

Bury Food Strategy 2020-2025: Progress Report (April 2022 – Sept 2023)

This report outlines progress made from April 2022 onwards within the Bury Food Strategy. The Bury Food Strategy is divided into 6 key objectives - progress and development is spread across these areas. For further information on the Bury Food Strategy, Food Partnership, Bury Good Food Charter and media articles showcasing some of the work undertaken by the Bury Food Partnership please see: <https://theburydirectory.co.uk/bury-food-partnership>.



Fast track applied for the bronze Sustainable Food Places award for Bury (Nov 2021 - April 2022)

- A key output of the Bury Food Strategy was to establish the Bury Food Partnership to drive the food agenda forward, delivering on the action plan. Partners interested in healthier and sustainable food have been actively engaged since 2020, with quarterly meetings held since March 2021. *“It is a space to connect with professionals and community organisations/ individuals across Bury and Greater Manchester to challenge and help shape the way Bury sources and provides food for all.”* (Lucy Fitzsimon, Sports Development Officer).
- The Sustainable Food Places (SFP) Award is designed to recognise and celebrate the success of those places taking a joined up, holistic approach to food and that are achieving significant positive change on a range of key food issues. Themes include Food Governance & Strategy, Healthy Food for All, Catering & Procurement, Good Food Movement, Sustainable Food Economy, and Food for the Planet. The Bury Food Partnership applied for SFP Bronze award status, using this set of themes and framework, collating partner activity across our food system. This process in and of itself acts as a constructive means to track and drive further activity.
- Completing this application was a challenging but a very worthwhile process. Please view our [bronze SFP application](#) (this is shared on the Sustainable Food Places website for prospective applicants as an example of best practice).



Achieved the bronze Sustainable Food Places award for Bury (June 2022)

- The Bury Food Partnership were delighted to achieve this national accreditation for Bury. The award helped raise the profile of work underway, maintained group momentum and opened opportunities to grants.
- *“Bury Food Partnership has shown just what can be achieved when creative and committed people work together to make healthy and sustainable food a defining characteristic of where they live. While there is still much to do and many challenges to overcome, Bury Food Partnership has helped to set a benchmark for the other 80+ members of the UK Sustainable Food Places Network to follow. We look forward to working with them over the months and years ahead to transform Burys food culture and food system for the better.”* (Leon Ballin, Sustainable Food Places Programme Manager)

- “We are immensely proud of how much has been achieved by the Bury Food Partnership, in a short amount of time and amid a global pandemic, to drive forward our Food Strategy in its mission to Eat, Live, Love Food.” (Councillor Tamoor Tariq, Bury’s cabinet member for health and wellbeing)
- Bury were one out of only 9 Food Partnerships to be accredited in 2022 and we were also one of the fastest partnerships to achieve this accreditation (only joining the SFP Network in Nov 2021).
- We were presented with our award at the Sustainable Food Places conference (Oxford University, March 2023), where we were also invited to showcase our innovative work on making Bury Market a Healthy Start Destination for the first time.
- The Sustainable Food Places team have now encouraged us to go for Silver in 2024 due to our continued progression.

The following content highlights some of the ongoing work of our partnership in chronological order.



Bury Catering Schools Meals Service achieved the bronze Food For Life Served Here Award (Dec 2022)

- The Soil Association’s [Food for Life Served Here](#) is an external sustainable catering certification. This award recognises caterers who are serving meals that go beyond meeting the School Food Standards, and ensures that children are being served meals that are not only delicious but also good for health, nature and the climate.
- The award demonstrates a commitment to serve meals cooked from scratch, using sustainable fish, free range eggs and British meat that can be traced back to the farm. The award assures that menus have been certified by the UK’s leading sustainable food charity, and that the caterer uses locally sourced and ethical ingredients.
- Bury Catering provides 16,000 healthy and sustainable meals every school day as part of the Bury Climate Action Plan, and employs 270 local staff across 58 primary, secondary and special schools. The award helps evidence value for money and quality on the plate. It is a huge achievement during challenging times; recovery post covid, staffing pressures and the rising costs of food. The award reinforces the service’s strengths and supports the council’s climate action plan and Lets Strategy.
- Ruth Galpine, associate director for healthy and sustainable diets at the Soil Association, said: *“Food for Life Served Here caterers are leading the way in improving food culture in schools. Achieving a Food for Life Served Here Award is a fantastic accomplishment and a true reflection of a caterer’s commitment to serving school meals that are nutritious as well as tasty. We know that good food is a crucial part of the school day and, with fresh, healthy meals being served, students are equipped with the fuel they need for their learning and development.”*
- Bury Catering Service are now actively working toward Silver.



Bury procurement frameworks implemented promoting locally sourced food

- Bury scored highly in Sustains [Every mouthful Counts](#) report. David Catterall, Head of Commercial Services was subsequently invited to showcase Bury’s procurement framework at a national webinar hosted by Sustain (July 2023).
- Sustain are also in the process of writing a Bury procurement case study (due Sept 2023).

Background

- Bury Council announced a climate emergency in 2019 with an ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2038. This prompted the development of a decarbonisation strategy, where food is identified as means to reduce carbon.
- Bury Catering supported skills development as the service prioritised cooking from scratch which led to reducing carbon as food was not over processed or wasted.
- Changing suppliers to local producers and local suppliers supports the local economy and reduces the amount of carbon produced.
- Bury Council is a founding member of [YPO](#), which has a dynamic schools catering framework, enabling identification of local suppliers and ensure they were included on the framework.
- The local economy has been impacted positively as we have been able to drive business to local suppliers. The distance of delivery for all our schools has been reduced from over 50 miles away to less than 10.



A Path to Pantry film and resource launched

- Following a successful application by Bury Food Partnership, support from the My Food Community Programme has allowed for the creation of an innovative film and resource, looking at the transition from food bank to food pantry called [A Path to Pantry](#) (Dec 2022).
- In this film Trust House Bury and three other food pantry leads; Radcliffe Food Club at Bridge Methodist Community Church, Ramsbottom Pantry, and Bolton Road Methodist Church explain what a pantry is, and the benefits of this model in supporting the community. As part of this project there is a new information page sharing useful resources and links to supporting information for anyone considering transitioning from food bank to food pantry. A Path to Pantry was launched at the Bury Food Partnership meeting (Dec 2022), and via the Bury VCFA e newsletter and social media coms. This film has been viewed 216 times (so far up to 04.09.2024).
- At the time of writing there are 7 food pantries in our locality: Trust House Bury, Bury Food Club at Manna House, Ramsbottom Pantry, Bolton Road Methodist Church Community Pantry and St Andrews' Church Community Hub (Whitefield). Heaton Park Food Pantry (opened Oct 2022), and Radcliffe Food Club Bridge Methodist Community Church (opened Nov 2022). RGRS Community Hub are in the process of becoming a food pantry.



Exploration of models to support moving from food aid to food trade

- Bury Food Partnership in collaboration with Bury VCFA secured a **Good Food Enterprise grant** (£5.5k) from Sustain (May 2023).
- Trust House Bury, Radcliffe Food Club, FGRS Community Hub, Bury Food Club at Manna House and St Andrews Pantry are participating in the new Connecting Community Food Enterprises project. These groups are also part of the Bury Community Support Network.
- Baseline data is being collected from these groups and one case study will be shared with Sustain (Sept 2023). Each group operates in a slightly different way. It is hoped that by coming together to discuss similarities and differences, and the main challenges their projects are facing individually and collectively (such as where food is sourced and exploring surplus to purpose avenues) that this insight may help strengthen the sector locally and support the groups to attract social investment.
- Bury along with 3 other partner locations across England are involved in this project. In September via this collaboration, we have been invited to a site visit and workshop held at St Andrew's Hub in Liverpool which supplies 12 pantries and 11 food banks.



Active participation in networks tackling food poverty

- Bury Community Support Network (B.C.S.N) formed during the pandemic (2020). The network is chaired by the VCFA and comprises 18 independent charities, voluntary food banks/pantries and agencies who directly support people experiencing poverty. The B.C.S.N meet bi-monthly: sharing good practice, learning and peer support, funding support, governance support, gathering of insights to influence decision making and promote the work of members. It also provides links to other support structures, such as the Anti-poverty Strategy Group.
- Bury joined the newly formed [GM Food Security Action Network](#) (2022). Every 3 months there are network events aimed at co-designing Greater Manchester's food security response and showcasing good practice and connecting people to maximise innovation. Additionally, three focussed task force groups work on the priorities raised by the wider network; Increasing the uptake of Healthy Start, Ending Holiday Hunger and Doing More For Those Who Miss Out On Support.
- This year Bury Food Partnership has focused on improving Healthy Start Uptake.

2023



Nurturing access to affordable, local, quality produce via promoting Healthy Start (HS) at Bury Market for the first time

- Bury Food Partnership were successfully awarded a Good Food Economy grant (£7,500) from Sustain (Dec 2022).
- In January 2023 there were 1209 HS beneficiaries/1937 total eligible = **62% uptake in Bury**, which reflected the 62.7% national uptake.
- Promoting HS at the market supports our local families and the local economy.
- We held our first planning meeting with David Catterall and Alwyn Thomas (Bury Market Business Development Officer) and embedded HS promotion into Alwyn's work plan (making a range of HS at Bury Market promotion materials, press release and started liaising with the stall holders).
- 3 fruit & veg stalls at Bury Market came on board with HS, thanks to their good relationship with the Bury Market team.
- We held a soft launch, testing that the HS cards worked on the market, with families from Trust House as part of a Bury Market tour.

Bury Food Partnership are very proud to have successfully **launched Healthy Start at Bury Market** (May 2023) with a celebration cooking demonstration using fresh and low-cost ingredients on the market. Among those taking part were:

- Mayor of Bury, Cllr Sandra Walmsley
- Cllr Tamoor Tariq, Cllr Liz Fitzgerald, Cllr Nikki Frith
- David Catterall and Al Thomas from Bury Market
- Sharon Jarvis and Barbara Richardson from Bury Schools Catering
- Francesca Vale, Tracey Coatman and Jon Hobday from Public Health
- Sue Scott and Giovanna Kerwin from Bury Adult Learning
- Gemma Goss and Sheridan Mathews from FGRS Community Hub
- Katie Jenkinson and families from Trust House Bury

There is no on easy solution to increase the uptake of Healthy Start but as a partnership we have continued to use multiple touch points:

- HS flyers, posters, pull up banners
- HS banners in our local parks
- HS adverts on digital screens on Bury high street, and on the big screens on the dual carriage way
- HS on GP digital screens in 15 practices.
- Bury Market HS Facebook posts
- Bury Market tours with local community groups
- GMCA HS training video

Further HS Developments

- Anne Gent at the **Department for Work and Pensions** agreed to embed Healthy Start into their electronic questions which are asked when carrying out **universal credit initial claimant meetings**, this is a potentially groundbreaking step forward. Anne is implementing this across all the job centres in Bury to ensure consistency.
- The **Bury Registry Office** agreed to promote HS to families when they register births (with printed HS promotional materials in their office to give out, and as an electronic attachment to their forms).
- The **School Meals Service** also agreed to add HS info onto their next menu.

At the time of writing the August Healthy Start figures show that Bury's Healthy Start uptake is now at **66% uptake**, this figure has been gradually increasing all year and is slightly higher than the national average. Bringing together this valuable nutritional scheme with our fantastic local market is we hope beneficial to everyone involved, as part of our work in promoting good food for all in Bury.

National Recognition

Please see the following article showcasing our partnership: [Bury Market now a Healthy Start destination | Sustain \(sustainweb.org\)](#) (published May 2023). It is encouraging that we are getting national recognition for the work we are doing here in Bury on this programme of work. When David and Francesca presented HS at Bury Market at the **Sustainable Food Places conference** we received an amazing reception. Following on from this event we were then approached by the **Soil Association trustees** requesting a tour of Healthy Start at Bury Market. David showcased our **Bury Food Partnership achievements at Westminster** (14th of June 2023), out of 80+ possible food partnerships, there were only 4 slots for panel speakers – Bury being chosen demonstrates the regard in which our work is held. It is an example of connecting, supporting, and celebrating communities and businesses through food.

We shared how Bury Market has become a HS destination at the GM Healthy Start Task Force, which led to Manchester, Tameside, Bolton councils requesting to join the next market tour. This tour was also attended by the Bradford Market team, Leeds Public Health, Leeds University and Centre for Food Policy from London University,. We received extremely positive feedback from some of the attendees, validating the hard work and commitment the Bury Food Partnership and Bury Market have given to this great cause.