organisation, NDDT in Carcroft, and Holmesarr Ark and Crafts in Rossington provide support for residents at multiple levels of the Food Ladder, including hosting food banks, food pantries, community markets, cooking lessons, affordable community cafes, and community meals.
- The 'Don't be alone at Christmas' project has been run by Well Doncaster for two years since December 2023. In 2023, 28 groups and organisations hosted free community meals for residents facing Christmas alone.
- [The Bread and Butter Thing](#), a mobile affordable community food project, has 4 hubs across the city.
- The Food Bank Forum, facilitated by Well Doncaster (CDC), meets monthly to provide support to the city's food banks.
- Doncaster Mind deliver their 'Mind & Money Matters' project in several food banks, simultaneously addressing food insecurity, financial hardship, and mental health.



Image (credit - Citizen's Advice): Citizens Advice providing energy advice and support at The Bread and Butter Thing hubs



Aim 3: Create a supportive food environment

What residents told us...

25% of residents were not able to access affordable fresh fruit and vegetables in their local area.

Less than 2/3 of residents found it easy or very easy to access a diet that was balanced and nutritious.

Many residents wanted to see a reduction in the advertising of less nutritious foods and the number of hot food takeaways where they live.

Our food behaviours and food-related health conditions are strongly, if not predominantly, influenced by the characteristics of the environments we live, work, and play in, also known as the wider determinants of health. It is therefore important that these environments support our access to nutritious and sustainable food.

Limited access to physical resources, such as transport and suitable cooking, food preparation, and food storage facilities, is a barrier to accessing affordable nutritious food for many residents.

"The environment doesn't support people to make healthy choices" Doncaster resident, 2024

There are also many commercial influences on food choice. These are private sector activities that affect people's health and include exposure to the advertising and promotion of high fat, salt, and sugar (HFSS) foods, access to information provided by HFSS industry funded organisations, and residents' proximity to fast food outlets. Overconsumption of HFSS foods can contribute to an increased risk of food-related health conditions, such as type 2 diabetes, tooth decay, and heart disease.

Exposure to food advertising can shape dietary-related attitudes and behaviours, particularly among children and adolescents. Subsequently, several Local Authorities have introduced advertising restrictions for HFSS foods and beverages on council owned or leased advertising sites.

- Over one-third of food and soft drink advertising spend in the UK goes towards confectionary, snacks, desserts, and soft drinks, compared with just 2% on fruit and vegetables (The Food Foundation, 2025).
- In a survey of residents, 88% stated that would support restricting junk food advertisements outdoors (Doncaster Talks About Food, 2022).

We must take steps to reduce the negative impact that promoting HFSS foods can have, particularly on our most vulnerable residents.

It has been observed that more deprived Local Authorities typically have a greater density of fast food outlets than more affluent Local Authorities (Public Health England, 2024). Doncaster is one such area, having a high number of fast food outlets for its population size at 139.7 per 100,000 residents (**Figure 6**). To protect the health of all residents, the distribution of hot food takeaways needs to be regulated. Furthermore, by encouraging existing businesses to provide and promote more nutritious options, we can help make nutritious food more accessible for residents.

For many, a high proportion of time is spent at work or in places of education. It is therefore important that the food available in these venues, including that offered in canteens, on-site cafes, and in vending machines, and the ways in which this is promoted, are reviewed to ensure that they support residents' access to nutritious and sustainable food. This should also include take into consideration residents' dietary requirements, including intolerances, allergies, and cultural and religious needs.

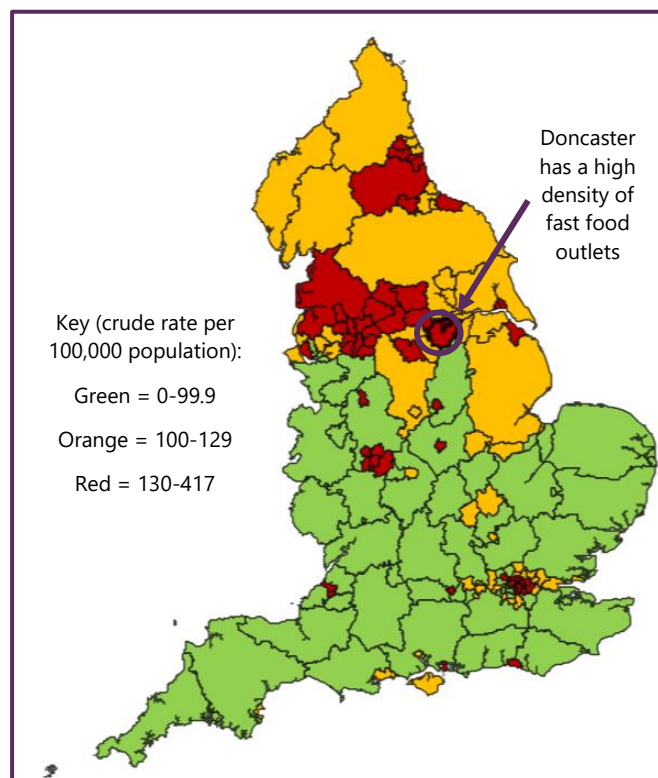


Figure 6. Density of fast food outlets in England in 2024 (Public Health England, 2025)

How will we achieve Aim 3?

Objective	Actions	Supported by
1. Address the commercial determinants of health that influence food-related behaviours	1) Raise awareness of commercial and other wider determinants of health, including HFSS advertising, the provision of resources produced by industry-funded organisations, and the location and quantity of hot food takeaways, to partners as barriers to accessing nutritious food and their impact on food-related health	CDC Public Health [PH] (Children, Young People, and Families, Healthy Lives, and Healthy Place/Wider Determinants teams), Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)
	2) Review existing policies and guidance in key institutions for promoting high fat, salt, and sugar (HFSS) foods and explore opportunities to strengthen these and/or develop new policies	CDC PH (Healthy Lives and Healthy Place teams), HWBB
2. Improve access to nutritious and sustainable food and drink where we live, work, and play	1) Improve access to free water in public buildings and community venues whilst encouraging the use of reusable containers	CDC Sustainability Unit (SU), PH (Healthy Lives team)
	2) Encourage businesses, organisations, and key institutions that provide or sell food to make nutritious and sustainable food more accessible to consumers	Sodexo Health and Care; CDC PH (Healthy Lives team); FoodCycle
	3) Pilot new school-based projects to improve our children's consumption of nutritious and sustainable foods whilst at school and showcase existing good practice in schools	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team, Children, Young People, and Families team), Adults, Family, and Community Learning (AFCL)/Remake Learning team, Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC); Voluntary, Community, and Faith Sector (VCFS) Great 8 representative 'Tackling Climate Change'; Edlington Community Organisation (ECO)
	4) Support the development of community projects and facilities that provide residents with access to cooking and food preparation equipment in their local area	CDC AFCL/Remake Learning team, PH (Healthy Lives team); Bentley Urban Farm; Manna CIC; Social Isolation Alliance (SIA)

What is already being done to achieve this aim?

- CDC's current Advertising Policy (2020) restricts the advertising of '*Fast food that is considered unhealthy*' on council owned assets including its website, street furniture, buildings, and on-street displays.
- Doncaster's Local Plan contains a policy restricting the opening of new hot food takeaways within 400m of schools, sixth forms, colleges, community centres, and playgrounds.
- Refill Doncaster was launched in 2019, with over 70 venues initially registered as 'refill stations'. Residents can visit these venues with their own reusable bottles to access free water refills.
- CDC School Catering team support several schools to use fresh produce that has been grown on-site within their school meals.
- CDC's Health and Wellbeing Board has prioritised food and will be supporting an action to "*Create a food environment that enables everyone in Doncaster to access and use diverse, nutritious, and sustainable foods through strengthened affordable food initiatives and by addressing the advertising and promotion of nutritionally poor foods, reduce food waste and increase local food production*".



Image: A bus shelter advertising board displaying a burger.



Aim 4: Tackle food waste and surplus food

What residents told us...

Food waste and surplus food was the top food-related environment and sustainability issue that residents would like to see being addressed in the next 5 years.

As well as protecting the health of residents, it is also important to consider the health of our planet and the environmental impact of Doncaster's food system.

In 2019, CDC declared a climate and biodiversity emergency and Team Doncaster have set out [targets to become carbon neutral by 2040](#), 10 years ahead of the UK target. Our food system contributes to these climate changes, from the ways in which our food is produced, the distance it travels to reach our plates, the types of food we eat, and how we use and dispose of this, and so action must be taken in response to this. Encouragingly, nearly 2/3 of residents in Doncaster stated that they would make changes to their food and drink behaviours knowing they impact climate change (Doncaster Talks About Food, 2022).

Despite high levels of food insecurity in our city, food waste is also an issue.

- In the 2022 'Doncaster Talks about Food' survey, 2/3 of residents reported that they throw away food, particularly fresh vegetables, fruit, and bread.
- It is estimated that 10,000 tonnes of avoidable food waste is produced in Doncaster each year.

Reducing avoidable food waste has been recognised as a priority in the Environment and Sustainability Strategy for Doncaster. Residents have also identified food waste as a priority issue that they would like to see being addressed. Food waste contributes to carbon emissions and so it is vital that we prevent food waste from ending up in landfill to help us achieve our climate targets. In addition to the positive environmental impact, taking steps to reduce food waste can also have a positive economic impact by reducing the amount of food we buy and helping to make this food go further. More education and skill-development opportunities and the promotion of food waste campaigns are needed to support both residents and businesses to reduce avoidable food waste.

One way to prevent food waste is through the collection and use of surplus food. This food, often from food

manufacturers and food retailers, is perfectly edible but would otherwise have gone to waste. We need to continue to build connections between the organisations who collect and distribute surplus food and those who can use this food, as well as increasing the number of activities where surplus food is used. Additionally, apps and tools that offer a way for residents to identify and access surplus food in their community should be promoted. The reduction of food waste in the community and redirection of surplus food to those who need it would have both a positive environmental impact and would contribute to increased food security for our residents.

However, there are some circumstances where food waste is unavoidable. In these situations, appropriate disposal methods, such as composting and anaerobic digestion, should be encouraged. Opportunities for composting schemes for individual households, communities, businesses, and organisations should be investigated. For larger-scale food waste, anaerobic digestion can be used to turn this into usable renewable energy and biofertiliser, a substance containing nutrients which promote plant growth. The new 'Simpler Recycling' regulations, which came into effect from March 2025, mean that many workplaces, including schools and places of worship, are now required to separate food waste from other waste prior to collection. It is hoped that, alongside reductions in the amount of food waste that is produced in the first place, this will result in a reduction in the amount of food waste that ends up in landfill. However, it is important that workplaces are supported to adopt these new regulations.



Image: An example of surplus food collected and distributed by FareShare Yorkshire

How will we achieve Aim 4?

Objective	Actions	Supported by
1. Reduce food waste where we live, work, and play, and support appropriate disposal initiatives where waste is unavoidable	1) Promote ways to prevent and reduce food waste at home, through education, training, campaigns (including the 'Love Food, Hate Waste' campaign), and the provision of resources	CDC Sustainability Unit (SU), Public Health [PH] (Healthy Lives team), Waste and Recycling, Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB); FareShare Yorkshire; Doncaster Mind; Manna CIC; FoodCycle; Social Isolation Alliance (SIA); Edlington Community Organisation (ECO)
	2) Support businesses and non-household premises, such as schools and places of worship, in the adoption of new national food waste regulations	CDC Waste and Recycling, SU, Policy, Insight, and Change (PIC), HWBB
	3) Facilitate the introduction and use of compost initiatives in communities, schools, and businesses	CDC SU, Waste and Recycling, PIC; FoodCycle
2. Improve the redistribution of surplus food, especially to those most in need	1) Connect food suppliers, producers, and growers who have surplus food to organisations who can utilise this to support residents in accessing affordable food	CDC SU; FareShare Yorkshire
	2) Promote apps and other tools that signpost residents to available surplus food	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team), SU; SIA
	3) Continue to promote programmes/services in Doncaster utilising surplus food and investigate feasibility of expanding these activities to additional sites	FareShare Yorkshire; CDC PH (Healthy Lives team, Well Doncaster); FoodCycle
	4) Champion community-led or community-based initiatives that help reduce food waste and promote the use of surplus food e.g. food swaps, community fridges	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team), SU; SIA; Holmesarr Ark and Crafts; ECO

What is already being done to achieve this aim?

- FareShare Yorkshire collects and distributes surplus food to many organisations across Doncaster, preventing this food from going to waste and supporting residents' access to affordable food
- The development of a circular economy (one that keeps resources, including food, in a continuous loop of use and reuse for as long as possible) has been set out as an aim in the Doncaster Delivering Together 10-year Strategy. It is hoped this will minimise waste, help meet Doncaster's net zero target, and create good jobs.
- ReFood, who collect food waste and use this to generate renewable energy, are used by RDaSH NHS Foundation Trust and around 60 schools across Doncaster.
- CDC Waste and Recycling Team have been supporting organisations and businesses to adapt to the new Simpler Recycling regulations.
- [FoodCycle](#) provide a free weekly meal, produced by volunteers from surplus food, at Doncaster Baptist Church. This addresses food insecurity, loneliness, and food waste.
- [Your Life Doncaster](#) provides tips for reducing food waste at home.



Image: FoodCycle's free weekly community meal at Doncaster Baptist Church



Aim 5: Support and promote locally produced food

What residents told us...

¾ of residents stated that it was difficult to access a diet that was locally grown and/or produced, but this was considered important or very important to 68% of survey responders.

Less than 30% of residents reported that it was easy or very easy to access a diet that was good for the environment.

Access to locally sourced food, fresh fruit and vegetables, and sustainably produced food were recognised as priority issues that residents would like to see being addressed in the next 5 years.

Improved access to community growing spaces was also something that many residents wanted to see.

The way our food is produced and the distance it travels before reaching our plate also contribute to climate change and biodiversity loss. Globally, the food system is responsible for around one-third of human-made greenhouse gas emissions. In turn, changes to our climate, with more frequent extreme weather events such as flooding, have an impact on food production and overall food security.

The ways that our food is farmed, produced, and stored contribute to its carbon footprint and so these factors should be considered when assessing the environmental impact of our diets. Residents reported that it was currently difficult to consume a diet that was good for the environment. It is therefore important that residents are supported to be able to access lower carbon and sustainably produced foods.

Championing and supporting food sourcing from local, sustainable producers and suppliers can help reduce our carbon footprint and increase the sustainability of our food system. Food is also an integral part of Doncaster's local economy. Using and promoting more local food producers and suppliers can have economic benefits for our city and supporting local businesses can help create and retain jobs for our residents.

- Nearly 4% (~3500) of residents in employment work in food and beverage service activities, with many others employed in the manufacture of food and beverage products, and crop or animal production (ONS, 2021).
- Over 800 residents are directly employed in Doncaster's agriculture sector (DEFRA, 2021).

We need to support our food sector by helping local businesses thrive whilst also encouraging engagement in nutritious and sustainable food initiatives. Stronger local supply chains and partnerships between local suppliers and users/sellers of food produce are also needed to create a resilient and locally focused food system. Many residents want to be able to access locally produced food, but this is currently difficult for many.

Growing our own food can have a positive environmental impact, including through a reduction in the distance that our food travels before it is eaten. It is important that our food system is resilient to disruption, such as that caused by the local flooding in 2019, and this is vital for addressing food insecurity. Growing more food at home, school, work, and in community spaces can also offer a step towards increased food resilience and security by providing us with alternative sources of nutritious food. We will explore opportunities to increase this provision across the city.

- 4% of respondents to the 2022 'Doncaster Talks about Food' survey reported that they take part in community food and/or growing projects.

Food growing activities also offer health, social, and wellbeing benefits for residents and community activities provide an opportunity for residents to come together. These benefits should be championed to encourage more people to participate in and/or establish their own food growing activities.

There are already several community food growing spaces, including community orchards and community gardens, in Doncaster. However, many residents reported that they are not currently aware of these spaces. Greater promotion of these activities to both residents and services is therefore required. Other barriers to residents accessing these spaces also need to be identified and addressed to increase participation in local food growing activities.



Image: Planting crops at a Doncaster community garden (photo credit: Sustainability Unit, CDC)

How will we achieve Aim 5?

Objective	Actions	Supported by
1. Build connections with and support local food producers and businesses	1) Identify, connect with, and celebrate local food producers and businesses, including Doncaster Market and local farm clusters where established	Doncopolitan/Warren Draper (Bentley Urban Farm); CDC Public Health [PH] (Healthy Lives team), Sustainability Unit (SU)
	2) Encourage and facilitate key institutions in Doncaster that provide or sell food to utilise local food producers where feasible, and showcase where this is happening	CDC PH, SU
	3) Champion the benefits of consuming locally, sustainably produced, and lower carbon foods to residents, businesses, and institutions	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team), SU
2. Encourage and facilitate food growing where we live, work, and play	1) Promote 'grow you own' at home and support residents to access the resources they need to get started	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team), SU
	2) Undertake mapping to identify existing food growing provision (i.e., community growing spaces and food growing education, training, and skill sharing activities) for residents across Doncaster	CDC PH (Healthy Lives team), SU; St Leger Homes
	3) Increase the promotion of food growing opportunities in Doncaster	CDC SU, PH (Healthy Lives team, Well Doncaster), Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)
	4) Facilitate the development of new food growing spaces and activities in community spaces, schools, and workplaces	CDC SU, PH (Healthy Lives team, Well Doncaster), Adults, Family, and Community Learning (AFCL)/Remake Learning team, HWBB; Doncaster Mind; Bentley Urban Farm; St Leger Homes
	5) Support services, organisations, and groups, such as food banks, to connect with local community growing spaces	CDC PH, Well Doncaster, SU; Social Isolation Alliance (SIA)

What is already being done to achieve this aim?

- In November 2024, Climate Doncaster (CDC) held the Great Doncaster Lesstival, encouraging residents to consider steps to reduce consumption and household expenditure. Microgrants were available for organisations to hold activities to support this, such as food growing workshops and seed share and swap events.
- Environmental Pride funding supports community-led environmental improvement projects in Doncaster. This includes the development of community orchards and growing spaces. Since 2022, there have been five rounds of funding.
- There are several community gardens and growing spaces already established in Doncaster, such as Bentley Urban Farm.
- Doncaster Mind have their own allotment, which is tended by a weekly gardening group and promotes the mental health and wellbeing benefits of growing food.
- NDDT Bullcroft food bank have established an allotment on site, allowing them to grow some of their own produce and offer skill development opportunities for the local community.
- CDC recently offered a small grant for food banks to increase their own and/or local residents' food growing capacity
- Doncaster Market has many vendors that sell fresh, locally sourced produce, including fruit, vegetables, and meat.



Image: Bawtry and Austerfield Wellbeing Project Community Allotment, which has been supported by Environmental Pride funding (Photo credit: BAWP)

How can I get involved in the Doncaster Food Plan?

It is not too late to get involved – in fact, this Plan is only the beginning!

There are several ways that you can get involved in the Doncaster Food Plan, whether you are a resident, voluntary, public, or private organisation, or local food business.

Are you:

A voluntary, community, or faith organisation, public sector organisation, or a private organisation?

- Review your own food-related activities and practices and pledge to support one or more of the actions outlined in this Plan over the next 5 years (or propose your own!).
- Align your own food-related strategies and/or organisational policies with the Doncaster Food Plan.
- Tell us about any food-related activities you currently, or are planning to, run. We can help promote these to residents and/or other services and organisations.
- Join the Doncaster Food Network or visit [Doncaster Food Network - YourLifeDoncaster](#) for more information
- Share this Food Plan with other partners.

A local food-related business?

- If you agree with the vision and principles of this Food Plan, we'd love to hear from you so that we can build up our map of local, nutritious, and sustainable food businesses in Doncaster. We can also help promote these.
- Join the Doncaster Food Network or visit [Doncaster Food Network - YourLifeDoncaster](#) for more information.
- Review your own food-related activities/practices and pledge to support one or more of the actions outlined in this Plan over the next 5 years (or propose your own!).
- Connect with a local group or organisation to support them in delivering food activities for the community.

A resident?

- Get involved in, volunteer at, or share your food-related skills at a local food-related activity. Find out more about what is going on in your local area by visiting www.yourlifedoncaster.co.uk.
- Share food-related project ideas for your community by attending a local Positive Action Group or even consider setting up your own food-related group/meetings in your community.
- Think about your own food behaviours and consider what changes you might be able to make to eat more nutritious and local food and/or to cut back on food waste at home (visit [Eatwell - City of Doncaster Council](#) and [Food - YourLifeDoncaster](#) for some useful tips, information, and resources). No change is too small!
- Need a little extra support? Details of food banks and other food support services around Doncaster can be found here: [Food Bank Information - YourLifeDoncaster](#).

If you are interested in any of the above, or would like any further information, please contact Kirstie Lamb at Kirstie.Lamb@Doncaster.gov.uk

Together, let's create a city where everyone can access and use a range of nutritious and sustainable foods in ways that enable people, places, and the planet to thrive!



Image: Aerial shot of work in progress at a community garden in Doncaster (Photo credit: Sustainability Unit, CDC)